

The Police Dog

Evolution, History and Service



James R. Engel

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Cover: Belgian Malinois "Alexander Badger Man"
Owner Eric Wilson, Photo by author.

Also by the author:

Bouvier des Flandres, The Dogs of Flanders Fields, 1991

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Dedicated to the women in my life:

Martha Engel, my mother

Kathleen Engel, my wife

Sarah and Meredith, my daughters

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Preface

A police dog book is an enormously daunting project, especially for an American physically and culturally so remote from the European origins of this heritage. Yet it is a tale that needs to be told in depth and with perspective, with a sense of history, rigor and culture – even a trace of skepticism – in order to deal with the contradictions, the frailties of human and canine nature.

A long professional career as an electronics and systems engineer in the communications industry, largely involved in providing communications and information systems for police and other first responder agencies, has provided close contact with police personnel at diverse levels, ranging from technical presentations in board rooms before high ranking administrators, politicians and their ever present consultants to riding along in a squad car to learn first-hand the realities of on the street service, how the equipment and systems we were providing worked in the real world. Many years of Schutzhund training and breeding, including extensive time in Europe, provided contact with many officers and trainers, European and American, and first hand insight into many aspects of practical police dog deployment.

Although the police dog as we know it today emerged from the herding dogs of northern Europe at the advent of the twentieth century the use of dogs in the service of those in power, be it the nobility of the ancient regime or the modern state, goes back as far as history tells its story. Often these were of the Mastiff style – massive, powerful and intimidating – serving to keep the working and agrarian classes, those providing industrial and agricultural labor, in their preordained place. The industrial and concurrent political and social revolutions of the latter nineteenth century marked a real shift in power to a more egalitarian basis, and as the social and economic status of the common man improved his dogs, especially the herders, took on new roles, especially in police service. As the Industrial Revolution progressed and the rural population migrated to burgeoning industrial and commercial cities the modern police force evolved to maintain law and order. These incipient police forces found ever expanding roles for herding dogs whose historical work in the fields and meadows was evaporating.

The use of the term herders rather than referring to herding breeds is appropriate, for these formal breeds were emerging concurrently, in the same era, driven by the same demographic and societal currents as the modern police forces and their emerging canine partners. As we shall see the evolution of formal canine breeds, kennel clubs and dog shows has had insidious detrimental consequences, and increasingly the actual police dog candidates are emerging from the fringes or outside of this mainstream conformation show oriented world.

Our subject is the traditional patrol dog breeds with the protection, interdiction, search and detection roles of the classic police dog, as it emerged in Belgium, Germany and the rest of northern Europe, and as exemplified by the German Shepherd Dog, known colloquially throughout the world as the police dog.

The original role of the police dog, evolving early in the twentieth century, was as a partner for the officer on foot patrol, providing protection and deterrence, especially at night. This involved both alerting on the presence of a potential adversary – through the sharp canine hearing, olfactory prowess and keen night

vision – and engagement as necessary. In the era before squad cars, radio communication and even street lighting the patrol dog expanded the presence of the officer, projecting authority and respect.

While aggression is still often the public perception, that is the biting dog, today the typical police dog serves multiple purposes, particularly those involving search or substance detection, notably drugs. In our modern world the police dog who can only bite is essentially obsolete or very special purpose, for the olfactory potential, the sense of smell, is as or more important than deterrence and aggression. Some of these olfactory functions – including drug, explosive and cadaver detection and search and rescue – are at times fulfilled by specialist dogs without the protection or aggressive role. An inherently much less aggressive breed, such as the Labrador Retriever or Beagle, can be less threatening in a school or airport environment and can be smaller and thus easier to maintain and more agile in searching restricted areas such as the cargo bay of an airliner or a shipping container. The military also uses many such dogs for bomb detection. Thus not every police or military dog is a biting dog, and many search and detection dogs are civilian trained and handled, usually in cooperative conjunction with police authorities.

Search and rescue functions – in urban disasters or wilderness areas – are often conducted by civilian volunteer organizations, using a wide variety of medium sized dogs, such as the Golden and Labrador Retrievers in addition to the more traditional police breeds. In general, these dogs are selected and trained to be non-aggressive, since disaster victims are not criminals and are likely to be injured, unconscious or in a severely stressed mental state. These civilian search and rescue dogs and special purpose detection dogs – the Labrador Retrievers, Beagles and mixed breeds – that search for drugs, explosives or accelerants are discussed briefly in the chapter on scent work, and then left for another author and another book. A little more detailed discussion of the Bloodhound has been included in the scent work chapter because of the close historical association with police work.

While the more primitive protection dog of the Molosser type has a long and complex history, the focus here will be on the more modern, more formal police service dogs. Since the military dogs – beginning particularly in the First World War and serving with distinction in Iraq and Afghanistan even as I type these words – have commonality in function, training and breed they are included to the extent possible. The modern dual purpose police dogs and the military scout and patrol dogs are essentially the same in training and function and come out of the same breeding heritage, and are thus appropriately included here.

The police community by history and the nature of the work tends to be cohesive and parochial, a band of brothers providing mutual support, right or wrong, in the ongoing turmoil of fighting crime. Our so-called war on drugs has over the past several decades accentuated this, and secrecy and deception, necessary in any war, have also tended to estrange our police services from the public at large. In the real world, serve and protect is an extremely difficult balance to create and maintain.

Police service by its very nature requires suspicion, the natural tendency toward the default attitude of mistrust and distance from outsiders. Sometimes gathering information for publications concerning police affairs tends to bring forth this distrust, the sense that secrecy is fundamental, that enhanced public knowledge of training and tactics can only be to the benefit of the adversary, the criminal element. But my belief is that while this is quite understandable, and that while many areas – such as details of drug concealment and detection – need to be closely guarded secrets, broader public understanding of the realities of police service, especially canine deployment, are good public relations, are to the long-term benefit of police agencies and individual police officers as well as the community at large. Serving this need for shared understanding is one of the primary reasons for this book.

Early chapters explore the evolution of the dog and the ongoing relationship with mankind, particularly as regards the pastoral existence and the canine herding function. Subsequent chapters explore the historical development and contemporary application of police style canines, both in the formal police and military context and in terms of civilian training, breeding and personal and home protection. In order to understand these applications, it is necessary to have a broad understanding of the historical evolution of the protection breeds and the trial systems – such as the German Schutzhund, Dutch Police Trials and the Belgian and French Ring Sports – that have played such a fundamental role in the evolution and preservation of effective police canine breeds.

Although much of this will provide background information and insight helpful to the breeders, trainers and users of police style dogs, this book is in no sense intended as a practical training manual. Rather it will cover the broad historical evolution of the police, military and civilian working dog breeds, applications and the supporting organizations and trial systems. While details of training methods and procedures are not our subject, hopefully the understanding of the history and evolution of these breeds, and the realities of contemporary police and military service, will prove useful to the practical trainer as well as the student of history.

In a work of such broad scope and diverse audience there is always the tendency to fall into jargon and assume knowledge common to the experienced but foreign to the casual or inexperienced reader. As an example, using the term "Koehler method" or just a reference to the man immediately conveys a great deal of information and implication to most serious dog trainers, but is oblivious to a great many readers. I generally deal with this with brief introductions, and often put explanatory information in a footnote.

This work has evolved from many years of training, research and living with the Bouviers des Flandres and from extensive European travel. Many sections of this book are rooted in articles appearing over the years, beginning with my days as a contributing editor to Dog Sports magazine in the 1980s and subsequently on my various web sites and magazine articles. Much of this research was in preparation for our award-winning book *Bouvier des Flandres, The Dogs of Flanders Fields*, appearing in 1991.

From the beginning the concept for this work has been to strike a balance between the need for a sequential narrative appropriate to those unfamiliar with the police canine culture and the natural inclination of the more experienced to go directly to the subject of interest at the moment. Thus each chapter and section is as much as possible a standalone work for convenient reference, and the order of the material is thus in a certain way arbitrary. The consequence has been that some information has been repeated in slightly different ways in the varying contexts; this has been a necessary compromise in order to render the individual chapters more complete and readable on a standalone basis.

One of the difficulties in a book such as this is the seemingly never-ending organizations with long names and arcane abbreviations, such as AKC, FCI, KNPV, SV and on and on. But it just cannot be avoided, politics is life and any human activity involving three or more people is fundamentally political in nature; to understand the emergence and function of the police dog one must come to terms with all of these human frailties, conflicts and sometimes even the nobility of the people driving the process. For reference, there is an appendix with a complete listing and brief explanation; perhaps in some future parallel universe this sort of thing can be overcome.

Beginning January 1, 2012 the Schutzhund trial program, created and largely controlled by the Germans and especially the German Shepherd bureaucrats, was phased out in favor of the IPO program under international FCI control. This is much

more than a bureaucratic realignment, and in fact represents a major watershed in working canine affairs, as will be extensively addressed in later chapters. In some places, references to Schutzhund should more formally and correctly be to IPO, but old habits die hard and the meaning should be taken from the specific context. In general usage the generic use of the term Schutzhund for the historic trial system as well as ongoing IPO practice seems likely to persist into the foreseeable future.

Through the years many people have contributed to this book, both directly and indirectly. These include:

- Kathleen Engel, my wife, always the real breeder at *Centauri* and the person who more than any other made this work possible.
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- Lee Jiles provided historical information on the Belgian Shepherds and reviewed various related text sections in draft form.
- Edmee Bowles, American foundation of the Bouvier des Flandres.
- Ria Klep, pioneering Dutch Schutzhund Bouvier trainer and breeder.

Photos not otherwise credited are my work, or an inadvertent omission, which please bring to my attention. I am, of course, responsible for all errors, and would be most grateful to anyone reporting them to me.

Jim Engel,
Marengo

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In the Beginning



The Grey Wolf

Photo Jaroslaw Miernik

The wolf, the progenitor of the dog, is an extraordinarily effective predator. He is fleet of foot, of acute hearing and olfactory capability, strong and bold in the attack and works effectively in the cooperative social structure of the pack, attributes in many ways naturally well matched for an alliance with mankind. Although current scientific thinking is that the process of domestication was much more complex than primitive capturing, taming and thus directly domesticating wolves to create the dog, the end result is a remarkable working partnership. From the beginning man sought alliance with the dog as an effective protector in order to take advantage of these physical attributes of fleetness and power in his own struggle to survive and prosper. The keen canine olfactory capability, acute hearing and effective night vision are fundamental components of this protective functionality, for in order to repel a marauding predator, man or beast, it is necessary to detect his presence before harm can be done to livestock, property or members of the band, family or village.

Once agriculture commenced the crops would have tended to attract growing populations of varmints and pests, wild animals which at every opportunity would feed on the crops, in the field or stored after harvest, such as rats and deer. Newly domesticated animals, such as sheep, would have been enormously vulnerable to predation. The presence of primitive dogs would have alleviated much of this both by reducing the local population of prospective guest feeders, perhaps providing meat in the process, and by driving them away, permanently intimidating them. As carnivores, dogs or quasi-domesticated proto dogs would not have been inclined to disturb the crops or stored grain and, as proven by contemporary practice, could have been managed so as to fend off predators on the livestock while abstaining themselves.

The use of the dog in livestock husbandry and herding was an enormously important aspect of the contribution of the dog to the survival, advancement and prosperity of mankind. Although the use of contemporary herding dogs, particularly in the British Isles, often does not involve an important guardian role this is from the historical perspective a recent and unusual set of circumstances. In earlier and more primitive times, and over much of the world even today, herding and livestock

guarding was and is as much defense against predators as containment, control and movement of the livestock itself. The common American or British perception of herding as being what Border Collies do on television or in the recently fashionable amateur herding trials reflects a very time and regional specific culture where control and manipulation of the sheep is the totality of the functionality. This situation has come about because of the eradication of the more significant predators in the British Isles several centuries ago.

Conventional wisdom, as espoused in popular literature and general canine books, is that man directly domesticated wolves to create the dog by capturing, taming and selectively breeding wolf pups. This process, which would have occurred over long periods of time, with false starts and failures along the way, and perhaps in many places independently, would eventually have led to the breeding of animals living out entire lives in the company of man. The taming process would no doubt have been precarious with many becoming wild and aggressive as they matured and thus eventually being culled or returning to the wild. But from time to time some, the less aggressive and more tractable, and thus better adapted to life with man, would eventually have been bred while living with the band or within the village and the ongoing selection for the more tamable would gradually have increased the physical and psychological differences from the wolf population.

So prevalent is this view that it is widely assumed as established scientific fact. Yet the current literature belies this perception, that is, many current researchers increasingly believe that the dog is likely not directly descended from the grey wolf at all, but rather from an intermediate species or sub species, depending on the particular viewpoint being espoused. Thus while the wolf and the dog are very closely related, the emerging modern view is that there most likely was an intermediate non-domesticated breed or stage of development, which would have evolved and changed, thus distancing the first domesticated dogs from the wolf in terms of time and evolutionary state. Furthermore, if these views come to predominate under ongoing scientific scrutiny, increasingly likely, it will mean that man did not directly domesticate the wolf after all, but rather an existing wild or quasi-domesticated canid distinct from the wolf. This is of enormous importance, not only for the advancement of science, but because the existing mythology contributed to enormously misguided, ineffective and even damaging practices in canine breeding and especially training. The "alpha wolf" concept of dog training is dead, and being put to rest. We are the better for it.

Over the past thirty years science has made enormous strides in understanding the evolution of the human race, knowledge of fundamental practical importance in understanding the structure of modern society and the behavior of men, tribes and nations even today. New tools of science such as linguistic analysis and investigation of mitochondrial DNA sequence variation have resolved controversies and provided revolutionary insight. In coming to understand ourselves better our relationship with the domestic canine has been enhanced; these novel scientific methodologies have also been applied to the canine with equally significant and far reaching results.

There are practical consequences of this for dog breeders and trainers as well as historians. As an example, the concept of the alpha wolf has permeated the literature and gospel of dog training over the past thirty years, almost anything can be and has been justified and verified in terms of "just like the alpha wolf," perhaps most notably the once popularly promoted concept of the alpha roll. Yet David Mech, who popularized much of this in his famous 1970 book, has in the intervening years fundamentally revised his views and publicly urged his publisher to take the obsolete book out of print in favor of his subsequent work. (Mech, *The Wolf: Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species*, 1970) (Mech, Personal Web Site)

This enormous progress in the biological sciences in recent decades offers the hope of better breeding, training, medical care and nutrition for our canine companions. Most of this is sound science supported by substantial DNA evidence, archeological discoveries and other scientific evaluation procedures which have come into use. But there is always an element of conjecture in the popular literature and care is needed to separate actual scientific reporting from amateur speculation, especially extreme speculation intended to popularize a person, a point of view or a commercial activity. All new knowledge and interpretation of existing knowledge needs to be applied with common sense and caution, for there can be danger in making simple minded interpretations and applying them blindly to training, breeding and discipline. We do not need to repeat the sort of nonsense propagated in canine circles based on the alpha wolf concept, which was always more hype than science.

Canine Origins

In the 1750s the famous Swedish biologist and zoologist Carl Linnaeus evolved a classification system for plants and animals, thus creating the field of taxonomy. In his system species with similar appearance were grouped into the genus, and the Latin word for the dog, *Canis*, became the genus *Canidae* in which he classified the wolf, fox, dog, jackals, coyotes and other similar creatures. The dog was viewed as a species, and a number of sub species were identified according to general physical appearance. It had long been known that dogs and wolves are very closely related, as they can interbreed and produce fertile offspring. By the 1990s modern molecular biology had demonstrated that the gray wolf (*Canis lupus*) is the common ancestor of the domestic dog and many authorities therefore reclassified the dog as a subspecies of the wolf, that is, *Canis lupus familiaris*.

More recently some authorities, such as Coppinger, have nevertheless contended that for practical and evolutionary reasons the domestic dog is best thought of as a separate species. One consideration is that dogs can also produce viable offspring when bred to coyotes and jackals, which are themselves separate canine species. But more fundamentally they argue that although closely related the dog and wolf are separate species because they have developed marked differences in appearance, physiology, social mode and biological niche, and generally do not interbreed in nature because of these differences.

All of this is important in our context because the concept of the dog as a subspecies of the grey wolf implies that the first dogs were directly tamed and thus large, aggressive pack oriented predators. There are, however, problems with this perspective because such animals would have been very difficult to deal with, and also because the dogs found with existent primitive peoples are much smaller, less aggressive and less pack oriented. Contemporary thinking has increasingly gravitated to the concept that the first domestic dogs were in fact very similar to these smaller, much less aggressive dogs, which implies that there is an intermediate evolutionary stage or species between the gray wolf and the first dogs. This has far reaching implications.

Although there is much speculation about the relationship between mankind and the progenitors of the domestic dog prior to the transition from hunter-gatherer to pastoral and agricultural life, solid archeological evidence is sparse. The popular and dramatic view of man the great hunter taming the wolf and teaming with him in the pursuit of big game has little direct evidence and serious practical ramifications.

Janice Koler-Matznick remarks:

"At that time, humans had only clubs, axes, spears and knives. With these tools, stealth and ambush are used to secure large prey. Wolves are extremely difficult to condition to reliably inhibit inherent behavior. They

instinctively chase large prey, and thus would hinder humans hunting cursorial (quick running) game, rather than assist. Wolves are also extremely food-possessive. If hungry tamed wolves did secure prey, humans would have to fight them for it. Dingoes provide a modern example of tamed wild canids as hunting aids. The Aborigines used dingoes to locate small prey that goes to ground or trees, but prevented dingoes from following when hunting kangaroos because the dingoes chased them off. If tamed wild canids are not useful aids, for hunting cursorial game and smaller canids are as proficient at locating smaller prey, there is no reason to keep large wolves in domestication." (Koler-Matznick, 2002)

Thus it would seem likely that prior to agriculture and pastoral life men and wolves may have interacted in various ways, perhaps with either scavenging from the other according to the luck of the hunt. Wolves living in proximity to human encampments or villages in order to scavenge may have inadvertently alerted in the event of an intruder, just as the cry of the crow sometimes gives warning to the observant man walking in the forest. But a directly tamed wolf is clearly problematical as actively cooperating in the large game animal hunt or living in close relationship to the human band. The ancestral role of the dog in seeking out game and participating in the hunt for smaller game, driving them to ground or into the trees where they could be dispatched and harvested, is much better established by archeological evidence and observation of contemporary primitive practice than actual participation in the pursuit and slaying of large game animals.

Although villages or long-term encampments occurred sporadically in the hunter-gatherer era, in especially supportive locations, the advent of pastoral and agricultural living, very roughly about 12,000 years ago, was the point in time at which there begins to be substantial evidence of the human-canine relationship as we know it. The band of hunter-gatherers was always on the move, often making brief camps in the open, leaving little in the way of evidence of a primitive canine association or anything else; many things remain uncertain in our current state of knowledge.

Once planting and crop tending began mankind became tied to the soil and thus gave up the mobile way of life. Archaeological evidence is strong that the dog was present very early in this process. The immediate consequence of agricultural or village life was the creation and disposal of edible waste in the immediate area rather than spread across the countryside as the band moved in pursuit of game to hunt, carrion to scavenge or the abundance of nature to gather. All known primitive villages, those without a dogcatcher and eradication process, have quasi-tamed dogs belonging to no one in particular which live as scavengers, on the social margins, on the waste material. Even today large metropolitan areas, such as Moscow, sometimes have significant populations of indigenous canines with the same general physical attributes and quasi-domestic ecological niche.

In recent years Raymond Coppinger and others have theorized that as man gradually adapted to fixed agricultural life elements of the regional wolf population concurrently evolved into scavenging canines living on the periphery of human society and villages. Their view is that the discarded human waste in a fixed location attracted wolves as scavengers, and that gradually populations of these wolves became more and more dependent and as a consequence became less wild, smaller, with proportionately smaller heads and teeth, in other words, gradually became dogs or proto dogs. Modern DNA analysis is gradually producing significant evidence to support such speculation. (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001)

In this view man did not domesticate the wolf at all, rather elements of the wolf population through scavenging on village waste gradually evolved into the dog, or an intermediate species, without any direct intervention, selection or even desire of

men. Even to this day in many societies, particularly in the Middle East, dogs are regarded as unclean and much more of a nuisance than an asset, to be despised rather than used or loved.

Others, such as Koler-Matznick, take the point of view that the primitive agricultural village could not in general have supplied enough edible waste to support the evolution of a population of proto dogs. (Or, in her words by private communication: "The hunter-gatherer lifestyle did not produce enough refuse to nourish canids as large as the wolf. If the wolf was domesticated, this started long before there were permanent farming villages.")

Her view is that the available evidence most satisfactorily supports the concept of domestic dogs as descended from a species of medium-sized generalist canids, a truly wild species derived from but distinct from the wolf, that voluntarily adopted the pariah niche and remained commensal, that is living on human waste food without providing substantial benefit in return, for an extensive period before some populations became truly domesticated.

The problem with this is that it is difficult to imagine an intermediate species not able to obtain sufficient food from the waste of the human population being able to compete with the wolf and other established predators. If this hypothetical independent, intermediate species did in fact exist, the question becomes how did it sustain itself, that is, what did it actually eat?

My view of this is that while the theories of Dr. Coppinger, Koler-Matznick and the many other contributors may seem to differ in significant ways this might well turn out to be primarily a matter of emphasis and the timing of the domestication process rather than irreconcilable fundamental differences. There is a solidifying consensus that there was an intermediate stage between the wolf and the domestication process, and the primary questions are about how long did the process take, where were these intermediate animals living, and how did they sustain themselves. Since there are no old world coyotes, and since we know of reasonably successful instances of taming new world coyote pups, perhaps the intermediate population was similar to the coyote, filled a similar ecological niche.

The general view of the scientific community is that the transition to agriculture was a response to growing populations, more and more people were competing for limited resources and gradually some began to plant and then increasingly tend crops. This was likely much more out of necessity than preference, for agricultural life was generally harder, disease more prevalent and diversity and quality of food in the village much less than for the hunter-gatherer band in pristine regions with abundant natural food. In this view it was the lessening of this abundance due to population increase that was the driving force behind the innovation of agriculture. It would seem that even primitive men preferred a life of hunting and fishing – sending the women and children out to gather the bounty of nature – to the labor of planting, tending, gathering and processing grain. And perhaps the same diminishing supply of food put pressure on the wolf to adapt along with the human populations; the fact that the original domestic dogs were smaller with proportionately smaller teeth, skulls and brains may have been an adaptation to hard times, a restricted food supply.

The emergence of the dog as the despised scavenger on the edge of the human social structure will no doubt strike many as less heartwarming than the traditional notion of domestication by direct human intervention. The trouble is that people like and want to believe nice stories, that is, taking puppies home for the children to play with and having them grow up as dogs and living happily ever after is a lot more appealing than the dirty village dogs that are there primarily to live by consuming human waste. But the premise of an intermediate scavenger or pariah stage rather

than direct wolf domestication is compelling in many ways and seems likely to emerge in time as the conventional wisdom.

Furthermore, contemporary efforts to tame wolves taken from the wild and wolf and dog crosses have tended to be difficult; such animals must be kept in elaborate pens or runs and cases of taking a wolf pup home and raising it in a normal pet situation, even with the most capable trainer, virtually do not exist. While wolf pups can to some extent be tamed, in general they are exceedingly difficult to train, that is, teach to reliably come, bring, stay or sit on command.

Thus while it had been common to accept the dog as the result of a simple process of man taming and domesticating the grey wolf, in the current scientific thinking the domestication process turns out to be much more complex, with a number of conundrums and apparent contradictions. For instance, the social structure of the canine, that is, the dynamics of the pack, and the in many ways similar structure of the hunter-gatherer bands are commonly put forth as the basis of the human – canine alliance. Since the social structures are similar the migration of individuals from one to the other would seem to provide a sound basis for domestication.

A common counter example is that many of the larger wild cats are much more powerful than any canine, but their solitary social structure makes training and control in general problematic. Men may live with small domestic cats, but the cats retain their fundamental independence and do not generally work at the direction of or in direct cooperation with man, there are no herding or personal protection cats. If they catch a mouse or a rat, it is because they are hungry or interested in the sport of it, you cannot command a cat to go out and kill a mouse. Also, in domesticating a predator, one which is physically smaller tends to tip the scale in deciding who is ultimately boss in favor of the man.

The fact that men have trained cheetahs for hunting and large cats in circus acts are common would on the surface seem to contradict this. Also, it has been pointed out that you do not see wolves in circus acts because they are so much more difficult to train.¹

Perhaps the key to this conundrum is to focus on the distinction between the concepts of tame and domesticated. As Ádám Miklósi comments:

"Biologists prefer to study domestication in the context of evolution. For example, Price defines domestication as an 'evolutionary process by which a population of animals becomes adapted to man and to the captive environment by genetic changes.' Thus domestication is a Darwinian process including forms of selection that are present in natural populations." (Miklósi, 2007)

Dogs and sheep are domesticated, changed fundamentally in the process, while Indian elephants are tamed, taken from the wild and trained to work. The reason for taming rather than domesticating elephants seems to be that nature provides a reliable and cost effective source of supply, negating any potential advantages of actual domestication. Jared Diamond points out that only a very small number of wild animals are practical candidates for domestication, for a variety of reasons ranging from difficulty of reproduction in captivity to inherent difficulty in taming. (Diamond, 1999) He goes on to point out that none of the large African grazing

¹ Of course, it might well be that wolves are not common in circuses because their size and similarity in appearance to domestic dogs would limit the audience appeal. The existence of wolf acts in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, actually Borzois (Russian wolfhounds) and white German Shepherds were used, has been brought to my attention as a counter example.

animals such as the zebra and various antelope species have ever been domesticated either for food or as draft or transportation animals in spite of repeated and determined efforts. No large animals other than the dog and llama, very limited in range and impact, were domesticated for either food or transport in the Americas or Sub-Saharan Africa, a major factor in European world domination. (Diamond, 1999) The dog is unique in that it is the only really large predator ever successfully domesticated.

Taming is distinct from domestication, a process of taking a wild animal – a wolf, bear or elephant – and by means of training, feeding and association modify the behavior so that it will respond to various commands and refrain from killing you the first time you turn your back. As we have seen, cheetahs, lions, tigers and bears can to some extent be tamed, that is, to perform in circus acts. The severe injuries in the Siegfried and Roy tiger act in Las Vegas a few years ago serve as a reminder that this is an extremely shallow and hazardous process. Yet the fact remains that the big cats are to some extent trained to a greater extent than has proven possible for the wolf.

How then, if the wolf is so difficult to tame and then train for useful work, did the dog become man's best friend? Cats are domesticated but carry on their original mode of existence, that is, hunt mice. Cats do not engage in cooperative activity – herding, joint hunting – because in nature they lead a solitary rather than a cooperative life. Cats are domesticated but do not take on new roles or work cooperatively with their owners, are famously independent even in domestication. Notice that all domestic cats are very small, small enough to insure that the man will always be physically dominant, win a physical confrontation. Dogs are dangerous to man primarily in packs and groups, and cats simply do not form groups. Dogs are useful in cooperative work primarily because of the inherent social structure of the ancestral canids. Taking a wolf for training is extremely difficult, but when derived canids can be integrated into the human social structure training becomes enormously successful and useful.

So how can you domesticate what you cannot tame? The answer would seem to be that you cannot, but the dog evolved independently of man's direct intervention as a scavenger on the edge of human society, perhaps most importantly on the edge of villages as man converted from hunting and gathering to agriculture. In this process they became smaller, with proportionately smaller skulls and teeth, as adaptations to living in a world of scarce food. In a similar way, as the Coppinagers point out, the tight, cooperative pack structure gave way to much more independent existence, for in scavenging others are there to share the food but not particularly useful for obtaining it as they are in the hunt. At the edge of the village, other canids are competitors rather than partners.

Koler-Matznick's differing view, via private communication, is that

"the dog ancestor was not a cooperative pack hunter of large game and instead had the most common form of canid social organization, the mated territorial pair that hunts small game. Note that the mid-size canids, the coyote and Golden jackal, have the ability to be flexible in their social groupings, and where there is plentiful larger prey like deer, they can form long-term family groups to take advantage of the larger game."

At this point I leave the discussion to the experts, for I certainly do not have the credentials to affirm or discredit any particular theory of the canine domestication process. The purpose of this discussion has been to emphasize that dogs are much more and much less than domesticated wolves, and that we need to be more careful in statements beginning with "Since dogs are just domesticated wolves..."

The taming or domestication process for the dog occurred very rapidly, for after millions of years of separate existence the dog emerged as part of mankind's

transition to agricultural and pastoral existence. This is in some ways contrary to evolution as an acumination of random, accidental genetic modifications, implying that the genetic basis of the dog was latent in the wolf for a very long time.

Key insights to the special nature of this canine domestication process have been provided by the groundbreaking work on the taming of the silver fox by the Russian scientist Dmitry Belyaev, commencing in the 1950s. Beginning with a foundation population of foxes selected for apparent tameness, from existing stock being raised for their pelts, and then in each generation selecting based only on tameness, within 30 to 35 generations the population had become to a very significant extent domesticated. But, even though tameness had been the only selection criteria, there were dramatic physical changes including floppy ears, short tails, short legs, lighter colors and dental malformations, attributes generally associated with the canine. Physical and psychological traits seemed locked together genetically in a way very similar to that of the domestic dog. (Wang & Tedford, 2008)

There are significant ramifications here for the training and application of dogs. In recent years the social structure and dynamics of the wolf pack has provided a lot of the theory and verbiage in dog training literature and like many newly fashionable concepts is perhaps taken beyond what is really warranted. If the self-domestication scenario popularized by Coppinger, but growing out of extensive earlier work, becomes the new conventional wisdom, perhaps too literal an interpretation of wolf pack structure and dynamics will come to be seen as misleading as a guide to canine training and application.

In recent years analysis of human mitochondrial DNA sequence variation has indicated a common female ancestor for mankind about 100,000 years ago in Africa, leading to the increasingly predominant Out of Africa theory of human origins. Similar genetic analysis techniques have more recently been applied to the domestic dog.

A 2002 article in *Science* magazine by Dr. Peter Savolainen, of the Royal Institute of Technology in Sweden, reported on the analysis of mitochondrial DNA sequence variation among 654 domestic dogs. Savolainen concluded that the most likely scenario for the emergence of the domestic dog is from a common origin in a single gene pool for all dog populations in a relatively short time about 9,000 to 14,000 years ago in eastern Asia, that is, the general region of China and South East Asia. The canine DNA evidence indicates three females rather than a single maternal origin for the domestic canine. Subsequent breeding back to wolves in some canine populations is also supported by this evidence. (Savolainen, 2002)

Although there were subsequent claims of much earlier origination, a 2009 report of much more comprehensive research by this group, which includes Dr. Savolainen, lends further support to the earlier date:

"The mean sequence distance to ancestral haplotypes indicates an origin 5,400–16,300 years ago from at least 51 female wolf founders. These results indicate that the domestic dog originated in southern China less than 16,300 years ago, from several hundred wolves. The place and time coincide approximately with the origin of rice agriculture, suggesting that the dogs may have originated among sedentary hunter-gatherers or early farmers, and the numerous founders indicate that wolf taming was an important culture trait." (Pang, 2009)

Notice that while these genetic analyses of current dogs are of primary interest, none of this eliminates the possibility of previous instances of regionalized sub populations of wolves adapting physically and psychologically in an ongoing relationship with primitive men. Such populations of pseudo dogs may have emerged any number of times, only to become extinct as circumstances changed, and thus leave no genetic remnants in our dogs of today.

Although there was at one time speculation of genetic contributions to the domestic dog from the other canids such as the jackal or coyote, these results of DNA analysis and other evidence clearly indicate that this was never so. While it is possible for a dog bred to a jackal or coyote to produce fertile offspring, the occurrence of this is so unusual, virtually absent in nature, that no detectable contribution to the current domestic dog gene pool is known to exist.

By saying indirectly descended it is meant that man did not domesticate the wolf but rather a pariah like intermediate species. Regardless of the exact details of the domestication process, and the fact that dogs and wolves can interbreed and produce fertile hybrids, the dog is seen today as a separate and distinct species. The fact that dogs returning to the wild do not take on the type, form and character of the wolf but rather become very similar to the common pariah or the dingo is strong supporting evidence for this view.

Subsequent to the initial domestication, and during their long association with mankind, many fundamental differences in appearance, character and genetically determined behavior propensities have evolved and been selected for to produce the many diverse breeds now existent, further distancing the domestic dog from the wolf and intermediate species. Thus while there is potential insight into dog behavior to be gained from a study of the wolf and its social structure, it must be applied with care and caution and only where actual experience verifies speculation.

To some it has seemed plausible that pastoral existence – that is, gradually guiding and controlling a herd of reindeer, sheep or other stock animal in the process of domestication – may have had a different mechanism, that is, been a process of concurrent domestication of the stock animal and the appropriate herding dog. This seems not to be the case. According to Dr. Myrdene Anderson (Anderson, 1986) the domesticators of the reindeer, the Laplanders (or more correctly people of the Saami culture) brought preexisting dogs with them as they migrated into the area from the east. (Private communication) Although the Saami reindeer-herding dog was fundamental to the domestication of the reindeer, it was never used as a sled dog, transport being provided by the reindeer, usually castrated males. (Anderson, 1986)

The use of the dog for the sled team was typical of the Inuit or Eskimo cultures of Siberia, the far north of America and on to Greenland. These dogs are also believed to have gradually migrated into these northern areas along with the original populations, as ongoing existence in these extremely cold regions without these dogs was likely not possible.

In many regions, even to some reduced extent today, sheep are maintained in massive herds and moved many miles, even hundreds of miles, yearly for forage in the presence of serious predators such as the wolf. This process is highly dependent on the use of herd guarding dogs, and although some postulate that this way of life involved the concurrent domestication of the dog along with the sheep it seems likely that the evolution of this way of life was dependent on the adaptation of the necessary guarding dogs from preexisting domesticated dogs. Furthermore, as the Coppingers point out, these guard dogs are not really bred by man in the sense of selecting particular stud dogs for females in heat, since even today breeding occurs to whatever dogs are acceptable to the female and litters likely produce pups from several sires, with a preponderance of herd guarding dogs the norm because of proximity but not excluding local dogs of every description. It is the selection process subsequent to birth rather than the human directed selection of breeding pairs that maintains these herd guarding dogs.

The emergence of the pastoral or herding dog is of particular interest and significance in the story of the protection dog, for the modern police patrol dog, the ultimate example of the genre, has emerged primarily from one very specific region

and culture, that is, the northern European tending style sheep dogs and the cattle dogs of the same general region, such as the Belgian and German Shepherds.

Even from the beginning the dog, even the quasi-domesticated scavenger, would provide a warning at the approach of other animals or hostile human beings on a raid. The human-canine partnership evolved through many phases and in many different settings, and the ability to alert and warn of, and possibly also fend off or attack, intruding adversaries was a primary benefit of the association. Especially at night the dog's sensitive hearing and sense of smell provided security both to the people and to the domestic or quasi domestic animals their sustenance depended on. Intrusion detection, protection and defense were from the beginning a major part of what the dog brought to the partnership with mankind.

The popular vision of the first dogs as hunting partners for wandering bands of hunter-gatherers is problematic on two levels. If dogs were actually directly tamed wolves – doubtful in light of current science – taking their food away from them would have been extremely difficult, and in such a scenario the question becomes what advantage the partnership would have provided to the newly tamed wolves. Modern attempts to tame wolf pups taken days old from the nest never produce adult dogs remotely useful for the sort of hunting envisioned. And if such a partnership was viable, why did it only come into existence just before widespread agriculture, rather than during the thousands of years when the wolf and hunter-gatherers coexisted? If on the other hand the direct ancestor of the dog was the thirty-pound scavenger of the village edge these incipient dogs would not have been powerful hunters, but perhaps would have at best been useful for seeking out smaller prey animals, perhaps for the human beings to dispatch.

Coppinger speculates that although there is scattered, often indirect, evidence of canine associations as far back as 12 or 13 thousand years, the comprehensive human-canine partnership began to flourish with the advent of agriculture, that while the evidence for partnership in the hunt is tentative and sparse the evidence for dogs as integral to the advent of widespread agriculture is broad and robust. This would mean that the foundation canine roles were the herding dog and the varmint or pest eradication dog that kept wild animals from consuming crops before they could mature and be harvested. (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001)page 283

Our knowledge of the evolution of the dog is ongoing and will without doubt become more detailed and nuanced as archaeological discoveries are made and the evolving tools of modern science such as genetic DNA analysis provide more firm information as a basis on which to speculate. But for our purposes present knowledge is more than ample to establish that the protective function of the dog has played a major and perhaps at times irreplaceable role in the story of European civilization from the very beginnings, as evidenced in the mythology of Rome where Romulus and Remus, abandoned in the wilderness, were suckled by the she wolf and thus survived to found the city and the empire.

In summary, the state of current science is that the domestic dog is descended, probably indirectly, but primarily or entirely from the gray wolf. Earlier speculation of genetic links to the jackal or coyote have largely gone out of favor. While this had been the growing consensus over many years, the twenty-first century canine genome research has served to confirm and emphasize this, as well as promise much future knowledge. (Ostrander & Wayne, 2005)

Over more than twenty centuries, from before the Greeks and Romans, and well into the twentieth century, a good dog was a necessity for virtually every European farmer, stockman and herdsman. As Justin Chastel, Belgian working dog breeder born prior to the First World War, said to me in recalling his childhood "when the sun went down, all a farmer and his family had was his dog. There were no lights, no police patrols and no telephones to summon help."

The Molossers

Throughout history the land has increasingly been owned and ruled by a small elite, be they the lords of the manor of medieval Europe, the plantation owners of the American South or the British or Dutch colonists of South Africa. Whether those working the land or in the mines were serfs, peasants, slaves, tenant farmers or



Cane Corso

share croppers the outcome was much the same: those who possessed the land or owned the mine worked little or not at all and benefited enormously, took the necessities for granted and luxuries as they came while those who toiled the soil lived at a bare sustenance level. Of course none of this was ever really voluntary; few of us would choose to be enslaved or tied to the land or to work in the mine.

Just as each class had its function and place in life, they also had dogs according to their needs, desires and resources. The shepherds and farmers had their herding dogs, later to emerge into formal breeds, and the house dogs of the lower class tended to be smaller and less expensive to feed and keep.

Those in power maintained it by force and rigorous social bounds, ever vigilant to quench any uprising from below, any sign of rebellion. And rebellion has always been just under the surface, be it the slaves of Rome

or the slaves of the American South. Usually these uprisings are crushed, but sometimes they succeed, as in the French revolution which went on to change the social fabric of Europe or the revolution of the slaves in Haiti which succeeded in taking over that nation. Other successful rebellions lead to an even more oppressive ruling class as in the Russian Revolution of 1918.

Just as firearms, and earlier weapons such as swords, were held away from the working classes, large and powerful dogs were largely in the service of the rich and powerful. If the aftermath of our American Revolution the right of the people to hold arms was enshrined in our constitution, and although there is not a canine equivalent of the second amendment free Americans of all classes came to possess these large, powerful dogs, as in the progenitors of the American Bulldog in the rural South.

The classic examples would be the large English Mastiff and corresponding national breeds such as the Dogue De Bordeaux in France and Cane Corso in Italy. As European colonists spread around the world local variants emerged such as the Dogo Argentino, Fila Brasileiro and Boerboel of South Africa. In many instances these dogs protected the landowner's interests beyond the immediate premises, as for instance the function of the gamekeeper and his dog was to keep the peasant classes

from poaching on the game in the landowner's forest. And, of course, all of the forest belonged to one powerful lord or another; there was generally relatively little public land open to the common man for sport or sustenance.

The term Molosser has come into use for these large, powerful dogs, usually with down ears, a foreshortened muzzle and a short coat. The term Mastiff is sometimes used as synonymous, but better usage is generally to reserve that term for the original English Mastiff and its variants. Other nations and languages adopted their own vernacular such as Dogge in German and dogue or dogo in French or Italian.

This terminology is in actual practice poorly defined and often confusing. In general working dog conversation a distinction is made between the herding dogs or herders and the mastiff style or Molosser, such as the American Bulldog. But the Rottweiler is generally thought of as deriving from herding or droving dogs but yet is often included in Molosser lists.

It is most important to realize that classifications such as Molosser and herder are broad and have great overlap, and that many if not most breeds encompassed by such classifications will have significant ancestry from other kinds of dog. Comparative statements are particularly treacherous in that any generalization will have numerous exceptions. State that the Molosser breeds are in general massive and powerful and many will be quick to point out that many Boxers are less massive than individual German Shepherds. The Rottweiler is commonly thought of as a Molosser and by many others as a herding dog, and can thus be enlisted on either side of any argument.

As an example, consider the Presa Canario of the Canary Islands. This is the historical summary direct from the FCI standard:

"Molosser dog native of the islands of Tenerife and Gran Canaria, in the Canary Archipelago. Emerging as a result of crosses between the "majorero", a pre-Hispanic cattle dog originating from the islands, and molosser dogs brought to the archipelago.

These crosses originated an ethnic grouping of dogs of "dogo" type, of medium size, of brindle or fawn color, marked with white, of robust morphology, characteristic of a molosser, but with agility and drive of tremendous temperament, rustic and of an active and loyal character.

During the XVI and XVII centuries their population increased considerably. Numerous mentions of them exist in the historical texts prior to the conquest, mainly in the "Documents of the Town Council" which explained the functions that they fulfilled. Essentially they functioned as a guardian and cattle dog, as well subdued the cattle for the butchers."

The problem with all of this is that much of it is based on promotional enthusiasm rather than objective, verifiable historical fact. Actual records of descent, a studbook, only commenced in the 1960s or 70s. The process, as always, was on the basis of "Yes, that one looks like it might be a Presa Canario." This is by no means intended to slight this particular breed; this is exactly how the German Shepherds, the Belgian Shepherds and the Bouviers came into existence as formal breeds. This is how all breeds commence. Talk about this or that breed being descended from dogs brought by the Romans two millennia ago and similar foundation mythology tends to incorporate a great deal of poetic license in that these primitive types are continually being genetically modified by random breedings to whatever is locally available. While the Presa Canario is thought of as the Molosser type in actual fact a significant portion of the genetic heritage is that of the native herding dogs present on the islands prior to the more recent Spanish colonization.

A simple statement of origins is never enough to characterize a breed, for the decisions of the breeders subsequent to the melding of the two originating types

must have had a profound influence on the dogs before us today, and these breeders were among the farmers and cattlemen. The similarity to the Rottweiler is striking, and it would seem reasonable to think of both of these breeds as intermediate between the Molossers and the herders, perhaps even with a preponderance of herder in functional terms.

Although substantial plantations predominated in many favorable regions of the south, North America in general came to be dominated by independent family farms. In the hill regions of the South in particular, Molosser style dogs for farm protection and bull and hog control came into the hands of these small, family based landholders. These dogs tended to be a little smaller, a little more quick and agile than the classic English Mastiff. Remnants of these rural southern farm dogs formed the basis of the American Bulldog after the Second World War.

In general the Molosser is thought of as heavy boned, large and powerful rather than quick, fleet and agile. The bite is a methodical grip rather than a quick strike. The typical short muzzle is characteristic of the guard dog relying on sight and sound rather than olfactory prowess. In general, the attack of the Molosser was to be direct, strong and persistent. Indeed, the Bulldog has become the ubiquities personification of relentless, dogged persistence.

The herding dogs of protection dog discussions are not generally of the Border Collie type of southern Scotland and northern England, where the land is sparse and the sheep disperse to forage rather than remain in flocks, but rather tending style dogs from northern European areas of Germany, the Low Countries and northern France. The quintessential example of this was the dogs of the shepherds, progenitors of the Belgian, Dutch and German Shepherds, who in the herding past were primarily tending and guarding dogs needed where flocks were large, needed to be kept intact and needed to be defended from serious predators.

Thus these tending style herders needed immense stamina to contain, guard and guide the herd night and day. Such dogs were quick and fleet rather than large and powerful. Being lighter boned and less massive than the Molosser, the power of the attack comes from the quick strike rather than massive power. The muzzle tends to be longer for more efficient breathing and for the olfactory capability necessary in searching out strayed herd members.

While the function of the Molosser is to engage an opponent and prevent his escape; that of the herder is different in fundamental ways. The primary duty of the herder is to protect the flock or herd, which means that when an intruder retreats he must react in a manner opposite to the Molosser, that is, break off the attack and stay with the herd. Wolves and other predators are often quite canny; perfectly capable of sending a couple to draw off the dogs in an extended chase while the remainder can have their way with the herd.

In addition to the Molossers and herders, many regions had specific breeds or types for predator eradication, such as the Irish and Russian wolfhounds. These tended to be sight oriented chase dogs and were of entirely different breeding, structure and character from the herding dogs or Molossers. These sight hounds have had relatively little practical human protection or police application.

This distinction between the slower, powerful, dogged attack of the Molosser and the quick strike, often with a quick release, of the herder plays a pivotal role in the selection of breeds for modern functions such as police dog, guard dog and personal protection. The effectiveness of police dog service in Europe is largely a consequence of the various training, trial and breeding systems such as Schutzhund and the Dutch Police or KNPV trial systems, which began to emerge very early in the twentieth century. Just as police service emphasized the herders, these trials were primarily participated in by the traditional herder based police breeds such as the German

Shepherd, Malinois, Bouvier and the others. Other breeds developed specifically as police style working dogs, such as the Doberman Pinscher, also played a part.

The Molosser style dogs, other than the Rottweiler and Boxer, have generally not been represented, and their participation has tended to decline with time. There has been a double edged sword aspect to this, the trial systems were set up to emphasize the nature of the herders, that is the quickness, and especially the control in the emphasis on quick outs, recalls and automatic guard rather than engagement when the adversary stands still. And this is not discrimination against other styles of dogs, for these trials emphasize the natural tendencies of the larger, more robust tending style herders precisely because they are the most useful and effective in actual police service.

French Ring especially emphasizes the extreme aspects of the herding dog nature, with great emphasis on quickness and agility in engaging a helper who is expected to be deceptive and evasive. This is not really ever going to be to the advantage of the Molosser, although in America we have seen at least one Ring III American Bulldog.

This is a dilemma for the advocates of the Molosser breeds, especially those in increasing popularity where there is a strong desire to emphasize proven working capability. If these breeds are bred for success in Schutzhund and Ring, they will need to become smaller, more agile, less bull dog like and quicker in the bite. But will this in reality only diminish the traditional attributes of the breed, the power, massiveness and strength? Is evolving a Molosser line into a pseudo herder ever really the right direction?

Some Americans, such as Dominic Donovan on the east coast, have attempted to create new breeds free of European domination and control, a new start in a new land. Although precise combinations are closely held secrets, this seems quite evidently an effort to combine some of the more robust and energetic Molossers with short coated herders, mostly Malinois and perhaps Dutch Shepherds. In principle there is no reason to object to this, Americans in general need to grow up and stand on our own feet rather than sucking up to Europe; but it a difficult undertaking.

But would these dogs be Molossers? How much Malinois blood can you incorporate and not have Malinois with a little outside breeding to maintain vigor, size or whatever the needs of the moment seem to be, as in the Dutch police lines?

Are weight pulling or hog catching trials an answer? In this day and age the draft dog is obsolete, even illegal in much of Europe, and the traditional bull and hog work was in steep decline when the American Bulldog was pulled together by advocates in the south like John Johnson and Alan Scott to preserve this heritage as the way of southern life changed, eliminating their function just as the herding breeds were established in Europe as police style patrol dogs half a century earlier for the same reasons. (The Johnson dogs, created by crossing with English Bulldogs, are much more massive and ponderous than the more athletic and functional Scott style dogs.)

In the big picture, the American and French revolutions stripping the ancient regime of its land, its power and often its lives and the Industrial Revolution, moving the masses from the land to the cities and putting power in the hands of an emerging commercial and merchant class, have made the Molosser style dog less prominent as the working herders of the lower classes have emerged as the modern police patrol dog and to a large extent the guardian of farm, business and homestead.

Just as in the herders and other fashionable show lines, many of the Molossers have evolved into pathetic caricatures, as in the English Bull dogs and the Johnson style of American Bulldog. The advocates of these breeds have a challenge even more difficult than that facing the herder style dogs, for it is obvious that a Malinois

must pass a Schutzhund, KNPV or Ring trial in order to be proven worthy of his breed heritage; but there are really no corresponding, generally available and widely accepted Molosser criteria.

But in the larger picture, all of this is for another author and another book, for the vast majority of police canines, and all serious departmental programs, are based on the herding breeds of North Central Europe rather than the Molossers or other variations.

The Herding Heritage



Shepherd with Flock and Dog

Painting by Anton Mauve (1836 – 1888)

The police breeds as we know them today emerged from among the indigenous herding dogs of north central Europe in response to the need for enhanced law enforcement in rapidly expanding industrial cities in the latter 1800s. The question for the canine historian, and the key to unlocking the essence of these breeds, is why this latent foundation was among these herders, why these dogs rather than the Airedales, Mastiffs, other Molossers – or any other breed or type – became the working partners of the police officer worldwide. The answer lies in the evolution of our common agricultural heritage.

For several million years man and the hominoids he evolved from had subsisted by hunting, scavenging and gathering in competition with other predators and herbivores. Very late in this process, only a few thousand years ago, a moment in time on the evolutionary scale, rather than simply seeking out the bounty of nature we began to domesticate our food sources, that is, gradually began to plant and tend crops and to take active control of game animals. This was in response to increasing human population and the consequent scarcity of naturally occurring food, an alternative to population control through starvation. Population reduction by less productive breeding, starvation or migration had always been the natural way of reigning in growth, but eventually local human populations evolved means of enhancing food supply through intervention and management in natural food production. As game animals became more scarce and neighboring bands increasingly put pressure on supply we evolved a process of controlling and restraining them and fending off other predators, including other humans, so as to provide sustenance in hard times when nature did not. Once the process reached critical mass, that is as populations increased more and more beyond the capacity of

nature to provide, crops and domestic animals became the social foundation rather than strategies for transient hard times. The world would never be the same.

Although there was enormous variation in the evolution of pastoral existence according to climate, terrain, natural vegetation and the nature of the animals to be tamed dogs were in many instances crucial partners in the process. Dogs may not always have been necessary, and domestication would eventually have come forth without them, but some pastoral traditions would have been much more difficult or impossible without the use of herding dogs. Sheep and goats were the first to be tamed and controlled, followed later by cattle and swine. Dogs were useful both for controlling movement, that is, for keeping the herd together and moving it in search of forage or for convenience and also in discouraging predation, that is keeping wolves, lynx or other human beings from harvesting the livestock for their own benefit.

In the centuries following the fall of Roman domination in the north of Europe the land was held by the nobility and the church, and the common man was tied to the land. This was generally a sparsely populated world vastly different from today, where predators such as the wolf, lynx and bear still contested man for the benefit of his livestock. The Romans had come with domesticated animals, cattle and sheep, and their own herding and droving dogs, which remained even as direct Roman domination waned and then vanished.

For twenty centuries these herdsman tended their sheep and cattle, aided by their dogs. This was an era before cities and with larger distances between villages, with vast open lands, much of it forest or of use primarily for grazing. Because of this sparse population, the herds tended to be in large, open grassland where the primary function of the dog and the stockman was to keep the flock or herd together and to protect them from predators such as the wolf. Many herds moved great distances yearly to take advantage of the lush grass and cool temperatures of the highlands in the summer, retreating to lower elevations to avoid the snows of winter. This continues even today in areas such as Greece, Spain and Turkey, although in recent years trucks have augmented some of the long migrations. And the predators were always present, alert for the opportunity to take down a wandering animal, even today in many regions of the world.

Gradual increases in population caused favorably situated villages or trading outposts to emerge into towns and eventually cities. In time this process, and the increasingly onerous bondage of those working the land, built up the societal pressures leading to the French Revolution, in the 1790s, which spilled across Europe and then the world as a whole. This was the focal point of a process that over time would transform agriculture and thus the age-old role of the herding dogs. This revolution was at root about land, about wresting it away from the nobility and the church of the ancient regime and allowing it to pass into the hands of the men and woman who actually worked it.

Prior to the French Revolution the stock largely grazed on what is referred to below as untilled land, what in America we would call open range. Although the ancient role of the dog was largely that of guardian against the predators, times were changing, the wolf was disappearing. The last known wolf in Belgium was killed in the Ardennes in 1847. (Vanbutsele, 1988)

Von Stephanitz mentions bears as so prevalent in Prussia as late as the 1750s as to occasion school closings. He further notes that the last known lynx was killed in Westphalia in 1745 and lynx were being shot regularly in the mountains of Thuringia up to the early 1800s. The wolf is mentioned as the most serious predator, and numerous instances of large-scale killings and serious economic loss are cited; predators were a very serious problem for the continental stockman until relatively

recent times. Even today a few wolves have reappeared in remote areas of Germany. (von Stephanitz, 1925) p106

This way of life went on for many hundreds of years, and only began to change with the Industrial Revolution in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, which took increasing population from the country side to emerging cities and began to mechanize the farm, reducing the need for agricultural labor. One consequence of this was the evolution of formal police service commencing in rapidly growing cities, which in time led to the evolution of the police dog. In the early years the canine function was primarily aggression, that is, crowd control and providing security for the patrol officer, particularly at night. In light of this the most obvious candidates would have been drawn from the larger estate guardian breeds and similar dogs, and in fact Great Danes and similar dogs were among the earliest recruits in Germany and other places, long before the herders were established as formal breeds. But over time the Molossers, Airedales and other candidates fell aside; and modern police dogs evolved from the herding breeds, specifically the tending style dogs of Belgium, Holland and Germany.

This revolutionary process – long, difficult and violent though it was – went hand in hand with incessantly expanding populations to transform the way of life of the herdsman and his flocks and dogs. This transformation, of the entire social order, was for the herdsman from open land grazing to increasingly controlling the flocks in more crowded circumstances, in close proximity to cultivated fields and over actively used roads. As the predators were gradually pushed back and the livestock was coming into closer proximity to expanding farm fields the canine protection role was diminishing and the tending style herding dog was emerging.

In the decades following the French Revolution the expansion of crop farming to fill more and more land, driven by and contributing to expanding populations, put pressure on the herdsman, for now he had to find food for his herds and flocks in close proximity to actively tilled land, which meant he and his dogs had to keep them out of the tempting fields. This gradually altered the role of the dog, putting increasing emphasis on herd control and less emphasis on the waning predation threat. The larger and more fierce guardian dogs gradually gave way to the more mobile, more agile working dogs of the stockman and shepherds, the progenitors of the tending breeds of today such as the German and Belgian Shepherds.

The Industrial Revolution was a process of expanding industry in ever-larger cities and mass migration from the country to industrial work in the cities. This greatly accelerated the changes in an agricultural way of life that had been evolving slowly. The handwriting was on the wall for these sheep and cattle tending breeds, and for the shepherds and stockmen themselves.

In the words of Dr. Adolphe Reul, founder of the Belgian Shepherds:

"There was a time when Belgium possessed, according to its relatively small territory a considerable number of dogs used for the guidance and guard of the flocks of sheep, and even flocks of geese, because in the whole country sheep were bred and used for their wool.

"As a result the price of wool and mutton fell, an inevitable consequence of the ruthless competition that Argentina and Australia offer our own producers, as a result of the given extension to the production and the use of cotton and of the realized progress in the agricultural domain that has brought it the suppression of the out of date system of untilled land, the decrease of the number and the importance of the flocks is emphasized." (Vanbutsele, 1988)

In another commentary Reul pointed out that the widespread use of chemical fertilizer meant that the long term custom of leaving fields periodically fallow,

without a crop, was greatly reduced, further reducing the grazing land available to the shepherd and his sheep.

Similar trends were taking place in other regions, such as Germany. Vanbutsele goes on in his own words:

"Following the general counting, 969,000 sheep were enumerated in 1836, 583,000 in 1856 and 365,000 in 1880. The sheep were mainly bred in Campine and the Walloon provinces." (Vanbutsele, 1988)

The Industrial Revolution was driven by technology, especially the steam engine for mining, railroad and industrial use. Technology would continue to transform the pastoral and agricultural world as the nineteenth century emerged into the twentieth, with barbed wire, the tractor, combine and other novel inventions further reducing the need for farm labor. The railroad, paved roads and eventually the truck were transporting the stock to market, making the drover and his dogs relics of the past. The horse went from the foundation of agriculture and transport to amusement, racing and recreational riding, in a few short decades. The replacement of the sailing vessel by the steam ship meant that foreign agricultural products from places such as Argentina and New Zealand could be economically transported to Europe, relentlessly driving down prices of products such as wool and mutton.

As the sheep disappeared and the shepherds turned to work in the fields or in the cities, the way of life of these herding dogs was in its own turn disappearing. In order to preserve these dogs, and to meet the emerging social needs of urbanization, men such as Louis Huyghebaert created new sports, the so-called dressage or obedience, which with new emphasis on practical police style application quickly evolved into the Belgian Ring sport. The evolution of these sport activities and the invention of the police dog were part of the same process, for amateur breeding and training was from the beginning an essential part of the European canine police and civilian defense work.

Animal husbandry varies over time and region immensely according to the climate, terrain, social structure, state of technology and the animals herded, that is, sheep, cattle or others. The function and thus the physical and working attributes of the herdsman's dogs have varied according to time and region. Many times a differentiation is made between the herding of the sheep or other animals, controlling and directing their movement in the pasture, countryside and along rural roads and the guardian breeds whose function is solely to challenge and drive off predators. But this is not a realistic way to think, for this division really includes only the extreme ends of a wide spectrum of functionality, for over time and region the vast majority of pastoral dogs have had roles that involved elements of each.

Furthermore, the distinction is often made between the drover's dogs, as exemplified by the Smooth Collie or the Rottweiler, who help transport the cattle or sheep to market, and the more general herding dogs that tended or herded the sheep in the fields and meadows. These are all broad generalizations, and in reality any particular herdsman or farmer is likely to have dogs that perform several of these functions in ways appropriate to his situation and needs, and the man himself would probably tend to regard such arcane discussions of terminology as just plain silly. Much of this has been invented and popularized by the citified, middle class breed creator hobbyists, seeking to identify, differentiate and justify their newly discovered show dog breed, something the stockmen in their fields and meadows would no doubt regard as humorous or outright absurd.

Nevertheless, in common usage today these pastoral dogs are by convention broadly classified as herding or gathering dogs, livestock guardians or tending dogs. Each of these shall be discussed in some detail in the following three sections.

Herding or Gathering Dogs

The stereotypical herding picture that most quickly comes to mind is the intense Border Collie crouching and giving the eye; that is staring intensely as does a stalking predator, from whence the behavior emanates. In the lowlands of the British Isles, on the border of Scotland and England, the Border Collies do not deal primarily with sheep in massive herds, but with sheep which generally roam free, exist on their own, semi wild, to find sufficient grazing in a sparse and generally rough environment with rocky slopes and deep gullies. This is of course only possible in regions where predator pressure is very low, and the wolf has been extinct in the British Isles for centuries. Because the sheep spend much of their lives essentially on their own, roaming free, they are especially challenging for the dogs, who must quickly gain control when the time comes for shearing or other interaction. These dogs will bite or grip, preferably to the face or legs, to gain discipline. Breeding and training the herding dog to grip or bite with enough intensity, and in the right way according to the animals being worked, is fundamental to all herding. Herding is controlled aggression, derives from the basic hunting and chasing instincts modified by man through breeding and training to stop short of the kill or injury yet elicit enough of the fear response in the herd and individual animal to gain and maintain discipline. Such dogs generally work silently, circling the herd and then going to the eye and stalk posture to control, with a quick run forward or to the side to direct or cut off a sheep.

This style of herding and herd dog no doubt evolved concurrently with the eradication of the predators such as the wolf and the increasing population density and the resulting need to utilize ever more sparsely vegetated grazing land. Thus the herding role evolved from keeping the animals in a compact group for effective control and defense to one of locating and retrieving generally free ranging sheep. When the sheep are gathered together, the dogs of the different shepherds must often coexist in close proximity during the ordinary course of their herding work, for semi wild sheep feeding and living on their own must be gathered and separated for shearing, harvesting or breeding.

Although American and British people are typically familiar with this Border Collie style of herding, this is a very special case, for in reality unattended sheep have suffered significant loss from predation over most of history and most of the world even today. In general the continuous presence of a shepherd and his dogs, or the larger, more aggressive single purpose livestock guardian dogs, has been necessary to protect the sheep.

Livestock Guardians

Guardian dogs are those which live permanently with the herd as surrogate members, driving off or engaging predators, such as wolves, bears, lynx or jackals. They are exemplified by the larger, sheep guardian dogs from the Pyrenees to the Himalayas, such as the Komondor, Anatolian Shepherd Dog, Kuvasz, or Maremma Sheepdog of Italy. These breeds are predominantly white today to match the color of the sheep, but in much earlier times, prior to the Romans, when the sheep were of varied colors encompassing black, grey to brown the guardian dogs also tended to these colors, instances of which occur today. One explanation given is that the dogs come to match the color of the sheep, with white becoming predominant in Roman times because white sheep became desirable and common in that this facilitated the dying of the wool. Others speculate that the color was more a matter of fashion, and that the instances of northern European hobbyist breed creators with money to spend encouraged some shepherds to select for white, by culling pups of other colors, in order to supply this novel market.

Sheep and goats were the earliest domestic animals, beginning about 8000 years ago; and there is every indication in the earliest writings and existent art that guardian dogs were essential from the very early stages in order to keep domestic animals in a world where natural predators were ubiquitous. Over time the breeding of the sheep and the dogs gradually evolved together, more by happenstance than specific, premeditated human decisions, continually according to the evolving human social and agricultural circumstances.

As Coppinger points out, until recently, before the advent of trucks for transport, sheep, dogs and shepherds were continually on the move, often covering several hundred miles in a yearly cycle. In these circumstances, on the move year round with the sheep, it would have been impractical to confine a bitch in season to insure a specific stud dog. The female was no doubt serviced by whatever dogs were present and capable, perhaps several males. Coppinger points out that this is the typical situation, even today, in some remote areas. (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001)

Thus the sheep herd guarding dogs are a continuum from the Himalayas to the Pyrenees in Spain, with local variation according to climate, terrain and local husbandry practice. Under such circumstances men do not generally make breeding selections, for the female will generally mate with the dog or dogs available, and those dogs that work stay and those that do not move on or die out. The various formal breeds are a modern creation, often at the instigation of European and American hobbyists, who love to discover a new breed and make it fashionable as a pet and show dog. Such dogs usually lose their real working potential and character by the time they wind up in the dog show ring, and certainly shortly thereafter if any vestige remains, for the fundamental fact is that such dogs were created to live with the sheep rather than man and by their nature tend to make poor human companions and pets.

Livestock dogs are the product of natural selective breeding and then imprinting and socialization at a very young age rather than training; human contact is generally minimized at this critical time. Although the dogs need to relate to the herdsman to some extent, the fundamental and deepest loyalty is to the herd, of which they are from birth virtual members. These guardian dogs are primarily sheep dogs, although they are sometimes also used with cattle. The initial imprinting is species specific, that is, dogs raised with sheep will in general not develop a strong enough affinity for cattle to be effective.

Most authorities regard these dogs as while perhaps exhibiting regional types or variations fundamentally a breeding pool contiguous across the region, the breed distinctions being the creation of dog show hobbyists. Of course, similar observations also are relevant to the herders, for in the broad view the difference between the German, Belgian and Dutch shepherds has more to do with national and regional pride than fundamental differences in the indigenous herding dogs spread across north western Europe.

Lest one think of these livestock guardian dogs as specific to Europe or Asia, Charles Darwin reports dogs working in exactly this way in Uruguay in 1833 in his famous *The Voyage of the Beagle*. (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001) Indeed, guardian dogs have enabled sheep raising for centuries and throughout the world, while the Border Collie style of herding is very recent and very local, a peculiarity of circumstances in the modern British Isles. Wherever men raise sheep, they either bring the dogs along with the initial stock and adapt them to new circumstances or quickly adapt local dogs to the guardian role, often evolving appropriate dogs through interbreeding.

In popular conception the livestock guardian dog engages in nightly battles with the wolves in a desperate struggle to preserve the herd. But Ray Coppinger makes the point that in reality the simple presence of the dogs generally disrupts the

predator mode of operation, and that actual physical engagements are uncommon. Just as wolf family groups or packs separate themselves spatially in a region, with each group marking its own territory and tending to respect that of other groups, thus minimizing physical violence, the existence of the guardian dogs within the herd establishes the grazing area of the herd as the territory of a separate canine group, which in the normal course of events is respected by the local canine predators. Just as the best outcome of the police officer's career is many years of side arms training without ever a shot in anger, the guardian dog as a deterrent rather than an active combatant is the optimal mode of livestock husbandry.

In a similar way, for many years it was the common belief that the wolf and the mountain lion were not natural predators on man, that there were no known examples of attacks on human beings. In recent years, mountain lion and even wolf attacks have become increasingly common because of restrictions on hunting and the use of guns has gradually reduced the communal memory, a learned behavior of man avoidance, in these predator species. Little Red Ridinghood was generally safe from the wolf in North America because her father, grandfather and uncles for generations shot at wolves at every opportunity.

By communal memory I mean that the fear and avoidance of man passed on from the mother or within the pack. In a similar way, each generation of wolves brought up in a social environment where sheep herd predation was not part of the learning experience would tend to carry on the existing modes of hunting. Hard times would of course lead to pressure for new means to survive, overcome social inhibitions against sheep predation even in the presence of the guardian dogs.

The Coppinger book relates their experiences in an extensive project over many years bringing old world livestock guarding dogs to America and introducing them to American stockmen. This book became upon publication an immediate classic, which everyone seriously interested in dogs of any type should not only obtain and read, but seriously study. Even when not referenced directly, much of the material presented here was first publically available in this source. (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001)

Tending dogs

Dogs that control and direct the movement of the herd as well as protect it – as exemplified by the German and Belgian Shepherd dogs – are generally referred to as tending dogs. Such breeds work with large groups of sheep, which by nature and breeding selection maintain the flock structure, rather than dispersing to feed as do the sheep in environments served by the Border Collie. These dogs, often working in pairs under the direction of the shepherd, move the flocks from place to place, along roads as needed, to find continual access to new grazing and a safe place to rest the flock in the night, when the dogs patrol the perimeter to prevent straying and drive off predators. These tending dogs do not exhibit the eye and stalk behavior of the gathering breeds, but rather push and grip the sheep as necessary to maintain discipline.

Sheep in the larger herds of the tending style breeds live their entire lives under the close control of the dogs and thus will naturally to stay in the herd and not usually challenge a dog one on one, that is the dogs train the sheep continually and the lambs grow up in an environment with basically trained sheep. This is in contrast to the gathering breeds mentioned above, where the sheep often have only sporadic interaction with the dogs, which thus must continually be able to assert discipline over an animal used to living on its own.

Regional herding trials are generally popular and reflect the work of the various breeds according to local circumstance and tradition, with those in the British Isles

involving the dogs working with a half dozen to a dozen sheep while the HGH German Shepherd trials involve two dogs working several hundred sheep.

As we have seen, the herding dogs in general, and the continental tending breeds in particular, needed the endurance to be in the fields for long periods of time, the olfactory capability to seek out and identify lambs born in the fields or strayed from the herd, the willingness to work with the handler combined with the initiative to take action on their own as needed and the ability to exert control by biting and gripping with minimum viciousness and damage, that is, contain the hunting and killing instinct short of the full natural cycle.

This is also an excellent job description of the modern police dog, and the underlying reason why the vast majority of police breeds evolve from these tending style herding dogs, developed over hundreds of years of service in the fields and meadows and then consolidated into our police breeds at the turn of the twentieth century.

Advent of the Police Breeds

The original working partnership between man and dog was primarily in diverse agrarian roles, the first of which was likely watchdog and guardian of the primitive band, homestead or village. Other roles were eradication of vermin or pests decimating crops and participation in the hunt, sometimes one and the same thing as in chasing down deer or antelope, which could be a threat to crops and also provide meat for the campfire or table. The dogs were likely necessary partners in the domestication of sheep, goats and cattle and went on to serve diverse livestock guarding and management functions. These were hands on farmers and herdsman with crops to bring in, livestock to care for, farms to guard and families to support; their dogs were of value according to their contribution to this work. All of the attributes and capability of the modern police and military dogs were latent in these primitive canine partners.

In time as class structures evolved the nobility and later commercial classes created their own sort of dog – the modern hunting breeds especially, the retrievers and pointers, and their household companion dogs – which were valued more for leisure than work, often more valued than the working men and women whose labor supported their elite life styles. But the working dogs were still there, these herders and farmyard dogs, like their masters, living in obscurity, without written history or elaborate records of decent, beyond the purview of those who could read and write and thus create history.

In the middle to later 1800s the industrial age was awakening in Europe, the peasants and tenant farmers were in the first tentative stage of becoming land-owning farmers in the modern sense and many were migrating to cities to become working men beginning the long struggle toward middle class status. This Industrial Revolution, the demise of an agrarian way of life that had predominated in these regions for a millennium, would bring profound changes in the way men worked with their dogs and the nature of the working partnership.

The population was migrating to the cities and prime agricultural land was often becoming too valuable for open grazing on unfenced land, rendering the herdsman and his dogs increasingly obsolete. Mutton and wool were coming from places such as South America and New Zealand at prices that were dramatically lowering European sheep production, especially in the Low Countries where the police dog emerged.

Throughout much of Northern Europe – in Belgium, Germany and the Netherlands – the more prosperous farmers, the veterinarians and indeed men from diverse backgrounds began to take notice that these indigenous herding dogs were

disappearing as a thousand year old agricultural culture was evaporating before their eyes. In response they began to establish the herding breeds, that is, to create standards of appearance and character and to keep records of descent. The dog show began as a means of gathering together these men and their dogs, to provide an occasion for the formation of clubs and evolving the infrastructure of the modern canine establishment.

These tending style dogs of the continental shepherd and cattleman, guardian as well as herding dog, medium in size, quick and agile, resolute in defense, would prove to be an ideal base on which to build a police patrol dog culture. The dogs of the British Isles – gathering style dogs such as the Border Collies, the larger terriers and the massive estate guardians – in time proved to be not of the right stuff, not the needed balance of physique and character.

Thus this age old guardian role comes down to us in the form of the police service dog, the military scout and patrol dog and the protection and watch dogs serving farmers, stockmen and families of every sort. In continental Europe especially, nations such as Belgium and Germany gathered together their regional herders, rapidly becoming obsolete because of the advancing Industrial Revolution, and created the police breeds such as the German and Belgian Shepherds, the Rottweiler and the Bouvier des Flandres.

Beginning in the latter 1800s progressive police leadership, seeking to empower and protect the police officer on foot patrol in industrial city neighborhoods – men such as Konrad Most in Germany and Ernest van Wesemael in Belgium – began programs that have continued to evolve and prosper until this day. This process was facilitated by the establishment of police dog trial systems in cooperation with civilian breeders and trainers, such as the Dutch police or KNPV trials, which began in 1907. This close cooperation between civilian breed founders and trainers on the one hand and the police and military administration on the other was a key element in the rapid European progress in the evolution and deployment of effective police canines.

While the continental Europeans strode forward, the British and Americans wallowed in ambivalence. Although there was a certain amount of early enthusiasm in a few progressive police departments, with American police personnel going to Belgium, buying dogs and establishing programs before the First World War, it was seed spread upon barren ground, sometimes flourishing for a year or two but usually dying out at a change in police administration or on a politician's whim. Police programs, almost always small, came and went. Finally in the early 1950s the last existing program flickered out and for several years thereafter there were no known formal American police canine programs.

The failure of a strong working dog culture to emerge in England and America was fundamentally a matter of historical circumstance and the absence of strongly protective British herding breeds. While the Germans and Belgians were busy establishing their police dog culture – breeding traditions, trial systems and deployment programs – with broad public support and active civilian participation at every level, we procrastinated. In the English speaking world there were no new police breeds to excite and interest civilians and no trial systems to draw young men into training and competition, thus building a residual pool of knowledge and experienced trainers and handlers available for police and military programs.

This entrenched British ambivalence to the protective canine is not rooted in an especially humane culture; for bear baiting, pit dog fighting and other brutal canine diversions had a long national history, and only became illegal relatively recently. Perhaps this pervasive negative attitude springs from over reaction, that is the process of eliminating pit fighting and similar atrocities may have carried over as a general pacifist attitude and an aversion to all forms of canine aggression. Or perhaps this was simply the paternalistic and self-preserving instinct of the British

upper class at work, the concept that – although aggressive dogs may perhaps be necessary and useful in police applications – the breeding and especially the training of such dogs should be closely guarded activities, conducted only under the auspices of proper authorities. In this worldview the population in general is to be denied access to such dogs and such training, just as every effort is made to keep lock picking tools and techniques out of reach and secret, and firearms of all sorts forbidden to the population at large. This of course ignores that such restrictions do not keep explosives or firearms out of the hands of foreign terrorists or resourceful domestic criminals.

Strangely enough, although America became the land of opportunity for the gun enthusiast with the greatest per capita ownership in the world of even the most exotic firearms, our attitudes toward the protection dog have primarily been transplanted from the English. In general, English and American police forces, from the politicians providing the money, policy and senior officers right on down through the ranks, have a deep-seated suspicion of and aversion to cooperation with civilians of any sort. The extension of this elitist predisposition to dog trainers and breeders, as contrasted with the continental spirit of cooperation, plays a major role in the relative lack of sophistication and self-sufficiency of contemporary police canine programs. Ongoing dependence on European sources of dogs for deployment and breeding, training guidance and methodology and sport culture increases operational costs at a time of national economic stress when cost effectiveness is increasingly the prerequisite for ongoing taxpayer support.

These cultural biases and attitudes carry over to the civilian national canine organizations, the Kennel Club in Britain and the American Kennel Club, which have historically maintained great distance from any aggressive canine propensities. This of course reflects their origins in the upper class elements of British society, primarily interested in their hunting dogs, their lap dogs and their estate guarding and gamekeeper's dogs, that is, the Mastiff and similar breeds.

Indeed, the quintessential police dog, the German Shepherd, was given a new name by the British on the eve of the First World War, along with the royal family who gave up their German name to become the Windsors, in order to avoid seeming too German. The British chose to call the breed the Alsatian, after the province of Alsace, which although under French control subsequent to the First World War was historically, culturally and linguistically as much German as French. Perhaps only the Brits would go to such length to pretend that the German Shepherd is really some sort of French dog, for there is no historical connection between the breed and this border province other than in fertile and insecure British imaginations. Much of this attitude comes through in the world of the American Kennel Club, which was from the beginning under tight eastern, Protestant, upper class control.

While police service may be conceded as necessary, and even touted when there is money to be made, breeding of the high class purebred dog in the English speaking world has always been without any selection for practical working potential, especially in regards to the canine protective and aggressive functions. As a consequence the dogs produced are fundamentally useless for their work, and as serious dogs have become necessary, especially in the wake of the September 11th atrocity, they have increasingly been imported from continental Europe, especially the Netherlands and Germany. The consequences of this have been deleterious in that excellent or even marginal dogs have been difficult to identify and purchase and more importantly the American police canine programs have evolved isolated from the training, nurturing and breeding culture so important for effective deployment. Police dog work is a team affair, and just as a chain is no stronger than its weakest link the effectiveness of even the very best dog is severely limited if the handler is lacking strong canine knowledge, skills and experience in addition to being a first rate police officer. Such levels of skill are simply not provided and maintained by a

cursory instruction course for a new, inexperienced handler, and this has from the beginning been the Achilles heel of the American police canine movement.

Indeed, effective management and cost control in the basic and ongoing training process, both for handlers and the dogs, is the key to a viable police canine movement. Over the years, many programs have gone out of existence because they were perceived as not cost effective or simply beyond limited budget resources. The yearly cost for a police officer may be well over a hundred thousand dollars. (This is not what is seen in the paycheck, but rather reflects the overall cost of fringe benefits, the salaries of administrative and support personnel and training time reducing service availability.) Thus the decision to assign an officer for eight weeks of training is generally going to be expensive, perhaps a fifteen or twenty thousand-dollar investment. This may well be a good decision, but certainly not one to be taken lightly. Thus the economic motivation for the purchase of trained dogs rather than starting with untrained young dogs, many of which will inevitably be found wanting and discarded as training commences, are apparent.

Although the emergence of the canine police function was occurring across much of Northern Europe, after a brief flurry of interest in prewar Belgian programs subsequent American attention to these breeds of the protective heritage, commencing with the return of the troops from the First World War, focused on Germany. Cavalry Captain Max von Stephanitz, prime mover for the German Shepherd Dog, promulgated and promoted the foundation principles – that work must come first, that form must be according to function – and this vision has resonated around the world for well over a century.

The pioneering spirit of this German Shepherd culture demanded that a dog possess the moral and physical attributes necessary for his work, which must be proven on the working trial field as a prerequisite to breeding and service. In order to demonstrate and prove these essential attributes such as courage, stamina, working willingness and the olfactory potential these pioneers created a series of tests which eventually came to be known as the Schutzhund trial, in English literally the protection dog trial. Similar trials evolved concurrently elsewhere in northern Europe.

From the time of Columbus the Europeans who came to America brought their dogs with them, and European breeds, philosophy and authority have been predominant even until this day. Actually, this goes back even further; several thousand years earlier, for the American Indians brought their dogs with them across the Bering Strait land bridge.

Following the First World War protective heritage German breeds, beginning with the Shepherds and then later the Dobermans and Rottweilers, achieved enormous popularity in America, catering to a deep and persistent desire in so many of us for the perceived reflected machismo. The Belgians may have created the police dog, but the Germans knew how to promote and popularize it to the general population as well as the police specialist, for the genius of von Stephanitz encompassed promotion and deep understanding of human nature as well as the canine. Although the German Shepherd had been present in small numbers in America before the war, popularity surged with the return of the troops, peaking at 21,596 AKC registrations in 1926 and then crashing back down with the advent of the great depression of the 1930s.

The fly in this ointment was that American shepherds evolved strictly as show and companion dogs, with no expectation of or realistic appreciation for working capability. There is little doubt that many dogs lacking in courage or overly sensitive to gun shots, of little or no value for breeding or service in Germany, found their way into the American market, and more importantly, into our breeding programs.

The Doberman Pinscher also became a prominent and popular breed in America following the First World War, with many imports contributing to the rapidly expanding American lines and a large and vigorous body of enthusiasts emerging. The Doberman was promoted as a police dog and as a consequence served prominently with the United States Marine Corps in the Pacific during the WWII. The Doberman people were always good at promotion, perhaps a little too good in that there was the tendency to take drive and working character for granted. Other German dogs such as the Rottweiler and similar breeds in the rest of Europe, such as the Beauceron, the Picardy Shepherd, the Belgian Malinois and the Bouvier des Flandres, were rare in America, and in this era shared little of the protection dog aura driving the popularity of these German breeds.

In the better classes of American society, as pandered to, manipulated and encouraged by the AKC, canine aggression has from the beginning been perceived as a behavior problem, something to deal with, rather than a fundamental and useful attribute. It has always been slightly suspect, a touch low class. The use of the dog for personal protection, security, military service or police patrol became a perhaps necessary and useful function, but not something a respectable, upwardly mobile person would want to be involved in. When the subject came up with a breeder or advocate it would be patiently explained that certainly any German Shepherd or Doberman, even, no, especially, their show dogs had the innate potential for the police or protection role. It was portrayed as a simple matter of a little training, the implication being that such techniques should be carefully held secret among proper police authorities, least lower class elements should unlock the inner aggression for nefarious purposes, just like methods and tools for lock picking should be kept out of the hands of potential burglars.

Thus because of this passive culture encouraged and abetted by the AKC, Americans prior to the 1970s, breeders and owners alike, remained profoundly ignorant of the culture essential to the breeding, training and preservation of these working breeds. There were no Schutzhund trials as tests for breed worthiness, and more importantly no perception of the necessity of incessant testing of breeding stock to maintain the requisite character attributes. Thus many dogs coming to America were those insufficient for breeding in Germany, the timid or those lacking in gun sureness, thus poisoning our well. In America the only criteria for quality was a show ring increasingly deviating from the original breed in form as well as function. The American shepherd and Doberman lines quickly became pale imitations of the original, seriously deficient in both the appropriate athletic working structure and the requisite character for their work. They became, quite literally, pathetic replicas of the real thing.

Americans had been gradually becoming aware of this disparity and sought ways of bringing this German culture, these training and breeding practices that were the real foundation of these breeds, to our shores. Sporadically in places like the Bay Area in California and suburban Chicago, local groups had been forming clubs and training. In 1970 an American oriented national level Schutzhund organization came into existence, and although it faltered and fell by the wayside by the end of the decade German affiliated organizations such as the DVG and the *United Schutzhund Clubs of America* were flourishing.

Because of the popularity of the German breeds, and half a century of German promotion of their canine culture in the rest of the world, our dream of a sport and trial system in America, which would hopefully bring forth the best in a man and a dog, was focused on the Schutzhund trial. A few of us were determined to free these lines and these dogs from the debasement of AKC style show breeding, to bring a new and better era to America. We had the enthusiasm of the naive, really did believe that we could transplant the heritage according to the vision of the European founders.

Many of us had our beginning in American style obedience, but found it increasingly sterile and empty for dog and man alike, knew in our hearts that there must be something more. We were warned about this esoteric German ritual called Schutzhund, warned by our betters, warned that that it was not the American way, that it was from the primitive past before the canine had been purified and the aggression tamed and submerged. But some of us, drawn by the mystique of the protection heritage, by the vision of dogs capable of more than heel and fetch, sought out these forbidden rituals to see for ourselves.

We were transformed. Sometimes we saw our dogs come alive when given the opportunity to serve the purpose of their ancestors, but often we were dismayed to see that our noble working dog fell grievously short, that membership in a breed, inscribed on a registration form or pedigree, did not in and of itself confer the requisite character. Sooner or later most of us sought out truly advanced and capable dogs of our own breed, witnessed the execution of the work of our breed before our own eyes. For me it was in 1980, outside of St. Louis, where two Germans with Schutzhund titled Bouviers des Flandres brought over by Dr. Erik Houttuin opened my eyes; I had never imagined that such dogs could exist.

In time we came to believe that we were destined to fulfill the heritage of the protective breeds in America, bring the training and ideals of Europe, especially the Schutzhund program, to our shores to fulfill the age-old destiny of our breeds. As in every revolution, we looked up to and idealized all things European, especially German, and sought to emulate their heritage and ideals. Few of us had actually been to Europe and the early encouragement and pioneering to a large extent came from Germans who had to come to live in America after WWII.

For us Schutzhund came to be the sport for the common man and uncommon dogs, the key to the excellence we saw for ourselves in titled German Shepherds, often imported. These European trial systems held out the promise of being the way in which the ordinary person, the family man with other obligations and limited financial resources, could compete and contribute, and our dream was of making this a reality in America.

Little did we dream that our heroes had feet of clay; that betrayal even then lurked in high places in Germany.

Police Dog Requisites

Dogs serve so well in so many diverse roles because of the enormous range and pliability of physique and character attributes inherent in their genetic heritage. Men have for innumerable generations and centuries been creating, through breeding selection, intentional and inadvertent, dogs that are massive and powerful, lean and swift or small and appealing according to the requirements of a specific service, be it hunting, guarding or lap dog. This is not selection in the classic evolutionary sense of random genetic mutations bringing forth novel attributes, for that process is much too slow; we have done this sort of thing over and over during the past ten or twenty thousand years. Little or nothing fundamental has been created by mankind; breeding selection brings forth latent attributes, present in the original canine genetic base even if not evident in the phenotype, to produce dogs with the potential at birth to excel in a specific role. The genetic potential is there, all we do is adjust parameters through breeding selection.

Over much of history selection was not in the sense of physically isolating the in season female and providing access to a human selected male, but rather a process of females breeding to the available dogs, as in a herding environment, and men selecting from the pups according to utility and preference which are to be valued,

protected and fed preferentially and which are to be treated less favorably, pushed out or selectively culled.

Thus we are able create specialist lines and breeds in relatively short time spans because the essential canine propensities and characteristics are and were latent in the rootstock, available to be brought forward and stabilized, be it directly from the wolf or through an intermediate species. As an example, all dogs have potential for instinct driven hunting or prey seeking, but this can be latent and submerged as in the Toy Poodle or active and intense as in the better specimens of the herding or police breeds.

Nobody trains a Mastiff and takes it to the Greyhound track, but people sometimes are foolish enough to train dogs of hunting breeds or lines whose progenitors left the hunting field generations ago or German Shepherds from American lines not tested in the crucible of the trial or service since the ancestors were imported from Germany, perhaps disposed of because found wanting in the home land. Yet the one is just as absurd as the other.

Sports cars and dump trucks are both vehicles with an engine, four wheels, or at least wheel sets on four corners, a steering wheel and a driver's seat. If you have enough money for fuel you can drive any of them to Las Vegas, at least if you start in North America. But if you go to the gravel yard and have the nice man dump a yard of road bed gravel into the side seat of your sports car or enter your dump truck into a sports car rally you are going to be disappointed, and all of the driving skill in the world is not going to make one bit of difference. The same principle applies to dogs. One can train the right German Shepherd to sort of point or retrieve, and an occasional Chesapeake Bay Retriever will pass a Schutzhund trial, but on the whole this sort of thing is going to be a lot of work, a little flat and mundane once the novelty wears off and very unlikely to provide the personal satisfaction of top level competition or service.

The typical domestic dog is in general smaller, less aggressive and much less suspicious than the wolf, all necessary adaptations for integration into human social structures. Skull and teeth are diminished in terms of relative proportions and absolute size. The creation of the police or protection breed demands that some of this be recovered, that is, there was a need to produce candidates in general larger, with the more robust teeth, a more powerful bite and more dominance and aggression than the typical house or farm yard dog. Such dogs are of course more expensive in terms of maintenance – require more food, room, exercise and discipline – than the village scavengers and thus by nature are less well adapted as pet dogs or dogs in the hands of the population at large. Most of the problems ordinary people have with police style dogs today have roots in these breeding enhancements creating the more robust and aggressive dog necessary for police service. This is the fundamental paradox of police dog breeding: in spite of all the propaganda in support of pet sales only limited segments of the population are willing and able to effectively deal with strong specimens from such breeds. This is why these breeds are so often emasculated and why they are inexorably divided into pet lines, replicas if you will, and those truly capable of high level police service.

By adapting lines of dogs through breeding selection as sheep guardians, herders or police dogs the useful propensities are selected for and enhanced and those that are deleterious are suppressed, first through selection and then through training and conditioning. But this is an age-old process, likely commenced informally by selecting, encouraging and supporting the better workers among random breedings and neglecting, pushing out or culling the less useful dogs, a process operational for generations and centuries before men began making specific breeding selections and then later the invention of formal breeds and studbooks.

When the need for police and military dogs in the modern sense was becoming increasingly compelling in the middle to later 1800s the use of the herders was not preordained, for they were still in the fields and pastures, did not yet exist as breeds. The various mastiff style dogs, massive estate guardians with roots extending back to ancient war dogs, would have been obvious candidates. Diverse breeds including Airedale Terriers and English Collies had their advocates and were worked with before the various northern European herders were even in existence as formal breeds.

But ultimately the tending style herders had the right stuff, the requisite combination of moderate size, agility, stamina, trainability, olfactory acuteness and especially the restrained aggressive nature necessary to defend with vigor, but resist being drawn away in the chase, leaving the herd or flock unguarded. The massive size and more overt aggression of the Molossers, the ancient style of war dog, was not what was needed for police patrol in expanding urban factory and working class districts at the turn of the twentieth century.

The emergence of the practical police dogs and the formal police breeds, such as the German Shepherd or the Belgian Malinois, was concurrent; these trends were opposite sides of the same coin. But almost from the beginning there was a disconnect, once formal breeding began increasing majorities of these incipient police breeds were being selected for the show ring rather than according to the actual needs of the police officer. The political structures – the establishments – of the breed clubs were increasingly in hands which saw money, prestige and power in show ring glory. These men, these brothers of Judas, were right about money, prestige and power; but they were and are wrong about police dogs.

Even today Malinois of the Dutch police community are often without formal pedigree – are what they do on the trial field and in service. This community is quite willing to blend in an overly aggressive dog to reinvigorate a line or a larger mastiff style dog for more size; the trials and training decisions inevitably serve to discard what does not contribute to working excellence. Just as the Scotsman with his Border Collie is not concerned about the purity of the lines, if it can herd, get along with the other dogs and is healthy and robust it is a Border Collie and all of the scribbling on kennel club record books means exactly nothing.

Just as the cowboy of the American west could be light or dark – Negro, Caucasian or Hispanic – dogs throughout time have been what they do, not who their ancestors were. The breed in the kennel club sense, with the closed gene pool, is a European invention less than two hundred years old, a twinkling of the eye in the time scale of genetic evolution. As can so clearly be seen in the plague of genetic defects and structural absurdities in the show breeds, and all of the medical screening tests, this is evolving into a self-limiting genetic fiasco.

American Doberman and German Shepherd advocates, particularly the show elements, tend to disparage what they like to refer as mongrels and half-breeds, such as the lines of the KNPV trainers. But the Doberman is a genetic disaster no longer even considered for serious police or military service and the useful German Shepherds are increasingly from working lines on the fringes of the mainstream, increasingly distinct from the show lines. This is true not only in North America but in Germany as well. Where thirty years ago most of the Schutzhund podium places were reserved for the German Shepherd, today the Shepherd predominates only in his breed specific trials; in open competition increasingly the Malinois is enjoying his lunch, and police departments, even in Germany, are looking to this Flemish breed.

Ultimately the pragmatic concept that a dog is what he does on the field, and especially in actual service, will prevail. The incessant demand for the exported KNPV dog worldwide, and the increasing price, demonstrates this and belies the kennel club concept of the purebred, the pseudo purity of the arbitrarily closed gene pool.

This does not mean that we cannot or will not have breeds such as the German Shepherd or Malinois with commonality of appearance and demeanor as well as working character, but it does mean that in the long term it will be necessary to bring whatever is needed from wherever it can be found into the lines to maintain vigor, working drives and genetic diversity. This is how men have bred serious dogs according to real needs for untold centuries, and will continue to do so in the future. The concept of the purebred and the closed gene pool and conformation beauty shows of the pseudo elite kennel clubs will wither in the face of practical reality, the performance of the dog in service. Mankind has always selected dogs according to performance and only later thought of the resulting body of breeding stock as a breed, and those in need of actual working stock will always select in this way.

In an earlier era of Greeks and Romans, before the advent of firearms and armored knights on horseback, the war dog as an actual combatant, where the power to bite and attack was the inherent reason for the dog, was at least to some extent of practical battlefield utility. At the turn of the twentieth century, about 1900, the police dog was introduced for urban patrol, often in factory or working class districts, where, especially at night, the police officer was alone, often unarmed, and out of touch, with only his baton for defense and his whistle to summon help. In this environment the patrol dog as a partner for the officer on foot patrol served primarily for his aggressive capability, to fight beside the officer if necessary, to change the dynamics of the street encounter. Even a pistol was neutral, could be taken and used against the officer; but there was no way to turn the well-trained dog, injury to his partner was only likely to enrage him further. There was very little mention of substance, drug or explosive, detection in this era, although the ability of the dog provide timely warning of an adversary through his olfactory capability, hearing or sensitive night vision was of fundamental importance.

Today the police officer patrols in a radio-equipped squad car with a high capacity side arm and often a virtual arsenal in the trunk or on the gun rack. Sophisticated computer driven portable radio networks extend officer communication beyond the vehicle to the streets and wherever else duty calls. The dog is confined in the back area of a SUV or squad car, and while available for officer security, and sometimes important in this role, it is no long the primary purpose. When the Navy SEAL team went in to take out Osama bin Laden they were heavily armed with devastating modern weaponry, the Malinois was not there to bite or fight, he was there to intimidate the civilian population outside the compound, to control the field of action with minimal risk or resources. In the Iraq or Afghanistan engagements, carried out primarily on the streets and against a foe indistinguishable from the civilian population, the primary function of the dogs was search, warning of potential adversaries and explosive detection. Winning hearts and minds among a civilian population much less sympathetic to the dog as a personal companion renders the use of aggression for intimidation and control problematic, a double-edged sword.

Beyond the technical advances in firearms, vehicle use and modern radio communications the scope of police responsibility has expanded enormously because of societal demands for the suppression of recreational drug traffic and the necessity of countering increasingly sophisticated organized crime operations with international reach and expanding terrorist threats, also sophisticated and international in scope.

Thus in modern police service the olfactory potential – the ability to search, track and for substance detection – has come to predominate, to be as or more important than the ability to fight and bite. For this reason it has become increasingly essential that these olfactory capabilities be emphasized in breeding, selection and training, along with the aggressive potential.

Police canine structural and character requirements have evolved over time, influencing training doctrine and methodology, breed preference and the

expectations of control and restraint of the dog. In the early years physical intimidation in support of the foot patrol officer was a primary purpose and in surveying surviving photos and descriptions we see a great deal of variation in size and appearance. The modern dog in general needs to be agile and small enough to get in and out of standard patrol vehicle configurations, healthy and durable enough to provide a reasonable service life in return for increasingly large investments in the candidate dogs and training, and stable and social enough to function in the presence of civilians, diverse police personnel and other dogs.

The predominance of the tending style herding breeds, especially those of the Low Countries and Germany, in contemporary police service is a consequence of the age old guardian role with the flock or herd, discipline in the aggression, the instinct to break off the engagement and remain with the livestock when the marauding predator withdrew and the olfactory competence inherent in the need for predator detection and seeking out lost animals. These powerful, agile dogs of medium size, developed over centuries in the livestock tending role, live on in spite of the fact that their age-old herding function has largely passed into history.

As we have seen, good police or protection dogs must be born and then made. The founders of these breeds have created, through a long process of incessant selection and testing, lines of dogs with good expectation of the robust, athletic physical form and moral attributes such as aggression and courage necessary in a serious police patrol style dog. Just buying any dog of a particular breed, that is, any German Shepherd out of the newspaper or off the internet, is not sufficient, indeed in many situations is little better than going down to the pound and picking out a dog who looks like he might like to bite.

The problem is that all of these breeds have many litters produced casually for profit, for show ring results or simply to make money. In all breeds – with the exception of the Malinois – the typical or average puppy is simply not very good because it is not out of a real working line.

And every puppy is a gamble, for some pups out of the best combinations are, through the simple random processes of genetic diversity, going to be born without the basic physiological make up to become good protection or police dogs. Much can be done by observing and testing the puppy, but this only enhances the likelihood of a suitable adult dog, does not produce certainty. At the end of the day, every puppy is a gamble, a roll of the dice and all we can do is load the dice in our favor. It is for this reason that many advanced trainers and police training programs purchase young dogs from fifteen months to two years of age, so that they can see a hip X-ray and other physical and medical conditions and can accurately evaluate the character of the dog. There is a much bigger price for such a dog, but generally it is a worthwhile investment for those with sufficient experience and need.

When my personal canine involvement commenced in the latter 1970s there were a number of breeds – including the Doberman Pincher, the Rottweiler and the Bouvier des Flandres – that had been intended historically as police and military service breeds, were generally perceived in these roles and had honorable service histories.¹ Although it was not obvious at the time, and advocates of each of these breeds did their utmost to preserve and protect the legacy, all were rapidly declining

¹ As a point of personal reference, I have been active in Schutzhund training for many years and have trained and titled one German Shepherd and numerous Bouviers, and also have observed other dogs and breeds in training over many years. Much of my commentary here will relate to my Bouvier des Flandres experience, but the same general trends have unfortunately prevailed for the other secondary breeds.

as serious police dogs in terms of number in service and the vigor and prominence of serious working lines.

In the early years of the American working movement, primarily Schutzhund, advocates for each of these breeds emerged, determined to create an ongoing American tradition and community, each represented at the foundation of the *American Working Dog Federation* in 1986. Over the years these early aspirations faltered, and these breeds are in decline as service and working dogs. Today's reality is that actual police dogs are German Shepherds and increasingly the Malinois, the others falling by the wayside.

It is true that there are individuals of these secondary breeds in service here or there, but these are fading exceptions, transient occurrences: often little more than a photo of a dog with a man in a police uniform, portrayed as a police dog but upon in reality not actually deployed or making street engagements. Sometimes trained dogs are donated, and there is more diversity among the single purpose detection dogs, a noble service but not the image projected by the concept of police dog. Today the American military deploys only German, Dutch and Belgian Shepherds – the Malinois – and most mainstream police programs worldwide have similar practices. No one could regret this more than I do, but at this point in history it is beyond any possible rational denial.

Although the focus of this discussion has been on the protection aspects of the dog it cannot be emphasized enough that the olfactory capabilities and willingness for the tracking, search or substance detection are also a product of breeding and must be part of the selection process, for there are 100 tracking points in Schutzhund and most police dogs must be capable of dual service, that is able to search and capable of substance detection. And it is fundamental that working willingness and obedience is the foundation of all useful work.¹

¹ This is not entirely true of the old style military sentry or guard dog, or the proverbial civilian junkyard dog, where acclimation to one handler and raw aggression was more or less enough, but such dogs and applications are now increasingly obsolete.

House Divided

Men have been drawn to fast horses and aggressive dogs for as long as they have ridden and trained; and the robust, masculine, powerful persona of the police breeds has always been immensely popular with large segments of the civilian population. Many of us were and are perfectly at ease with such dogs, taking on the responsibility to manage them, integrate them into a world of children, neighbors and others with ease, providing the necessary responsibility, control and discipline. Unfortunately, others find the reality more difficult to deal with than expected, sometimes creating serious problems of control and inappropriate aggression.

This is in a certain way reminiscent of the performance cars coming out of Detroit in the 1960s and early 70s, many virtually racetrack ready. But such cars were temperamental, quasi track level vehicles often less than entirely suited to the street, and in need of being driven with restraint and control, generally far below their potential. A few notoriously required as much time tinkering as driving to keep them running under the restraints of street use. This presented a problem for the automotive executives, for there was immense money to be made, and the aura of the performance models reflected to the entire brand; the auto company without a race car image was in danger of being perceived as a supplier of stogy sedans for the old folks, not a high profit margin business. Their solution was quite simple: bring out models with racing stripes, spoiler wings and evocative monikers such as *Gran Turismo*, *Charger* or *Grand Prix* but with only modest enhancements under the hood; they sold by the millions and were enormously profitable.

In a similar way many early breeders, with the entrepreneurial spirit of a Detroit executive, that is provide whatever will sell, began to produce softer, less demanding dogs for those desiring the persona but not quite up to the reality. Just as there is much more demand for pretend racing cars than real racing cars, there have always been many more homes for pseudo police dogs than real police dogs; and people ready to pay very good money for their illusions. The result has been the gradual division of these breeds into the serious working lines and the show and play lines for the less sophisticated and able segments of the public. The major exception to this has been the Belgian Malinois, which has never had substantial popularity as a companion or show dog.

Nothing could illustrate this debasement more surely than the AKC conformation ring, where pathetic caricatures presented as German Shepherds slink around the ring, hardly able to stand upright when brought to a trembling halt. Those attempting to train such dogs invariably find them deficient in the confidence, enthusiasm and fortitude that were the hallmark of the breed, as well as physically inept and fragile. Even though the German Shepherd is known around the world as the police dog, it is difficult to find a specimen from American lines capable of serving credibly in a police role, and they are no longer prominent at a competitive level in AKC obedience and other amateur sport venues.

Even more disturbing, over the past thirty years this debasement has also crept into the German show lines: rather than the Germans influencing American breeders to take on higher standards the American disease, spread by money, has corrupted much of Shepherd breeding in Germany. In stark contrast, the German Shepherds coming from the better European working lines, often from other nations such as the Czech Republic or Belgium, regularly produce individuals with the potential for excellence – exhibiting trainability, working willingness, aggression and confidence. The other breeds with a police dog persona, other than the Malinois, have a similar division, the primary difference being that none of them have a large enough pool of working dogs to easily find a dog to train and work. For this reason, the vast majority of serious, dual purpose police and military dogs today are Malinois, German Shepherds or a few Dutch Shepherds. Today such dogs are often without registration and sometimes of mixed background; the "purebred" concept has

increasingly lost credibility among such people, who are concerned with what a dog can do on the field or street rather than what is scribbled in registration books.

Many of us in the beginning find all of this contrary to simple common sense; quite naturally tend to believe that since the dogs look alike the character and the adaptability for work or training must also be present throughout the breed. Show breeders – European as well as American – encourage this mythology, minimize the fact that the working potential is primarily a function of the genetic selection which is greatly diluted in many lines. Their sales pitch is to the effect that if one is going to expend so much money and work in training he might just as well have a beautiful dog out of their champion lines, implying that genetic background is a secondary factor in police work and trial field success. None of this is true, but it is the foundation of the breed mythology, the sales propaganda. But it is a false foundation, a bubble of credibility as it were, and destined to burst as all bubbles do in time.

This propaganda is so insidious that most of us insist upon learning from direct personal experience. Many years ago, in the later 1970s, we bought a young German Shepherd male, mostly because like so many others I had grown up with a fascination with police dogs and because my wife Kathy wanted a better dog for obedience training. The dog came from a show breeder, at a time when we had absolutely no idea that such distinctions existed, and would likely not have believed had we been warned.

According to the plan we started tracking the dog, and I became the chief criminal suspect, to be searched for in the fields and woods. Normal tracks became much too easy and boring, and the dog tended to go fast, so I took to trying to throw him off by taking big jumps to the side, doing acute turns, going over fences and through ditches and anything else I could think off. The only rules were that I could not cross back over the track or walk on the rail across the ditch, because the dog would try to follow and slip off. The more I challenged this dog the greater his enthusiasm and drive became.

By the time the dog got the AKC tracking title he had become essentially my dog, so my wife gave him to me and went off to find the Bouvier she wanted in the first place.¹ So this young German Shepherd and I, knowing absolutely nothing, started going along on obedience training night, and the dog progressed remarkably. It was not all that long before we went to a big German Shepherd obedience trial specialty where, much to my surprise, we came in third overall and took home a huge trophy. We got the Companion Dog certificate with more impressive trophies, and shortly thereafter the dog died from Parvovirus, which we had never heard of, within twelve hours of the onset of symptoms; a truly sad story.

After a time we began to look for another Shepherd and began to run into some of the German working lines which were just beginning to be promoted. We were not convinced and went back to the original breeders for another dog, this time a much more expensive dog promoted in terms of high-level show potential lines.

But there was a problem. When we went off to training nothing happened, the beast was little more than dog meat in a fur sack. In obedience, on the recall, he would get up and sort of ramble toward you, had no interest in tracking and basically was a mild mannered, laid back, fairly dull dog. We were just looking into Schutzhund and the new Bouvier progressed rapidly, but the expensive new Shepherd would sort of bite like he was doing you a favor and could we please go home now. The Shepherd people in the Schutzhund club tended to show a pained

¹ I have never quite known how premeditated this was.

look on their face, which I did not really understand at the time, but to their credit said nothing negative about the dog, which was sold shortly thereafter.

What is the moral of this tale? We started to look seriously into lines and discovered that the first dog was mostly out of imported working lines, combined with some credible older American breeding, and the second dog was of prominent American show lines, meaning he was bred tight on then currently fashionable conformation winners.

This experience was our introduction to working dogs, and has served us well. Why was a novice trainer able to come in third out of a hundred or so German Shepherds at a well-established Shepherd obedience club with many experienced trainers? This was a real mystery, for I was a very ordinary novice as a trainer, could see that there were much better trainers at our obedience club. It took a certain amount of time to realize it, and even longer to believe it. But the fact was and is that the trainers at this specialty club were working German Shepherds out of American show lines, "pet quality" cast offs not deemed worthy of the show ring, competing with one hand tied behind their backs, and that their dogs were on the whole of very limited potential relative to dogs properly bred according to demonstrated comprehensive working potential. We, everybody in America, had so much to learn.

This is not an isolated instance, an accident of selecting the wrong dog, but rather a generality, the common experience. In reality the vast majority of dogs going into American police service today, regardless of breed, are imported or bred out of European working lines, mostly German Shepherds and increasingly the Malinois. The reasons for this are that these lines are much more trainable, energetic and reliable than dogs out of show lines, European or American. The most fundamental truth of working dog breeding is that when working intensity and willingness is not incessantly the predominant factor in breeding selection, it quickly withers.

When looking at the American registration statistics over the years, it becomes apparent that about twenty five percent of Americans seeking a purebred companion or family dog are looking for some sort of protection or police style dog to project the desired image. The German Shepherd, for many reasons, good as well as bad, was the beginning of the wave in the 1920s and is today still predominant almost a century later. While other breeds have come and gone the total has consistently been about a quarter of registrations. The Doberman Pincher sky rocketed in the 1970s and for a few years became even more popular than the German Shepherd. In the 1990s the Rottweiler surged, which went hand in hand with the decline of the Doberman.

On the whole the owners of these pretend dogs have been generally satisfied, found friends and neighbors sufficiently impressed and the dogs on the whole relatively easy to deal with. Breeders found that dumbing down and diluting the character reduced customer problems, made good business sense and made their breeding stock much easier to deal with. Nobody seemed to notice that they had been given replicas, like the macho man cars with racing stripes and nothing special under the hood.

Thus the vast majority of such dogs offered for sale in America today, the German Shepherds and other police heritage breeds such as the Doberman Pinchers or Bouviers des Flandres, are grossly deficient in working potential and character because they are bred without regard for character, or more often in fact selected for a low intensity character. Most dogs coming out of show lines, in Europe as well as America, are seriously deficient in the fundamental attributes of intelligence, working willingness, confidence and courage. This trend has become more and more pronounced over the decades, for in the 1960s and even a little later you could see

some common ancestry in the successful working and show line Shepherds, but not today. The breeders will of course promise you anything to make the sale, confident that the customer will not know the difference, in reality wants the image but not the reality.

Although this division has become much more pronounced in the past few decades, in reality it emerged in the very beginning as the conformation winners attracted the lion's share of the notoriety, prestige and money. Lest this be perceived as the attitude of an over the edge elite, consider the experience of those involved with Dorothy Eustis in the famous *Fortunate Fields* breeding and research program in Switzerland, leading up to The Seeing Eye guide dog program for the blind at Morristown, New Jersey. In their 1934 report, Elliott Humphrey and Lucien Warner, leaders of the program, comment:

"It will be remembered that at the turn of this century the German Shepherd as a breed began to split into two strains. The one produced beautiful dogs, including *all* the show winners. The other produced working dogs, including *all* the working champions. No dog of the championship strains born since 1909 has produced winners in *both* show and working classes. Thus the cleavage is complete." (Humphrey & Warner, 1934) p226

Even in these founding years, with the ringing words of von Stephanitz, still alive, demanding character and working capability, the prestige and money gravitated to those who did the minimum for work, sought glory in the politics of the conformation ring. Ultimately, excellent working dogs are only produced by those whose highest personal priority is working excellence. In the early years of the American awakening many, even I, endorsed slogans such as "We can have it all," "One breed" or "The Golden Middle." But thirty years of experience, during which my breed approached ever closer to the abyss, has shown these slogans were and are blatant falsehoods, for in the end such programs always lead to mediocrity, at the very best, in working character.

But in the world of real police service, mediocrity is not enough.

2

Age Old Skills



Belgian Shepherd, Malinois Variety

The transition from the age of agriculture to the age of manufacturing, the Industrial Revolution, dramatically altered the relationship of the common man to the natural world, resulting in the loss of touch with age-old animal husbandry skills. Breeding and training of horses, dogs and other domestic animals was marginalized: became hobbies or professions for an ever-shrinking minority rather than the skills necessary for ordinary men in their day by day lives.

Practical knowledge of animal behavior had been fundamental from the beginning, for hunting down animals to eat, and avoiding being hunted down and eaten, were essential skill sets. The dawn of agriculture and the domestication

of the dog, sheep and draft animals such as the oxen and later the horse meant that most men needed practical animal training, breeding and management skills in order to feed their family and provide security and shelter. Although the farmer and herdsman may have lacked a body of abstract theory and esoteric terminology, these people could and did breed, raise and train their horses, oxen and dogs as the foundation of their ongoing existence.

These skills were practical and heuristic, based on ways devised and evolved over time and passed from generation to generation, rather than the more abstract concepts of what we think of as science today. The development of modern science was pending the evolution of writing and mathematics; would unfold only slowly, for even the classic Greeks explained the world in terms of the four elements of earth, water, fire and air. This was little more than made up science in that it represented little real knowledge of today's chemistry, physics and biology; but as time went on men such as Newton, Einstein, Darwin, Skinner and Lorenz moved us forward to new levels of understanding. But the tentative speculation of these Greeks and other ancient peoples was not in vain; for it was from these beginnings that our current knowledge evolved. If we somehow manage to persist for another two millennia the knowledge of today will in its own turn likely seem quaint and primitive in light of new science.

On a theoretical or abstract level our understanding of human and animal behavior and cognitive function remains primitive; we train our animals using methods that gradually evolved over time because they work. But we cannot yet fully explain the underlying mechanisms of the process, the Schrodinger equation for the mind and brain remains to be formulated. We have only tentative understanding of the mechanisms by which the brain functions and our knowledge of the forces

shaping human or canine emotion, cognitive function and social behavior remains primitive. In reality, the sciences of psychology and ethology are at a comparable level to the classic Greek understanding of chemistry and physics.

Sigmund Freud is regarded as the founder of psychology, but today most of his concepts have evolved and been discarded or substantially modified, to the point that the original theory is on the whole repudiated. This is of course how science works; it is often an ugly and disorganized process. But the problem is that outmoded – and often simply wrong – concepts carry on in the conventional wisdom and are used in making bad decisions of public policy and personal action. Much of this sort of thing, reliance on outmoded science, carries on in practical dog training, selection and breeding even today.

Meager as our theoretical understanding of cognition and behavior is, on a practical level the common man – until the advent of the automobile and tractor a century ago – needed a working knowledge of animal training and use in order to earn his living and support his family. The stockman, herdsman and farmer needed to be able to effectively breed, select and train the domesticated animals life depended upon. Until a brief century ago our very existence was dependent on this practical animal husbandry skill, this ability to work the horse, oxen and dog. Thus in a sense those of us struggling to sharpen our dog training skills today are simply striving to recover the day by day knowledge of our great grandfathers. While their book knowledge of breeding and training may have been small, the practical hands on knowledge was immense, was in fact the legacy of the advent of agriculture several thousand years ago.

What we do understand is that all creatures, including both men and dogs, are born with genetically predetermined behavioral propensities, produced by the evolutionary process, to make the actions and reactions necessary for survival inherent, preordained behavior patterns. The fact is that these instincts or drives evolved over hundreds of thousands of years of hunter-gatherer existence, and continue to present training opportunities as well as cause problems in modern industrial and agricultural society. The inborn potential for aggressive behavior in most creatures, and especially pronounced in predators such as men and dogs, is a fundamental fact of our lives, as explored by Konrad Lorenz, and others. In order to master dog training, it is necessary to understand these drives and instincts as well as possible, for the training process consists primarily of harnessing them to produce the desired response and behavior.

At first glance, it may seem that comparing man and dog is a stretch, that man, with his technical knowledge, ability to speak, read and write, is an entirely different sort of creature than the dog. But the commonality is compelling, for both man and the wolf evolved in small, cooperating social groups to live by hunting and scavenging, often among much larger and more powerful predators. This is in contrast to the big cats – the tigers, cheetahs and leopards – whose solitary hunting resulted in much less interactive social structures.¹ The social dynamics of the wolf pack and the primitive hunter-gather human band have much in common; but also important differences.

As mentioned in previous chapters, even though it has become fashionable to think of dogs as directly domesticated wolves, this does not line up well with the

¹ The lions, which generally form long term, structured social groups, are the obvious exception. The purpose of the lion pride is thought to have more to do with social structure maintenance than hunting; perhaps because most lions live in an open savanna environment rather than the jungle, forest or mountain areas typical of the other big cats.

current scientific view that man probably did not directly domesticate the wolf at all but rather an intermediate and now no longer existent population, probably scavengers, derived from the wolf. The evolutionary process operating on these intermediate populations was substantial, modifying the innate behavior characteristics as well as the physical attributes. Thus even though it is still common to explain many things in terms of wolf behavior and the pack structure, it is prudent to keep in the back of the mind that this is a substantial oversimplification. The wolf characteristics referred to may turn out to be more remote in time and evolutionary distance and thus less directly defining of canine behavior than we have tended to believe.

On the other hand, proto dogs likely did come into existence at the emergence of agricultural man, adapting a scavenger role on the outskirts of emerging human encampments or primitive villages. (Some researches argue for an earlier relationship, some thousands of years prior in the age of hunting and gathering, but details on how such a population could survive, especially as regards obtaining enough food, are scant.) Whether these constituted a separate species is something we can leave to the specialists to work out.

What is key for us to understand is that some sort of intermediate stage in all likelihood did exist, and that the wolf heritage, though perhaps much more remote, was a primary factor in our ability to in turn integrate these prototype dogs into our social structure and create the domesticated dog. We are able to train our dogs because they have evolved on the edge of and then within our social structures. The fact that this occurred in a very brief time span – a few thousand years – means that all of these fundamental canine attributes were latent in the wolf rather than caused by random genetic modification and selection. As the dog came into existence as a truly domestic animal in full partnership with mankind, he took on many roles, mostly relating to defense or protection and various aspects of animal husbandry or herding.

The Right Stuff

Since dogs do not talk, at least to most of us, our understanding of how they learn and why they respond and behave as they do remains in the realm of observation, speculation and conjecture. It is true that scientists such as Ivan Pavlov, B.F. Skinner and Konrad Lorenz have taken significant steps in creating a science of animal behavior, but to a certain extent training remains in the realm of experience and art rather than science. Since there are major differences among breeds and individual dogs in willingness and inclination to learn and perform, those seeking a dog naturally want to select one with a high likelihood of success. Several key questions emerge:

- Why can dogs be trained at all?
- How can the best dog for a particular function be selected?
- What is the best training approach in a specific situation?

On a superficial level training can be thought of as a process of bringing a dog to the point where it will perform a task, such as working a track in a particular style or fetching an object and presenting it in a ritualistic way. In the process of creating a rote animal act for entertainment this is what it amounts to, but for those seeking useful service from the dog this trick for a treat approach is not and cannot be the essence of it, for you can teach parrots, pigs and even the big cats to execute rote stunts. The process of making the police dog or herding candidate ready for service is one of molding a relationship in which it can and will cooperate not simply in rote tasks such as fetch but in situations where the dog must show initiative and take independent actions, such as a building search where the dog must guard if the

found person passively stands his ground but engage if he flees or shows aggression. The police dog emerged from the herders, and the shepherd does not teach a young dog how to herd so much as he molds and directs the inborn instincts and natural propensities.

More particularly, since this is a book about police and protection dogs, the questions are why dogs are capable of human aggression and how to select and train dogs that can be effective, intimidating and useful yet still respond to and be under control of the handler. In his seminal popular book, *On Aggression*, Lorenz explores the complex evolutionary function of inter and intra species aggression and how it relates to territorial spacing, social order and breeding selection, and particularly how propensities and instincts can have extensions and consequences in venues beyond the original evolutionary purpose. (Lorenz, 1963) There is no chapter in the Lorenz book on teaching an obstinate dog to out, release the bite, but a broad understanding of the emerging knowledge of behavior can lend insight into the training approaches evolved in a heuristic way and handed down over generations. Lorenz accepted aggression as part of nature, and while deeply concerned about controlling its consequences in a modern world of war and conflict much more complex and hazardous than quarrels among hunting bands, he saw redirection, control and understanding of aggression as more realistic than trying to eliminate it.

In many important ways the key to selecting the right pup or older dog is the selection of the appropriate breed, that is, a Malinois or a German Shepherd for a police dog, a retriever such as the Labrador for duck hunting and one of the pointing breeds for upland game. This would perhaps seem obvious, for the original purpose of these breeds was supposed to be the breeding selection for the physical and moral attributes conducive to success in the particular line of work.

What is important but not at all obvious to the casual observer is that selecting a breed and randomly acquiring a pup is quite often an unproductive and ultimately frustrating experience, for the reality today is that most retrievers are not especially trainable for retrieving, many pointers do not instinctively point well and many German Shepherds falter at anything approaching real police work. The problem is that most puppies of these breeds are produced by those knowing or caring little about the work of the breed but rather are interested in accumulating the tin and plastic cups they hand out at the beauty shows, in being important in some way in an otherwise empty, dull and pathetic life or are simply lured by easy money. The consequence is that virtually all breeds with specific, serious originating purposes have today been split into diverging lines, virtually different breeds: the real workers and the popular AKC style companions and commodity dogs. The first indication as to the nature of a particular breeder is that virtually all serious working people, of any discipline, hold registry bodies such as the American Kennel Club in contempt.

An ongoing problem today is that sport systems, Schutzhund and French Ring in particular, are increasingly focused on things irrelevant to real police and protection applications, such as straight sits, artificial and exaggerated animation in heeling and whether during a search the dog looks into a blind experience has shown to be empty. Increasingly the rules force the judge to focus on trivialities rather than revealing the underlying functional nature of the dog. Close inspection shows that these things occur much more blatantly in systems under the thumb of conformation oriented organizations such as the FCI national European clubs, such as the SV. In general venues under the auspices of working breeders and trainers, such as KNPV and the NVBK, are much more practical, realistic and effective at producing truly useful dogs. This is a serious problem, for if the trial awards points for the wrong things, in the end the system, on the whole, will produce the wrong dogs.

So why, exactly, can you train a dog, induce him to obey? Is it because he loves you? Is it because he knows you will beat him if he does not? Is it because he hopes you will flip him a chunk of meat if he does?

Dogs adopt behavior patterns we condone and reinforce and respond to command because experience has created the expectation of desirable consequences for compliance and undesired experiences otherwise. These consequences must come to include the approval or disapproval of the handler as well as more tangible rewards or corrections, because in real service immediate response to the handler rather than the expectation of a physical reward is essential. The expectation of food or a thrown ball comes to be situation dependent, a conditioned response in a series of predictable exercises – useful in a contrived competition consisting of an invariant series of rote exercises but prone to failure in responding to asynchronous, unpredictable situations and commands under the stress of a tactical engagement.

In the harmonious relationship the sense of fondness and ease between man and dog are natural and desirable; these emotional and psychological bonds are in fact the basis for the utility of the canine. When this relationship is soundly established the dog is most content, and thus predictable and stable, in the world he understands how to control, where he can choose good things and avoid conflict through compliance. But there is nothing remarkable or unique about this: families, business operations and military units function best where there is established leadership, esprit de corps, and the tranquility that comes to the individual whose desirable actions lead to approval and predictable reward and undesirable actions cause discord, under his own choice and control.

Western culture, in particular the European, places enormous emphasis on the emotional bond between man and dog; as evidenced in innumerable stories, especially popular in children's literature, emphasizing and celebrating the proverbial love of a dog. Canine heroes on the movie screen or television perform amazing feats, come to the rescue of their master – typically a personable young girl or boy – on their own initiative with no evidence of training or a conditioned response. The one-man dog, emanating unconditional love, is the stuff of legend. The temptation is to conclude that love should be the foundation of service, that training is merely the process of forming and directing the natural emotional bond, that the natural and morally correct way of dog training is no force training through the guidance of the natural love of the dog. The dog is expected to obey you because he loves you. The problem is that the dog will naturally expect reciprocity, expect you to cater to his whims and desires, and avoid the expectation of undesirable responses, because you love him in return.

This is a false basis for serious training. Often the dog must respond to a command or situation in a way that is unnatural, that is food refusal or the call off in the long pursuit. Discipline, on occasion demanding sincere force, is necessary to produce a reliably trained dog for practical service as in police patrol or hunting. All training, including human education, is based on reward and punishment in balance, applied consistently according to the needs of the specific situation. Punishment is perhaps a harsh word, for many young men and woman understand that a lack of diligence in high school classes would lead to a life of menial, uninteresting work; and many dogs quickly learn – through effective training – that the correct response is also the most desirable. As an example, the release of the bite in the protection training is best taught from the beginning, where minimal correction will produce the release of the puppy tug. When the release command is delayed until late in the training, vigorous or even harsh corrections often become necessary. Good training strategy and practice will succeed with measured, humane corrections, but an element of compulsion is always necessary in serious dog training.

The emotional bond must be conceived and realized as the consequence of a good training regimen, not the basis of training. The spoiled dog without discipline will often exhibit affection and have a happy demeanor, and come to expect that the basis of love should be his doing what he pleases and you supplying the means. This is not dog training, it is handler training.

It is human nature to believe that one's dog loves them above all others, is the proverbial one-man dog, that there is a unique bond. The reality is that a confident, stable dog – the most useful kind – has the potential over time to transition to a new handler, just as many human beings can in time adapt to a new partner after the passing of a spouse. Dogs incapable of making such a transition tend to be flawed, seriously insecure.

The primary difference in the learning process between men and their dogs is that dogs live in a world of short term consequences and the human being from a very young age begins to be able to relate increasingly distant past incidents and their consequences to current behavior decisions. By the time the five year old begins school he is already much better at long term associations between actions and consequences than the family dog will ever be. In a good family situation you can sit down and explain behavior expectations to a five year old and in a meaningful way use reminders of prior experience to establish expected future behavior patterns. None of this is possible with a dog, everything must be taught without the use of language, a process that is awkward for the modern man where training a new family dog may be the first experience at dealing with animals, something that became routine experience for most children in a farm setting two hundred years ago. Much of the frustration, failure and abuse in dog training is rooted in unreasonable expectations on the part of the human that the dog should be able to make these longer term associations, and a tendency to inflict increasing punishment on a dog which cannot possibly have any idea of why he is being punished. Avoidance, fear and stress in the dog are the inevitable consequences.

Ethology

In the early twentieth century men such as Ivan Pavlov in Russia and Konrad Lorenz in Austria, famous for books such as *On Aggression*, pioneered the more formal study of animal behavior, beginning the difficult process of putting the age old arts of breeding and training on a more scientific basis. Pavlov, most famous for originating the concept of the conditioned response, was a physiologist primarily interested in the chemical and biological functions of life. His behavioral discoveries were made in a more or less incidental way, based on fortuitous behavior observations of animals undergoing experiments in his laboratory.

Lorenz spent a lifetime observing and interpreting animal behavior, as much as possible in a natural setting, with minimal outside influence and constraint. In doing so he played a key role in founding the science of ethology, defined as the study of animal behavioral patterns, particularly in their natural habitat, usually proposing evolutionary explanations. In addition to Lorenz, the discipline of ethology is associated with the name of his associate Dutch biologist Nikolaas Tinbergen, with whom he shared a Nobel prize in 1973. As the creator of popular books Lorenz has gained the lion's share of publicity and name recognition. Ethology has extended the concept of evolution – which had revolutionized our understanding of the physical form of plants and animals – to our understanding of the behavior, social mechanisms and organization of animal life, eventually lending insight into human social behavior. The ethologists based their concepts of human social and group behavior on the concept of this behavior as natural extensions of the evolutionary processes that created the behavior patterns of animals such as flocks of geese, the wolf pack and the territorial behavior of birds and animals.

For better or worse, the rise of ethology brought terms such as imprinting, operant conditioning, conditioned response and dominance into scientific usage, which has spilled out into the larger world, and in particular the discipline of canine training. Studies of the wolf pack social structure by men such as David Mech have brought concepts such as dominance and the so-called alpha wolf into the common vernacular of dog training, sometimes with misunderstanding.

Much of the value of the work of people such as Dian Fossey and Jane Goodall, who studied Gorillas and Chimpanzees respectively in natural settings in Africa, is that to the maximum extent possible they were observers rather than intruders, in the fundamental spirit of the science of ethology. This has led to enormous advancement in our understanding, for Chimpanzee studies on animals living in a cage and interacting primarily with graduate students have serious limitations that tend to be glossed over. Observations of wolves living in confinement have similar limitations, and have created misleading impressions which have extended into the mythology of dog training.

Unfortunately, it seems that many of the concepts of wolf behavior, such as the alpha wolf, had originations in studies of confined wolves in grossly artificial and unnatural circumstances. The problem is that just throwing unrelated wolves into a pen does not create a pack and the group dynamics is not that of a naturally evolving family group in the wild. To their credit men such as Mech recognized and corrected this, but it has proven difficult to push the genie back into the bottle. The modern view of the wolf pack in the wild is that of a family group with cooperation in hunting and rearing the typically single yearly litter. Pack cohesion and cooperation springs from a natural social dynamic rather than a "leader of the pack" inflicting a thrashing on lower ranking members from time to time to remind them who is boss. (Mech, *The Wolf: Ecology and Behavior of an Endangered Species*, 1970)

Dog training for police service was well advanced when the field of ethology began to emerge, and the reaction of dog trainers has varied. Many trainers have benefited by incorporating this new understanding into ongoing programs, but some, aspiring to recognition as dog-training experts, picked up the vocabulary and began to style themselves as authorities, sometimes to the extent of giving seminars and writing articles. But an elaborate vocabulary and a condescending manner without hands on success is in the long term fatal to credibility, and can create confusion in the minds of beginning trainers. The beginner is well advised to focus on the teaching of those with practical success, and incorporate more advanced and esoteric concepts as their knowledge, perception and confidence increase. The difficulty with this advice is of course that the beginner can hardly be expected to find and recognize "practical success." Getting started in dog training unfortunately involves some trial and error in identifying good teachers and mentors because most of those involved are salesmen on one level or another as well as trainers, seeking a following for success in business or advancement of personal reputation and status.

On the other hand it is a serious mistake to ignore developments in science and mathematics when they are not obviously practical. I recall as an engineering student regarding the theory of prime numbers as something of theoretical interest only, of no use whatsoever in what I thought of at the time as the real world. Fortunately, people in this instance more clever and wise than I went on to use prime number theory as the foundation of the security and encryption systems that are now the basis of secure internet communication and commerce, of a new commercial world order. All fundamental scientific knowledge expands the human potential, is important and valuable even when there is a lapse of time before practical applications evolve and are proven.

Reading the popular books by Lorenz such as *King Solomon's Ring*, *Man Meets Dog* and *On Aggression* is not likely to reveal a quick and easy solution to the

problem of convincing a dog to release the grip on the protection sleeve, but the insight gained might perhaps help a person to grow as a trainer and become better able to devise training solutions on the basis of fact rather than myth, certainly something more valuable than a trick to solve an immediate problem.

Ethology is not a monolithic body of knowledge with universally accepted principles, as a quick look at a list of well-known figures associated with the field will reveal, which includes: Raymond Coppinger, Richard Dawkins, Dian Fossey, Jane Goodall, Julian Huxley, Konrad Lorenz, Desmond Morris and B. F. Skinner. Rather it is evolving and changing; the books David Mech writes on the wolf in more recent years to some extent modify and extend his earlier work, which is how science is supposed to work.

Coppinger is a particularly credible and worthwhile source, for he spent many years training and competing racing sled dogs and then years in the field working with livestock guarding dog. Dirty hands, or hands that have been dirty, may not be fashionable in academic circles, but when seeking out wisdom and guidance for dog training they are every bit as essential as a sharp and agile mind.

The dog trainer should be open to new knowledge and concepts, but not quick to adapt the latest fad; respect both the accomplishments of the practical trainer who can win a major championship or consistently produce high quality police dogs and the scientist, perhaps oblivious to the practicalities of animal training, but making important and useful discoveries leading to better understanding of underlying principles. The cabinet maker of today often has enormous practical skill learned as an apprentice of an older master, but that does not mean that men of science – who could not put up a straight shelf in the kitchen for their wife – are not part of the process, for were it not for discoveries in chemistry, metallurgy and mechanics leading to novel adhesives, carbide tipped cutting tools and high speed steels the advanced techniques of the modern cabinet maker today would never have come into existence.

Thus, to summarize, canine ethology or psychology as a body of abstract knowledge has produced substantial advancement in our understanding of animal behavior, but is still at a relatively immature state. Academics such as the Coppingers, greatly aided by personal hands on training experience, are going beyond abstract observation and theorizing to make enormously interesting and useful advances in canine behavior and training. Dog breeding, selection and training still is and should be passed from generation to generation as practical or heuristic skill and knowledge, but progress comes from incorporating new insights and knowledge, as proven in practical training, from the emerging science of ethology and other academic research.

Terminology

Where the Greeks spoke of earth, wind and fire the canine world speaks of drives and instincts such as prey and defense, as well as other attributes such as trainability, aggression and sharpness. While these terms serve the ordinary purposes of education and discussion reasonably well, defining and explaining them precisely, devoid of subtle contradiction, is surprisingly elusive.

Dog training is even today much more art, based on heuristics, than science and has evolved an elaborate terminology used as often to paper over mystery and confusion as to express objective knowledge. But unless one chooses to start over at the beginning and attempt to rediscover the practical knowledge developed over the many centuries of domestication it is necessary to deal with the existing terminology, flawed as it may be, in order to benefit from the accumulated knowledge. In the era when most men learned to breed, train and manage their farm animals working

alongside fathers, grandfathers and uncles terminology and written knowledge was secondary, but today many of us take up dog training or horsemanship devoid of the knowledge and perspective once common to most ten year old boys, making us much more dependent on written and verbal instruction.

Scientists and medical professionals have always had a certain propensity to create elaborate terminology as a cover for the fact that they are in fundamental ways as confused and uncertain as the rest of us. By adapting a mildly condescending attitude to the layman and parading the esoteric vocabulary they are often given credit for much more real understanding than they actually have, which is exactly the point. In a similar way, the armchair canine experts, equipped with an array of buzzwords, can create the facade of knowledge far beyond any real ability to deal with actual dogs. The advent of the internet has taken this tendency to pretend knowledge to an entirely new level.

Over millions of years the evolutionary process has brought forth powerful inborn desires and natural propensities to hold and protect territory, enforce social structure and hunt down prey animals as a source of sustenance. These primitive inborn tendencies, created by nature to provide food and social stability to the predator population, have come to be referred to as instincts or drives. Dog training is largely a matter of understanding, often more on a heuristic or practical level than theoretically, and harnessing these drives in order to produce individual dogs with desired, useful trained behavior patterns and responses.

The intrinsic nature of these behavior mechanisms is the subject of ongoing scientific debate and investigation and no two sources are likely to agree entirely on all of the details. Many things, such as fear of snakes or heights, are believed to be inborn, while others are learned from parents, siblings or others at very early ages. But even if one were to understand the operational principles perfectly, the tremendous variation among individuals would still make training difficult and a matter of experience and capability gradually accumulated in a heuristic way.

Serious dog training discussions thus feature terms such as prey drive and defensive instinct; which tend to be casually bandied about, used to explain every behavior incident and to substantiate any and every point of view. The novice sometimes picks up on this, acquires a few buzzwords and soon comes to think of himself as ready to enter the discussion on an equal footing with the experienced trainer, especially as an anonymous internet expert. Indeed, a line of patter full of references to the social structure of the wolf pack and terms such as prey or defense and an occasional comment about a sharp dog can make one a player in many internet discussions with very little real experience or knowledge to back it up. This can have the effect of inhibiting further progress in understanding and in training, as a litany of buzzwords takes the place of real knowledge, gained through work and experience.

What, exactly, is prey drive or the defensive instinct? The answer, disconcerting as it may be, is the same as the one Alice heard from the Queen of Hearts when she entered Wonderland through the rabbit hole: these words, and most of the terminology of dog training and behavior, mean exactly what the speaker thinks they mean at the moment he utters the words, which varies from person to person as well as time to time, even in the same discussion. Nevertheless, an appreciation of the commonly used terminology, imperfect as it must be, is a prerequisite to learning about dog behavior and training.

On Aggression

In the introduction of his seminal book *On Aggression* Konrad Lorenz defines aggression as "the fighting instinct in beast and man which is directed *against*

members of the same species." Lorenz goes on to explain aggression as an evolutionary instinct which emerged as the foundation of social order, that is territory, social rank and sexual preference. An important function of aggression is maintaining separation, spreading a species over large enough individual or group territories for sufficient resources to maintain life, particularly food. (Lorenz, 1963)

The concept of aggression as a phenomenon within the species, a mechanism for social order among the same sort of animal, is fundamental. Predators hunt in order to eat, and aggression within the species is an ongoing mechanism of social order as when a pack of wolves repel outsiders or two rams bang heads in order to gain sexual precedence. Violence between different species in nature beyond hunting for food, or efforts to repel the predator, is unusual because nothing important for survival is at issue and all violence risks life limiting injury.

The immediate problem in a book about police dogs is that most of our discussion of aggression concerns the use of dogs to pursue, engage and hold men, a different species. The resolution is to think of the dog as being integrated within the human social structure, which makes the aggression against other men an extension, beyond nature, a consequence of the original intra species social integration.

Aggression is a fundamental aspect of most creatures, but its manifestation must be limited and restrained in order to maintain social order but yet not lead to the extinction of the species through unnecessary violence. In the relentless world of natural selection animals fight only out of necessity, that is, to preserve territory for feeding and to produce and raise offspring, for mating precedence, to drive off other animals from a kill to obtain food, or to defend a kill. Most engagements are in a sense ritualistic, almost always broken off short of death or serious injury when the outcome is clear, or when one participant retreats in order to live for another day. Aggression is necessary for life, but social mechanisms must minimize actual physical engagement in order to preserve life from one generation to the next.

So aggression does not and cannot mean a propensity to fight on any pretext, with nothing to gain, to go out on hunt and destroy expeditions with no specific purpose like some young male specimens of homo sapiens prowling bars with an obnoxious attitude to provoke a drunken fight just for the fun of it, or to establish the aura of masculinity.

Inherent aggression as the evolutionary produced mechanism for establishing territory, rank order and sexual preference and the incessant need to hunt down food are the twin foundations defining the behavior and character of all predators and their interactions with other creatures. This is true of both dog and man, and the integration of canine social structures and instincts into the human relationship brings an entirely new level of subtlety and complexity to the relationship. There is a tendency to think of aggression as applicable primarily to the protection or police pursuit and active search aspects of canine training, but to do so misses the fundamental point. Instinctive aggression is an inherent driving force in all creatures, including man, and comprehending and adapting training procedures and philosophy to these primitive instincts and drives is fundamental to all training. In a broader sense, beyond the world of dogs and dog training, a modern comprehension of the role of aggression in human behavior is fundamental to the understanding of history and the social order as a whole.

Thus through the work of Lorenz and other ethologists we have come to understand that aggression is a fundamental aspect of all animal life, and is especially important and complex in predatory species such as dog and man. In creating the police patrol dog, mankind has redirected and controlled the canine aggressive potential to his own benefit, substantially modifying and directing these natural instincts and capabilities through breeding selection and ever more sophisticated training methodology. Effective police dog training thus must be based

on this knowledge, both formal and academic as established by men such as Lorenz and even more fundamentally the practical, instinctive knowledge that has evolved over the thousands of years of the human-canine partnership.

There is a significant range of aggression in individual dogs of the protective breeds. At one extreme is the very aggressive dog that is only truly safe in the hands of his trainer, who must be aware 100% of the time of his surroundings so as to avoid the wrong situation. Such a dog can be difficult in a home and is often a kennel kept dog. These dogs can often be titled by an experienced and capable handler, but are not generally high scoring, depending on the trial system, that is may do well in KNPV but less well in other venues.

The obvious question is: who needs it? The short answer is that such dogs need to be maintained as a resource in the overall breeding pool, that aggregate aggression tends to diminish over time and a reservoir is necessary to revitalize a breed. Many dilettantes come to desire such dogs, perhaps as an augmentation to their masculinity, but placing such a dog in the wrong situation can be extremely bad for the general public perception of a breed as a whole. In breeding there is sometimes a misguided tendency to breed tight to such a dog, on the principle that there can never be too much aggression. In reality there absolutely can be too much aggression, and great care is necessary in such breeding.

As with most complex systems and attributes, there is a general Gaussian distribution, the famous bell shaped curve, for aggression. The super aggressive dogs mentioned above are in the upper tail of the curve, and as you move toward the mean there is a sweet spot of dogs more aggressive than the mean but not extreme. This is where you find the better patrol dog, competition and breeding candidates, and companion dogs for those with the experience and discipline to deal with them, that is, such dogs can be placed in carefully selected general homes.

A broad middle range of dogs is multipurpose, that is, probably capable of a title, possibly capable of realistic police service (depending on the needs and capability of the department) and a good fit for a large number of homes. One more level down, we find is a broad spectrum of dogs that, while only perhaps capable of a title, and not a good police or serious guard candidates, make reasonable companion animals in a broad spectrum of homes.

Below this you find the dogs significantly below average, which might show aggression based on fear. Such a dog may bite, and may be dominant in a situation with a weak handler, but is on the whole not of much use and in many situations potentially dangerous. Some inexperienced people think such a dog is much more than he is, and mistakenly think of this type of dog as good police or protection candidates. A few of these dogs sometimes need to be put down because they are potentially dangerous and a liability to those placing the dog as well as those receiving it. But on the whole these are mostly easygoing dogs which should be placed in the less experienced or demanding companion homes. While such dogs always are produced to a certain extent, breeding selection favoring such dogs, often with an eye to the pet market, is generally not a good thing.

There are a few dogs only minimally compliant to command under duress, perhaps growling at a low level and subtly threatening the handler without going to the point of overt aggression, and who may lash out in an unpredictable way. Such dogs are referred to as passive aggressive. Unless this attitude reflects fear and uncertainty which can evolve into confidence and cooperation through low-key training, not always a good bet; such dogs in general make for frustration and disappointment in the training. In general I dislike such dogs; will discard one for training and particularly from a breeding program.

Handler Aggression

One of the fundamental issues of protection dog training is bringing forth the aggression against the appropriate adversary while at the same time maintaining the leadership of the handler in restraint and control of the dog. Powerful, aggressive dogs are naturally those destined to rise to the top in the social structure, which means that it is the most natural thing in the world for them to seek to dominate the handler, to perceive themselves as boss and be in control.

These strong dogs may show a strong inclination to dominate the handler and respond to a correction with an escalating show of warning or aggression. This must be dealt with in an appropriate way so as to bring control to the relationship but leave the hardness and aggressiveness there for the situations necessitating it. Achieving this balance with a good dog is the most fundamental skill necessary for successful police level training.

Beyond the initial training, this can arise as an issue when a new handler is introduced, as for instance when a dog is sold or a police or military dog needs to be transferred to a new handler. More than one handler has been severely injured when, upon taking over a previously trained dog, assuming that a bold and forceful manner will quickly bring the dog under control. A team is a partnership, and the partnership does not exist in the beginning, but must be built based on mutual confidence and respect rather than brute force. Ignoring this can produce a beaten down, ineffective dog or a dog that will, when the moment presents itself, show dominance by attacking the handler.

My style of training is to seek to become the dog's leader, but by a thin margin, that is, be able to direct his work and make the decision to out or restrain without diminishing the dog's potential to be dominant over the decoy. One must lead, but the gap between the leader and the working dog must be narrow enough to allow the dog initiative and the ability to make the decision to respond to the unexpected situation. This can be a serious conflict between the needs of the sport trainer and actual police service, for all trials are highly structured and the tendency to train for the pattern for sport success through compulsion and pattern repetition is in many ways counterproductive for effective real world service. The highest scoring sport dogs are not necessarily the best for practical service or as breeding candidates, and understanding this distinction is an important mile stone on the journey to real knowledge of working dog training, application and breeding.

Predation

Cat and mouse is an age-old game with serious purposes and consequences. The kitten is presented with an injured mouse to play with so as to bring forth the inherent chase instinct, necessary to grow up as an effective predator, and thus secure the food necessary to survive and carry on the species. There is such a strong element of play in this that cat and mouse has become a descriptive phrase for many of the games that humans engage in; and as the phrase implies there can be a great deal of aggression and maliciousness in game playing at any level. Most kittens or pups are born with the natural instinct to chase what moves and pounce upon it if he can, and this is the essence and foundation of prey drive. Notice that a rubber ball or wad of paper will incite the instinct; it is the motion that causes the chase reaction, not hunger or the nature of the object. Growing up is becoming an effective enough hunter to feed and reproduce, a process that may take months and years under the guidance of the mother or pack, and a great deal of trial and error. But the inborn prey instinct – present in the beginning – is the foundation. Predatory instinct is what makes the terrier kill a rat, a fox run down a rabbit and a wolf pack run the deer or the moose.

Trainers and breeders tend to think of canine protective behavior – "prey" and "defense" – as a simple one-dimensional continuum. We speak of a dog being predominantly one or the other and make reference to a dog's fundamental character as in a 60/40 ratio of prey to defense. In reality this is an enormous oversimplification of complex processes. The so-called prey drive is a manifestation of a whole sequence of instinctive predatory actions culminating in the consumption of the prey as food. The defensive process, fight or flight, is also a complex set of interactions. These are distinct processes with different objectives – food for sustenance and avoidance of becoming the meal of a predator. They are related in that the instinctive defensive actions evolved to avoid being eaten and also for reacting to the threats of same species aggression relating to territory, sexual preference and social rank.

Most dogs will chase a cat that runs, and if he can catch him will kill him. But if the cat turns and takes a stand the dog may back down in confusion, for flight was the immediate cause of the chase and when it ceases the drive may abate. In this scenario the dog begins in a classic predatory sequence of instinctive responses, but when the cat turns there is a decision point, he will likely carry through and kill the cat, but he may switch into a defensive mode where fight or flight become the options. This dramatic shift of mode will reveal much of what the dog is made up of, which was the rationale for the flight and then turn in the original Schutzhund courage test, now lost on the altar of political correctness.

This inborn instinct to chase and kill is fundamental in all predatory animals, so much so that the conventional wisdom is that herding originated as an adaptation of this complex instinctive process. Modern gun dogs, the retrievers and pointers, were also created by modifying the instinctive predatory process through selective breeding, as were the herd guardian and police breeds. When a dog bites and shakes an arm or a sleeve, it is natural to see this as a manifestation of this age-old hunting instinct, in which the shaking motion serves to break the back or neck.

In evolving the police breeds we selectively adapted elements of both the complex primitive predatory process and the defensive instincts which evolved to evade predation and cope with inter species aggression. Just as the enormous diversity of our canine breeds – from the large and ponderous Mastiff to the petite Poodle – was and is potentially available in the foundation genetic resources, the moral and character attributes of the police breeds were also incipient, brought forth by man through selective breeding. Since this process takes place over a few hundred or thousand years, much too short a time for random genetic mutations to be the driving process, we know that we are merely rearranging – emphasizing and suppressing – what was present in the primitive ancestral gene pool.

Furthermore, although the primitive fight or flight response, present in all animals, prey as well as predator, can elicit an aggressive response when the animal perceives itself as cornered, the more advanced police dog functions, such as building searches and suspect pursuit, are based in the complex suite of hunting instincts and responses.

Ethologists such as Coppinger¹ envision the predation process as a complex sequence of instinctive actions, which they refer to as motor patterns. In the broadest sense, applicable in a general way to all carnivores, the hunting or prey process is enumerated as:

¹ Much of this discussion draws on Chapter 6 of the Coppinger book, which I strongly encourage the reader to purchase and study. (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001)

orient > eye > stalk > chase > grab-bite > kill-bite > dissect > consume

In this scenario some motor patterns or responses may be omitted or emphasized as adaptations to specific natural situations according to diverse factors, such as terrain and attributes of the predator and prey. In general the big cats excel at the eye and stalk because, while very fast in the beginning, they quickly tire. If a leopard cannot creep close to his prey, he is probably going to go to bed hungry. The wolf not so much, the pack quite often is able to run its prey down over much greater distances.

In a similar way, men create lines and breeds of dogs for specific purposes through selective breeding and training, suppressing or accentuating the instinctive predatory motor patterns according to need and circumstance. Perhaps the most important feature of this for the practical working dog breeder and trainer is that the adult configuration of these patterns, although dependent on genetic potential, is established and solidified through the imprinting process. Herd guardians have virtually no eye or stalk propensities because they are an integral part of the flock during the imprinting process, and individuals separated during the very short imprinting time become useless as guardians. The famous eye and stalk of the Border Collie are the most obvious manifestation of this, and illustrate how fundamentally herding in its diverse forms is just different, imprinting selected, manifestations of the ancestral predation process.

As Coppinger so eloquently points out, this process is the essential resolution of the old nature versus nurture controversy, not only are nature and nurture part of the process, opposite sides of the same coin, a huge component of the necessary nurturing takes place during a few, critically timed, days and weeks as the imprinting process. There is only ever one chance to get this right. The nature aspect of this is essential; the propensities must be incipient in order for the imprinting process to draw them out. Attempting to raise a Border Collie as a guardian and a Komondor as a herder can only, inevitably, ruin two perfectly good dogs.¹

The orient phase of the predation process is the seeking, actively searching or lying in wait, of a potential prey animal. The eye phase, exemplified by the eye contact of the Border Collie, is a challenge process where the commitment to the actual engagement commences.

The stalk is the attempt to surreptitiously approach as close as possible; this is critical for the big cats because they are incredibly fast over a short distance but of limited range, they will either succeed over a few hundred feet or fail. The stalk is perhaps less critical for predators with less speed but more endurance such as the wolf. Primitive man evolved a persistence or endurance strategy in which he selected a victim such as an antelope and simply pursued it, kept it in sight or tracked it, until it ultimately succumbed to exhaustion, at which point the man could simply walk up and finish the kill. The stalk probably plays little or no part in this particular hunting mode.

The chase is the essence of the hunt, but according to the physical structure of the predator – the tradeoff between initial speed and endurance – may go on for a few seconds or many hours. Even mankind has adapted the primitive predation process to his evolutionary needs and opportunities. Because of the long distance efficiency of bipedal running as compared the quadruped gaits of common prey animals human beings in warm climates evolved persistence hunting, in which they

¹ Those extending this reasoning to our school systems will likely become branded as politically incorrect, but any amount of money poured into school budgets cannot overcome emotional and developmental failures over the first two or three years of life.

simply chased a chosen prey animal until it was brought down by heat exhaustion. In this instance, the eye and stalk phases of the predation process are of minimal importance as compared to the chase. Similarly, grab or kill bites are not critical stages when the target animal is prostrate due to heat exhaustion.

The grab-bite and kill-bite may be essentially combined in a powerful predator such as a tiger, where the kill is complete within seconds of the end of the chase, but may be distinct as in a wolf pack worrying a cornered or exhausted moose. The dissect process is the tearing open of the carcass, or the still living animal, for consumption. Some hunting dogs, such as the pointers, carry the process only through the eye and stalk process, the chase being the flush as the hunter's command. The retriever will persist through the grab-bite, but must return to the hunter and present the prey, omitting the killing, dissection and consumption phases. In terms of hunting dog terminology, the retriever must be bred and trained for the soft mouth. Hunting dogs which actually persist through the kill phase often are bred to cease at that point, that is, not tear open or begin consumption of the carcass.

In the police dog the orientation phase is the search, as in a building or field. The eye and stalking process are essentially suppressed in breeding and training, and the chase should end in a clean grab-bite or grip and stop short of further injury in a kill-bite, that is, the dog should not thrash the arm or leg or slash and maul.

In evolving working types or formal breeds man has through selective breeding enhanced or diminished, often to the vanishing point, various stages of this sequence into or out of his working dogs. The Border Collie style herder has great emphasis on the eye in order to intimidate and control the sheep, and might in the extreme go to a grab-bite, but actually killing a sheep is seriously faulty. (Apparently an occasional killing of a sheep is in some circumstances seen as necessary for discipline – unavoidable collateral damage – but the habitual sheep killing herding dog is going to be culled.) In hunting the pointer must not take the next step beyond stalk, that is chase, for that would cause the birds to flush and deny the hunter his shot. Prior to the introduction of firearms, and against predators or vermin even today, some dogs are bred to complete the cycle and actually kill the prey. The ideal police dog would halt at the grab-bite stage, which is why shaking the sleeve or suit in a way reminiscent of breaking the back of a prey animal is faulty. Much of the working specialization of our various breeds can be convincingly explained as emphasizing or breeding out various combinations of these motor patterns.

This prey drive sequence is fundamental to protection training, is what initially motivates the distance engagements, for the merely defensive component of the canine nature provides no reason to pursue an adversary at a distance. In nature it is almost always the instinctive – and correct – response to break off the engagement when the adversary disengages and retreats, permitting both to survive for another day. In a certain sense, when man – through breeding selection and training – brings forth dogs willing and excited to pursue and engage a human adversary at a distance he is creating something beyond the normal bounds of natural behavior.

It is entirely reasonable to think of as the dog willing to go out into a strange area, away from his handler, and attack an adversary which is not a direct threat to the dog, the handler or the home territory, as driven by this primitive hunting or prey drive. And there is an element of truth in this. But, as we shall further explore under the heading fighting drive, there has to be more to it than that. For the natural canine hunts to eat, and thus prefers the easy quarry, the old, the sick, the injured. When the prey, such as the deer or other large animal, shows strength and the ability to defend the wolf with effective survival instincts backs off and seeks easier prey, because it is better to go hungry for a day rather than risk the injury that could

end life, that is prevent the wolf from hunting. Prey drive seeks out the weak and the fearful, but will tend to disengage from the quarry that shows strength because natural selection favors such discretion. Thus the effective police or patrol dog must have an extra dimension, beyond the natural hunting or prey drive, which enables it to go out the distance reliably in order to engage the foe willing to turn and aggressively defend.

Play objects

Prey drive is too often thought of as simply the propensity to chase a ball or moving object, but this is an overly simplistic a view. Many sport competition dogs will respond endlessly to the thrown ball, Kong or Frisbee, and many trainers use this as a reward and enthusiasm or drive building mechanism. On the other hand, our first Bouvier had very little ball or chase drive, and in fact would, on the second or third throw, take the object off into the bushes and bury it, yet was a dog very aggressive against a man at a distance. This was more than thirty years ago, and this was not especially uncommon in other breeds in that era. Although it has become fashionable to breed for chase object orientation, many contend that this is motivated by sport success and question whether it is, in the long term, sound breeding for actual police service dogs.

The words play and prey describe slightly different focus points on the canine temperament and response spectrum, and it is in general quite difficult to define the difference in an unambiguous way. But I am convinced that there is a difference and that it is important: the individual dog, including dogs with great practical potential, will show significant variation with some excellent dogs exhibiting strong desire to chase balls and Kongs, but others, perhaps of even greater real potential for serious protection work, will show little or no object interest. There are today trainers who will proclaim a young dog a bad candidate because he does not react in an expected way, is not a replica of a previous dog or fashionable methods. But often the failure here is in the simple minded, one method trainer rather than the dog, and sometimes a good dog is discarded because a trainer is limited in scope, unable to deal with the diversity of the working canine. The tendency of sport to increasingly reward simple prey drive is a serious problem in the police dog world today.

Many dogs with serious real world potential exhibit relatively little ball or object drive, yet properly trained will pursue a human adversary at an extreme distance from the handler, gaining power and speed with every step. This is clearly not a response to fear or the need to defend, and is not an extension of an object associated play drive. Clearly, something more fundamental, and in a sense unnatural to the wolf, is in play here. Just giving it a label, calling it prey drive or fighting drive (as we shall discuss in a moment) does not really bring fundamental understanding of the underlying phenomena.

Fight or Flight

When the cat arches his back, puffs up and dances sideways, to appear as large as possible, when the cobra spreads its hood, when the dog growls and postures, when the gorilla pounds his chest it is not to precipitate a fight or violence, but rather a strategy for self-preservation, a tactic to make an adversary stand down, to avoid an engagement where neither side has anything to gain proportionate to the risk of injury or death.

To this point we have focused on aggression, the inter species mechanism of social order, and predation, the process of hunting in order to secure food for sustenance. For the individual animal this produces an inherently hostile world where survival is never a given, where the danger of becoming a meal, starving because of failure in the hunt or being marginalized within the species social structure is ever present. A complex set of instinctive defensive mechanisms have arisen through the

evolutionary process to foster survival in this inherently dangerous world. Effective protection dog breeding and training requires comprehension and manipulation of these defensive instincts, bringing them into a useful balance with social aggression and predatory drives and skills.

Fear

Fear is good. Fear is fundamental to the nature of dog and man, is an essential survival mechanism. The defensive drive, flight or fight, is rooted in fear, and serves well when an unexpected and potentially dangerous encounter arises. Everyday garden-variety fear creates caution, is that quiet warning in the mind not to leap to the unknown without reason. Most men and dogs will instinctively step back at their first interaction with a rattlesnake, experience inbred fear and react in a life preserving manner. Those that do not back off may not live to have offspring, the primitive evolutionary mechanism creating and reinforcing this fearful propensity.

But fear is the ultimate double-edged sword. It can be excessive, and the successful creature must have the capacity, courage if you will, to overcome the natural and necessary fearful reaction and act according to the situation. While the confident, aggressive dog will certainly bite, and with proper training can be a very useful partner, excessively fearful dogs also can and will bite, and can inflict serious damage. But the fear driven dog is unpredictable, will perhaps run if he can see a way out and will respond to imaginary or perceived threats as well as situations eliciting appropriate fear. The fear driven bite is likely to be unpredictable, slashing and erratic rather than full, persistent and confident.

Failure to perceive early on the difference between the confident, aggressive dog and one biting out of fear can lead to confusion and bad decisions in training and breeding selection. While careful training, home field advantage and use of the training helper as the trial decoy can often produce a title, this cannot create what is not there, more dog than that present in the underlying genetic potential. If the newly titled dog is in the hands of a sport trainer and goes home, never to see a real engagement or procreate, no harm is done. But if the title becomes the basis for placing the dog in actual service, serious negative consequences could be the result. Under the stress of an engagement against an especially aggressive foe unrestrained by sport rules, and unforeseeable circumstances, the dog may fail to engage or persist in his attack. If such a dog is used for breeding rather than service the potential consequences can be even more serious, for the progeny are likely to inherit this weakness, projecting dire consequences far into the future.

There is a great deal of bluff and posturing in the unconfident or fearful dog, and he often learns that by putting on a show people will keep their distance, giving him an element of control over his fear laden world. But when pushed beyond his level of comfort, his ability to retain his composure, the tendency is to slash out, or run, thus becoming unpredictable or dangerous. It is the responsibility of breeders and trainers to differentiate between real and apparent strength and courage and make deployment and breeding decisions accordingly.

The useful protection dog is the confident dog, in which experience and training easily predominate over primitive fear in realistic working environments. Proper schooling, with escalating aggression on the part of the helper, incorporating novel threats to acclimate the dog to the unexpected, teaches the dog that he can and will prevail, gradually creating overpowering confidence. Such a dog will release promptly on command because he is confident that he can dominate, and go into a strong, assertive guarding posture. The correct bite is controlled and focused through the confidence of the trained response and the handler is able to bring the attack to an end with a verbal release command because of this same confidence.

Experienced trainers come to understand that clever training can often partially mask or redirect deficiencies in a dog's inherent character. All protection training is

to some extent directed at overcoming fear; allowing the dog to react predictably and usefully in spite of fear. The problem which arises with the marginal dog is that he may be trainable to the point of doing well in known situations, such as a trial, but revert to a fear driven response in the face of an unexpected, new situation. This is a difficulty in all training, for it is impossible to foresee and prepare for everything the dog might encounter in a working environment.

Thus while a reasonably confident dog can be acclimated to overcome natural fears, there is always the potential, in any dog, that he will revert to a fearful reaction in a new situation. This is why it is important that the handler understand the nature of his dog rather than just a few commands, so as to the extent possible foresee and correctly respond to such situations.¹

Defense

Defense is a fear driven response to a perceived threat, directed at self-preservation of the individual and thus ultimately the survival of the species. When the threat is real the defensive mechanism can often preserve life, but when the threat exists only internally, in the mind of the dog, it can seriously interfere with other life sustaining instincts. In nature fighting, as opposed to hunting for food, the predation process discussed previously, needs to be a last resort because of the ever-present risk of death or a crippling injury. There is often the need to defend food as in a carcass in the face of a determined scavenger, for sexual precedence or to maintain group or individual territory. But when these ends cannot be achieved by bluff or posturing discretion often is the better part of valor, a creature can survive many engagements where backing down was not really necessary, but a single injury can be life ending if it renders an animal unable to hunt the food necessary for survival or evade ever present predators.

In dog training this instinct to defend, referred to as the defensive drive, is a fundamental aspect of the canine instinctive response which needs to be called upon and used, but in a most cautious and restrained manner. Old-fashioned area protection dog training, that is, the proverbial junkyard dog or the primitive military sentry dog, tended to rely primarily on building up fear in the face of intruders and in breaking down the inhibitions of aggression. Control, other than the ability of the handler to place, remove and care for the dog, was not a requirement. This primitive form of training is less and less useful today, where there is emphasis on control and restraint in non-threatening situations, in developing discretion in the dog. (Incessantly decreasing cost of electronic surveillance equipment and expanding legal liability have played an important role in the reduced demand for such dogs.)

As we have seen, defensive drive is based in fear. Fear is a powerful and necessary response to what is perceived as a serious threat. In men, dogs and most other advanced creatures there are powerful physiological reactions, including the release of adrenalin into the blood stream. In this state, created by nature for literal fight to the death or flight for survival, creatures are capable of physical and mental feats otherwise beyond their potential. There are risks and costs to this process, which is why in nature it is reserved for the most serious circumstances.

The old fashioned junk yard dog training, where the dog learns through negative experience that every human being except a few handlers are the enemy, to be feared, to be attacked preemptively at every opportunity. Just as this style of dog has become much less common because of the liability, cost and the emergence of video and electronic surveillance, this mode of training, based in fear and unthinking,

¹ This is of course not limited to dogs; none of us can be certain how we will respond to a sudden, fear provoking situation until we come face to face with it.

preemptive attack response, is also rapidly becoming obsolete, along with the old fashioned pillow suit.

In protection dog training, creating a situation that will routinely bring forth a pronounced defensive reaction in response to purposefully incited fear is a double-edged sword. It can make a dog bite, and bite hard with great determination. But the extreme manifestations of fear reaction are reserved by nature for the emergency, and the routine inducement of fear for a desired response in training, in a trial or on the street is difficult to produce reliably, stressful for the dog, the handler and the helper and fundamentally unreliable. Fear can also make the marginal dog run, and once the dog runs this may become the natural response, easier each time it occurs.

The defensive instinct is in play at some level, and necessary, in all protection work; but it needs to be used minimally and with restraint, in an ancillary and supporting role rather than as the primary motivational force. In society today, it seems reasonable that those dogs that can only show aggression in response to purely defensive instincts should not be trained at all; and furthermore that for the primarily protective breeds such dogs should not be bred.

Although our current explanations of canine behavior have been focused on the instinctive aggression, predatory and defensive processes, further insight has proven necessary. The traditional two dimensional world of prey and defense is overly simplistic; there is much more to modern police service dog behavior than a simple extension of the primitive instincts to hunt for sustenance or respond to a perceived threat out of fear.

Fighting Drive

In the primitive natural state, the wolf and other predators have no reason, no survival related purpose, to go into unknown territory and pursue a creature presenting no immediate threat, aggression with no specific survival function. In contrast the inherent purpose of the police service dog requires that, when the situation arises, he must at human direction pursue and engage a man at a significant distance or search deep into a large, dark, unknown natural area or building such as an empty store, factory or warehouse. Clearly something else is in play. The term fighting drive has come into use to describe this propensity to pursue and engage at a distance.

Some hold to the view that this is an unnecessary complication; that the dog pursues at a distance out of simple prey drive. The conventional response to this is that the prey chase is opportunistic, usually ending in failure because the prey is too fleet or physically threatening, that something else must cause the dog to persist even when the fleeing adversary turns and becomes aggressive.

In my view the foundation of fighting drive is inborn, instinctive aggression as understood and described by ethologists such as Konrad Lorenz, taken to a new level through breeding selection. The dog running hard to engage a distant man with great vigor is driven by impulses and desires akin to the competitive human athlete, as exemplified in our inherently aggressive sports such as American football. In both instances, these drives are beyond the necessities of survival, as explained in terms of prey and defense, are extraordinary in that the fulfillment of or reward for the aggressive desire to strike and engage is the action itself, the spirit of winning, which we have come to call fighting drive. The line between fighting drive and stupidity can be thin; many football players suffer grievous, accumulating brain injuries casting a deep shadow over the remainder of their lives.

Competitiveness is an essential aspect of the police canine character, and a fundamental component of the development is to bring forth and solidify the latent

potential through successful training scenarios. The inborn drive to dominate in the struggle for food, to mate, that is, for sex, for the dominant role in the social hierarchy were necessary attributes in the successful wolf and other predators and carry on in the work of today's service dogs. In this context, it seems reasonable to believe that the wellspring of fighting drive is to be found in the inherently competitive nature of the individual dog, aggression instincts necessary for survival and prosperity over the centuries, enhanced through breeding selection.

In the longer distance aspects of dog training as a protection activity the hunting or prey drive will generally create the initial pursuit of the adversary, and if the man continues to run and allows the dog to take the sleeve or bite the suit while fleeing these instincts may be sufficient. But when the distance closes and the man turns and responds with aggressive postures and actions other drives must come into play.¹ Most hunting engagements by the predator in nature fail, because the prey has strong survival skills and instincts of his own, and because it is better to disengage than risk injury. Primitive defensive instincts are fight or flight under attack, and thus not the source of the drive to engage at a distance where there is no direct threat.

While a potential for fighting drive must be latent in the ancestors of the dog, in a certain sense it can be thought of as the creation of man, as a necessary extension, through breeding selection and then training, beyond those drives evident in nature to create something novel and useful, the modern police service dog. Wolves do not occur in nature with the massive size or foreshortened muzzle of the larger mastiffs; but the genetic potential was there for man to bring this structure forth through breeding selection. In a similar way, the potential for what we call fighting drive was latent in nature and brought forth by man through breeding selection for our specific needs and desires. Indeed, this enhancement of the capability for the strong distance attack is an essential aspect of the creation a police patrol style breed. While this may not be the drive initial training is based on, may not appear until later in the training process, it is the fundamental defining attribute of most if not all serious high-level protection, that is aggressive search and pursuit dogs.

Fighting drive has been a topic of incessant ongoing debate and discussion among dog trainers. Some dismiss it as imaginary and simple obfuscation, people making things more complex than they really need to be. Others see it as the Holy Grail, the key to the understanding of the protective canine. Real understanding of what we have come to call fighting drive requires that it be perceived as a manifestation of primitive aggressive instincts, solidified and directed by man to his own ends through selection – breeding decisions made through training, evaluation and testing.

Hard science is based on experimental verification. Albert Einstein pondered the working of the physical universe and devised a theory and a set of equations now known as general relativity. One of the consequences was the prediction that light is subject to gravity because of its energy created mass, and that the path of light from a distant star passing close to our sun would thus be deflected, causing the star to appear to shift position. This was unforeseen, but when the observations were made the deflection of light by gravity was verified and Einstein's theory was vindicated.

Prey and defense are simplifications, some would say over simplifications, of science increasingly well established through the work of Lorenz and the other twentieth century ethologists. Fighting drive is a little bit more difficult to relate directly to this body of knowledge, but perhaps one useful way of thinking about it is

¹ This is why the elimination of the turn on the dog in the Schutzhund courage test seriously lessened its selective value from a breeding point of view.

as an extension or enabling mechanism for the maintenance of territory in the sense of Lorenz.

Concepts such as "fighting drive" are not hard science in that they make specific, verifiable predictions; there is no experiment to be performed to prove whether or not it actually exists as an objective reality. My view is that it is a useful concept that presents a plausible model for observed behavior and brings into play the idea of behavior manifestations to some extent created or at least enhanced by human selection in breeding, useful in the overall understanding of the police dog in terms of breeding and training. Whatever your personal views might be, the terminology has come to be in general use, which one must be aware of to understand and participate in discussion of canine behavior and training.

More Terminology

Hardness and Sharpness

The term hardness refers to the dog that is very strong in the pursuit and bite and, particularly, responds to overt aggression on the part of the adversary with even more aggression and drive. Hurt the hard dog and he will come back to hurt you more rather than disengage. Hardness is in a general sense the opposite of shyness in the protection work. In some contexts the hard dog can tend to insensitivity to handler correction or even evolve into handler aggression. Usually the dog very hard in fighting the helper is also less sensitive to physical correction, and if not brought along with care can become handler aggressive. Although positive only training, denying the need for vigorous physical correction, has become quite fashionable in certain circles, hardness as an aspect of aggression is a necessary aspect of police dog breeding and training, and sometimes a hard and aggressive dog requires a hard and aggressive edge in the boss to establish a useful working relationship. This is usually minimal when an experienced, competent trainer begins with the pup or young dog, but the older dog who has been allowed to discover that most people will back down will from time to time require more severity. This requires great care, for losing a confrontation with a dog can produce serious injury to the man and an even greater training problem.

For this reason, with very hard dogs it is important to introduce the out early and with emphasis on the concept that the best way to the next bite is the quick out and intense guard. A dog with extreme hardness can be very difficult to force to release and once the dog becomes habitually disobedient to a release command the quick, clean, reliable out can be very difficult to achieve. The guys hanging around at the club may be impressed by the dogged refusal to release, but judges in a trial or court of law are much less likely to be understanding. I personally tend to like most hard dogs, but that may be a flaw in my character rather than a rational response, for the hard dog, not brought up carefully, can be the difficult dog. In a world where many dogs are trained and then sold to military or police departments, the potential down side is that a really hard dog assigned to the handler not quite psychologically tough enough to deal with it may become a liability; sometimes it is wise to be careful of what you wish for. Military dogs for instance may have several handlers in a career, and it is unlikely that all of them will be very experienced and dominant.

The sharp dog is the very intense dog, very quick to bite. This tends to be the more defensive dog, rather than the high prey and / or play dog. The sharp dog sometimes has a tendency to be an insecure or fearful dog and such dogs are often perceived by inexperienced people as desirable police or protection dogs, which very often is not the case at all.

On the other hand, a sharp, confidently aggressive dog can be an extraordinarily impressive and effective dog in the right situation, in the hands of a particularly good

police handler for instance, and there are trainers who find such dogs exhilarating and just plain fun to work. The problem can come if the dog needs to be taken over by another handler. If, for instance, there were to be a police administrative decision to transfer the dog where the person making the selection was not an experienced canine smart person, the dog might wind up in the hands of an inadequate new handler. This is not necessarily a matter of an inferior or poor handler, but just a mismatch between the dog and the handler. Such a dog has the potential to be aggressive to a new handler if the acclimation and training adjustments are not done in a careful and confident manner.

For me, personally, a little bit of sharpness goes a long way, for a moment's hesitation between the perception of the threat and the engagement of the dog can give the handler the moment he needs to rein in the dog and avoid biting the wrong person in the wrong situation. Of all the aspects of the canine nature, sharpness is perhaps the most aptly compared to the double edged sword, and most of us would tend to prefer slightly less sharpness to a little bit too much.

Sharpness combined with inherent insecurity or fearfulness, often referred to as the sharp-shy dog, is a volatile and dangerous combination. Such a dog will be prone to make quick, perhaps unprovoked, lunging attacks, and then retreat ready for another strike, or to run. This dog is in general most undesirable and unless handled very carefully can be quite dangerous. Such dogs are difficult, and if these propensities are pronounced should in general not be trained or bred. Sometimes it becomes necessary and appropriate to put such a dog down.

Confidence and Sociability

Confidence and sociability are often thought of as synonymous, different words for basically the same thing, but there are important distinctions. The confident dog is relaxed among strangers because he is not inappropriately fearful. He may or may not be social, that is, may or may not want or accept touching or familiarity by strangers. Confidence and sociability in the adult dog are more than any other aspect influenced by the initial imprinting in the critical puppy time periods. Some people seem to think that severely restricted socialization will make the pup more aggressive, a better protection dog. My opinion is that this is exactly wrong, the aggressive drive is there or it is not, and all of the isolation in the world will just accentuate fear and the lack of confidence of the inherently inferior dog, creating a dangerous rather than useful dog. A good strong dog benefits enormously by appropriate early socialization; he does not have to become everybody's friend, but he does have to maintain distance and composure in diverse social settings. As a personal experience, a couple of my most aggressive and strong Bouviers were everybody's friend if approached with a little bit of good sense, almost anybody could pet them and play with them. I like that in a dog, it just made my life a whole lot easier, and these dogs would flip into drive in a flash when seriously provoked or in the presence of the helper. Other, equally good, dogs will only accept social interaction as a trained response under the insistence of the handler, which is an important reason for the careful matching of handler to the propensities of the dog.

The extreme social dog, whose world is full of friends he has yet to meet, usually is perceived as very confident and is often especially desirable for the typical companion dog owner. The protection dog, on the other hand, lives in a world where there are people other than new friends, where an element of wariness is necessary, where being social to the extent of total acceptance of strangers is indistinguishable from stupidity.

A certain level of confidence, with a touch of fear to create awareness of danger, is generally a good thing, but being confident is different from being nice or social. History indicates that Attila the Hun was supremely confident, believed absolutely that when he conquered the entire subjected population was at his disposal, the

woman for his sexual gratification, the children to sell into slavery the men to slay or enslave according to his pleasure or convenience. Bullies in all contexts of life are generally confident, because they exhibit this behavior in an environment where experience has shown it to be effective, where they are personally invulnerable.

Most serious trainers will deal with or prefer a moderately or less social dog which is hard, strong and otherwise controllable.¹ We need a dog that will become suspicious and alert when there is a potential or overt threat. Suspicion and reserve can be thought of as the opposite of sociability, and the overly social dog will often not take his protection work seriously enough. Thus sociability in the protection dog in moderation is in general a desirable attribute. The social dog is one at ease among strangers and in new and different places. He can be walked in a crowd of strangers on a loose lead and his aggression is selective and controlled. Most handlers do not want strangers to pet or interact with their dog and discourage such manifestations of what are perceived as sociability in the companion dog.

In the service dog context, the confident dog is the secure dog which will tend to react only to a clear provocation and will retain composure and demeanor under stress. Where the overly sharp dog will tend to the preemptive bite, which may be inappropriate, the confident dog, appropriately raised and trained, will give a strong warning and hold his ground. The overly sharp dog may be lacking in confidence.

Sociability is perhaps the most desirable attribute in the family pet where the owners want a safe, easy to deal with dog and do not expect any protective functionality. Thus the highly social dog is the best dog in the vast majority of situations. But this level of sociability, to the point where a real threat does not alert the dog, is inappropriate for dogs of the protective heritage. Sociability is especially subject to the imprinting process, is influenced and established in the critical stage of puppy development, most influential approximately from when the eyes and ears open until about sixteen weeks or four months.

Confidence is to some extent genetically predetermined; while appropriate puppy imprinting and socialization are desirable in all dogs, some are born with a predisposition for inappropriate fearfulness and insecurity which can only be covered up, cannot be corrected by socialization and training.

Intelligence and Trainability

From time to time there are articles in the press ranking the relative intelligence of various animals or the canine breeds. This is mostly nonsense, for at root it relates to subservience, the willingness to perform tricks for praise or a treat, rather than fundamental differences in cognitive power. Dogs such as the sight hounds or herd guardian breeds often rate poorly, but this reflects the nature of their work, often devoid of human interaction. The herd guardian is bred and socialized to be stoic and devoid of responsiveness to human beings, to be concerned primarily with preserving the herd from predation. The Bloodhound is single minded and plodding, unresponsive except to the scent he is following, but on the trail he brings new meaning to the word dogged. The retriever or pointer is bred for and knows his work, and is unlikely to be flashy or animated in the view of the casual observer, unaware of the actual requirements and function. Dogs bred and selected for independence and reliability may appear lethargic because thoroughness and persistence are the essence of their functionality.

¹ I do not personally prefer a less social dog, but will deal with it when the other aspects are of value. One of our females came back to us as inherently unsocial, but was a good breeding resource. Sometimes this comes from bad early experience rather than genetic factors.

Intelligence in the canine is difficult to define and quantify because our tendency is to relate it to human modes and reactions, largely verbal in nature, and thus not entirely appropriate to understanding the dog. Bernie Brown, well-known Golden Retriever AKC obedience trainer, has commented that you need a fairly stupid dog to put up with the nonsense in this rote sport. There are dogs capable of associating several dozen words with various toys and fetching the object from another room on verbal command, and thus applauded and perceived as very intelligent. But what is the practical utility of this sort of thing?

Intelligence is in a certain way a detriment in the trial, for it can lead to initiative and independent action, and the judge busily detracting points for disobedience rather than awarding extra credit. The dog who moves on the long down to rest in the shade demonstrates intelligence and initiative, but the judge is still going to take ten points and the handler is going to be frustrated, and perhaps a little bit angry. This is why they are called the obedience trials rather than intelligence tests, and is an implicit indication of what we really value in a dog.

Trainability, the willingness to understand and comply with handler commands, is a vitally important aspect of canine application, but is, contrary to common perception, different from intelligence. The Border Collie, working in response to intense handler interaction and command to maneuver the flock, appears to be and is extremely intelligent, and ranks at or near the top of most lists. But the herd guardian dog, often working alone without guidance, surely takes on more real responsibility.

Wolf pups, even taken from the nest and intensively socialized, with no contact with adult wolves, are extremely difficult to train, unreliable and treacherous. It is the adaption to the human social structure, where compliance with human direction and command is essential, where trainability was introduced. In actual fact, by observation of problem solving ability, such as defeating cage and fence latches, wolves are in general much more intelligent than dogs, that adaption to the human social structure was in a fundamental sense a dumbing down process. (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001)

Thus trainability, the willingness to accept a human leader while still maintaining the potential for aggression and event initiated reaction, is something added, or at least greatly enhanced and emphasized, in the domestication process as wolves, directly or indirectly, evolved into dogs. So, in a fundamental way the price of trainability and compliance, working willingness, has been the diminution of real intelligence, in the sense of independence and mental initiative. (Sometimes our school systems seem to emphasize trainability and rote memory; perhaps we are also "domesticating" our children.)

In creating the police patrol dog, we needed to regain a measure of these ancient wolf traits, that is, breed larger, more aggressive dogs with larger teeth, more powerful jaws and more real intelligence. Yet more and more our sport trials demand rote obedience rather than initiative, for reasons of political correctness and the commercial salability of pets. Perhaps there is something wrong with this picture.

Nature and Nurture

Comprehending the principles of animal behavior and molding it through breeding and training has been fundamental to the evolution of mankind at least since the dawn of agriculture. This process began on a heuristic, practical basis as breeding and training knowledge passed down hands on, father to son. As this practical knowledge struggled to become science it came to be understood that behavior has two fundamental, underlying determining mechanisms, that is, innate inbred propensities and potential present prior to birth and then the subsequent life

experience and training. This in and of itself is not a great revelation, for every child born in a village or on a farm throughout most of history came to understand, at least implicitly, that it would be extremely difficult to train one of the barn cats in the same way as one can train a dog or a horse.

Thus the science of ethology sprang from this age-old desire to comprehend the roles of nature and nurture, to understand to what extent animal behavior is determined by genetic predisposition and what is the role of nurture, that is upbringing and training. The work of Lorenz and other ethologists in the middle twentieth century produced fundamental new understanding, providing an evolutionary perspective to common behavior mechanisms such as aggression and predation. Nurture is not just the aggregate life experience after birth, but is a process with distinct time periods where experience and learning profoundly mold the behavior and function of the animal for the remainder of life. In the days and weeks after birth the brain continues to grow and undergo permanent changes, hard wiring as it were, strongly affected by the associations and experiences of the the young animal. This is the imprinting process. At very specific times in the early life cycle, which vary markedly with species, windows of opportunity to mold future behavior shut, forever limiting or expanding the potential of the animal to function in the world in which it finds itself. This is of enormous practical importance in breeding, training and utilizing dogs of all kinds and purposes; for the most fundamental truth about dogs and work is that the excellent working dog is based on the foundation of proven working lines and in equal importance the character solidification in the first weeks of puppy life. Formal training of the young dog is based upon and limited to the potential of this foundation. Poor training of the older dog, if not actually abusive, can often be overcome; but a poor foundation in terms of breeding lines or inappropriate puppy experience can never be entirely rectified. In particular, the pup born in a kennel and denied sufficient human interaction and other experience before about sixteen weeks is irrevocably different from his sibling benefiting from extensive, well-founded socialization

Everyone involved in the selection, training and deployment of police dogs comes to believe that consistent success requires dogs from the appropriate breeds, and further that the lines must be those recently verified as to working character. American police departments no longer make public appeals for donated dogs and generally are not open to accepting offered donations. The reason for this is that police trainers have come to realize that the dogs must be both born and then made, that it is difficult and cost prohibitive because of failure rate of training dogs not out of established breeding lines. The less obvious reason for such care in candidate selection is that the dog with inappropriate socialization and imprinting in the critical weeks is forever limited in ways that cannot be known from physical appearance, the pedigree and to some extent even in initial hands on character evaluation. Donated dogs are available because someone does not want them, and poor breeding or permanent character limitations because of puppy socialization are likely reasons for the dissatisfaction.

Thus a primary contribution of Lorenz and his generation of ethologists is the concept of imprinting and the critical stages of social development. The original work of Lorenz primarily was with geese and other creatures, but the principle of imprinting has proven to be general to most species. For the domestic dog, the original, formal observations were a result of studies and experiments commencing shortly after WWII at the Jackson Laboratory in Bar Harbor, Maine, associated with names such as Fuller, Scott and Marston. (Scott & Fuller, 1965)

The reason for this profound long-term effect of the socialization process is that the actual physical structure of the brain itself is altered. As Coppinger notes:

"At birth a puppy has essentially all the brain cells it is ever going to have during its whole life.

If the puppy brain has essentially the same number of cells as the adult brain, how can it grow ten times bigger? The answer is that brain growth is almost entirely in the connections between the cells. Of all the brain cells present at birth, a huge number are not connected or wired together. What takes place during puppy development is the wiring pattern of the nerve cells. Some nerves make their connections spontaneously, driven by internal signals. Some nerves actually "look" for a muscle to attach to. Other connections are motivated by external signals. External to the brain, that is. For example, the eye tells the brain how many cells it needs to have in order to run the eyeball. Big eyes need more cells than small eyes, and thus animals with big eyes tell their brain to connect up a greater number of cells for eye function.

It is not only the size of the eye to which the brain must accommodate, but also the activity of the eye. The brain accommodates to the eye by growing the appropriate connections for both its size and its activity. The brain of a puppy raised in the dark doesn't make as many connections. A puppy that is raised in an impoverished environment has a smaller brain. It has the same number of cells, but not as many get wired together." (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001) p.111

For the domestic dog, the critical period of social development is from approximately two weeks, the opening of the eyes, to sixteen weeks; providing socialization and broadening experiences in this time period is fundamental for a pup to grow up into a well-balanced and trainable dog. (The fact that the wolf has much different, generally earlier and shorter, critical periods is a fundamental reason for the difficulty in taming and training.)

The work of these scientists is of course significant and most commendable, but for centuries before Lorenz and his associates won the Nobel prize for reporting these discoveries illiterate shepherds knew that for the pup to become a successful herd guardian he must almost from birth live with, sleep with and associate with the sheep, suckling along with the lambs on a ewe. The pup is often separated from the mother, littermates and human contact and totally immersed in the life of the flock, living exactly as a lamb. Puppies from even the best lines of working herd guardians are virtually useless for this work if they are raised to four months without intimate contact with the sheep and the flock.

While the window of socialization and imprinting opportunity for the pup is from eye opening or about two weeks to sixteen weeks, the wolf is significantly different. The wolf pup becomes capable of socialization and imprinting at eye opening or 13 days just as the dog, but the window is open for a much shorter time, ending at about 19 days at the onset of hazard avoidance behavior. Thus while the domestic dog is open to socialization for about 16 weeks, the corresponding period in the wolf is less than a week, which is a further indication of the difficulty that is encountered in attempting to tame and train a wolf.

There is a general tendency to think of nurture in terms of formal training, but this misses the mark in fundamental ways. The profound transformation in the brain of the pup in the first weeks has a long term effect on the nature of the adult, either setting the stage for successful training or at the extremes of early deprivation producing an adult essentially un-trainable and of little practical use.

Just as we have found that it is very difficult to educate children entering school at five or six years of age without the benefit of good nutrition and a foundation of

knowledge, linguistic ability and basic acceptance of deportment fostered in a stable early home life, training the year old dog is very difficult if he is not healthy and has not been properly socialized in the critical period and grown up in a supportive environment, with strong human bonds and relationships.

These principles of performance based breeding selection, proper imprinting in the critical periods, good nutrition, exercise and social development in the younger pup set the stage for the training of the maturing working dog. This has to a large extent been understood practically and intuitively over time, but the accumulated knowledge of scientists, breeders and trainers over the past century has given us the potential to breed and train better dogs capable of greater service to mankind.

Unfortunately, the AKC and FCI purebred show dog world encourages exactly the opposite of good breeding practice, that is, breeding on the basis of show ring politics and superficial aspects of appearance, raising pups in a kennel environment often devoid of appropriate socialization, and little or no training of the adult dog, which often lives out a dreary existence in a kennel run. As a consequence, police agencies increasingly look to sources, such as KNPV lines, in which breeding selection is practical and performance driven, often with little regard for pedigree or registration.

3

Dog Training Foundations



Although this book is not a training manual, knowledge of the historical evolution and conceptual basis of training, and current practice, is fundamental to an understanding of the breeding and deployment of sport and work dogs. These breeds cannot be fully understood and appreciated without hands on training; not everything can be learned from a book.

Obedience

Obedience is the essence and foundation of all training, the rest is mostly a matter of getting out of the dog's way and letting the instincts and drives nature and generations of breeding selection have created fulfill their intended purpose. You cannot teach a dog how to track, you do not even really know how a dog tracks; all you can do is teach him the desired procedures, to respond in specific ways and adapt particular styles. Even much of this is superficial, to satisfy the judge in competitive venues rather than actually having to do with finding something of importance in and of itself.

Protection dog training is essentially a matter of letting the good dog out, overcoming the inhibitions of early training and day-by-day life so as to respond with spirit and power when confronted by an adversary. Strong grips become second nature through proper sleeve or suit presentation and crisp outs evolve as the dog learns that a quick, clean out is the sure path to the next bite. But the instinct and drive to engage and fight must be there, cannot be created through training.

In police or military service obedience, especially under stress and distraction, is a prerequisite, but only meaningful to the extent that it provides a foundation for the scent detection and protection service rather than as an end in and of itself. For these reasons obedience must not be heavy handed or intimidating, which diminishes or interferes with the initiative and enthusiasm for the actual working service. These are important considerations in the evolution of obedience training foundations in drive building, with correction remaining, but as a necessary component to be applied minimally and with finesse rather than a heavy hand.

Although protection applications and scent work are covered in subsequent chapters, they must not be perceived as separate topics; this is about dog training, and while the focus is on formal obedience the most important principle for police work is that one trains dogs, not tracking, obedience and protection as separate, stand-alone skill sets. Obedience only finds meaning and value as the foundation of effective search, substance detection, pursuit and apprehension functions which are the essence of police canine service.

To train a dog one must establish psychological distance, become his leader rather than his friend; just as in raising children the parental role must be exactly that rather than friend and companion. For these reasons, many serious trainers keep their dog in a kennel run, at least through the initial training, rather than the home in order to maintain the correct relationship and focus on work as the best part of life. (Often an older or retired dog is in the house and the young buck is in the kennel.)

Heavy handed compulsion will perhaps create a certain level of compliance, and is the usual method of managing slaves. This is effective for human beings because they comprehend long-term cause and effect, know that the overseer will have them lashed to a post and whipped until the back is raw to achieve compliance. Dogs can also to an extent be trained in this way, but it is ineffective, unpleasant and can be dangerous in that at some point some dogs are likely to become handler aggressive. You never get more than grudging acquiescence and you live with the fear that the dog may revolt at the most inopportune moment. The other end of the spectrum, the so-called purely positive approach, has its own set of flaws and is discussed in detail later.

Ultimately all training comes down to a balance between compulsion and reward; it truly is as simple as that. Compulsion very seldom needs to be a matter of harsh correction, and if the foundation of the relationship is strong and well maintained most dogs do quite well with minimal corrections, to the point where they are quite subtle, perhaps not even discernible to the casual observer.

Over the years different training methodologies have emerged and been touted, sometimes reflecting real differences in philosophy and process but often merely to differentiate and popularize a particular trainer, seminar or book. The consequence is that in the beginning each of us must sort out vigorously defended training methodologies and philosophies, each, like a religion, promising the one true way. Naturally other training regimens are portrayed as producing disobedient, out of control dogs living as they please or despondent, surely dogs under the cruel yoke of repression.

Obedience training in the broad sense has two somewhat divergent aspects. One is training the dog to respond to commands or specific situations, such as an escaping prisoner, with the desirable action, in this case pursuit and restraint. The other is less specifically obedience in the command and respond sense but rather related to establishing desirable behavior patterns as in house training, staying off the furniture or avoiding interaction with other, neutral dogs. It is important to notice that these aspects differ in focus: one is concerned with teaching the dog to respond in a specific desired manner, that is, the way that you, the judge or the rules require. The other is focused on what not to do, and the importance of refraining when no one is hovering with the threat of immediate retribution.

Obedience and general social deportment are best developed through reward and approval of correct behavior and minimal but sufficient correction of inappropriate actions or responses. Heavy-handed domination, breaking the dog to be subservient and cowed, is inappropriate and self-defeating. The downside should be quite obvious: a cowering, intimidated dog is unpleasant to live with, and is much less effective for those needing a dog where initiative is an important aspect of the actual service, as in police or patrol service.

While police training is often thought of as tracking or searching, obedience and protection one must be aware that you train dogs rather than tricks and exercises; pressure and problems in one aspect of training are surely going to have ramifications in other aspects. Thus when you put pressure on in tracking or obedience the dog may be a bit less sure in protection. In general, problems or pressure in one area mean that you should tend to hold your ground in others. In particular, if you are doing things like a forced retrieve or disciplined tracking then in protection the emphasis should be on fun and drive building rather than higher levels of discipline.

Remember, if your dog is not having fun most of the time then perhaps you are doing something wrong or you have the wrong dog. And when your dog is having fun, you will be having fun too. For the serious trainer the gradual realization that you are training the wrong dog is always a possibility. No matter how good the pup's

background and how solid the foundation there remains the possibility that training will reveal inadequacy, in which case you face the gut wrenching decision of breaking the emotional bonds with your dog, so carefully nurtured, or going on with the knowledge that the original competitive or service aspirations are compromised.

The essence of effective training is establishing and maintaining the correct relationship between man and dog; the methodology or procedural details are of secondary importance. The handler must become the leader; the dog must work from the instinctive and accepted concept that life is good when the boss is happy. But the gap between man and dog should be small so that the dog can naturally have initiative and joy in his work within established guide lines. Actually, as one of my reviewers with a police administration background points out, this is a pretty good approach to managing people too.

Priorities

We have and train dogs for diverse purposes. Some of us want a dog with which to share an otherwise less fulfilling life and thus need one obedient and well behaved enough to be secure and compliant. Others desire a dog as sports equipment, acquired in the hope of one day standing on a podium for a few moments and waving a large, empty cup. Still others seek a working partner. In order to achieve these ends it is necessary to acquire a dog according to breed and appropriate lines – most of the working and hunting breeds are sharply divided between the real and the ornamental – and to select a pup with the greatest expectation of success, based both on pedigree and evaluation of the candidate in terms of physique and character attributes.

The skill and art of dog training often evolves over most of a lifetime. Those fortunate enough to have a well-established training environment with abundant clubs and instructors, and especially those with an effective mentor, have an enormous advantage, can advance quite quickly. But many of us, particularly Americans involved in the early years of the protection sports, especially those involved in one of the so-called alternate breeds, struggled to develop the skills on our own, in an inherently frustrating trial and error process.

As a consequence many of us go through several dogs in order to reach higher levels, and the training process, especially the social aspects, must build the experience base, social connections and credibility to get a better dog next time around. Credibility is important because the best candidates normally go to those whose previous efforts indicate potential future commitment and success; while it is true that proffering enough cash will buy many or most pups, those taking this tack are unlikely to have the knowledge and intuitive instinct necessary to make the best selection. Even the companion owner will be rewarded for his diligence in training not only because of better control and behavior in his current dog, but because if perceptive and observant he will gain in the knowledge and insight helpful in finding good dogs down the road and training them with greater ease and effectiveness.

Training and obedience are synonymous in many minds, but for those seeking functionality such as pointing or retrieving in hunting dogs or search, pursuit and engagement in the police dog the obedience must be instilled in such a way as to allow the instinctive capabilities bred into the dog to reach their potential, so that the dog can hunt or retrieve in response to command or search for and physically engage an adversary under the direction of the police handler. In police work the release and guard under command are just as essential as the willingness to engage directly and with power; the trick is to consistently achieve and demonstrate the one without inhibiting the other. In order to achieve these ends, the training regimen must be holistic, that is a program that builds aggression and power, or tracking initiative, together with the requisite discipline and control. Training must be

perceived as quite broad in scope, encompassing functions such as tracking and protection as integral facets of the program; it must become an effective means of developing and enhancing the whole dog.

At a competitive level many young dogs will be found wanting and thus discarded. In order to achieve success, the competitive trainer must start with the best possible candidate – which is why many are willing to pay substantial sums for an older dog already demonstrating the potential – and conduct his training in a manner that will clearly differentiate the inadequate candidate as quickly as possible without putting excessive stress on a dog which would otherwise have achieved success. This is by its nature a complex and demanding process, and all trainers fall short of these ideals to some extent. If there were an easy formula for cranking out winners there would be no excitement in the competition, for to be winners there must be losers.

In summary, although motivations and methodologies are as diverse as the people involved, the basic goals of dog training are enhancement of the desirability of the dog as a personal and family companion by instilling good manners and bringing the inbred drives and instincts to fruition for work or sport competition.

The Training Progression

Dog training has evolved over time. When I began in the late 1970s, in a Bill Koehler¹ oriented obedience training club, the primary reward was handler praise, and this was also the approach I learned in my early Schutzhund training. Food and prey or chase objects such as balls were not commonly used, and often disparaged. Many think of this as old school training, and some of us are not entirely convinced that it is obsolete.

During the intervening years a more modern school with emphasis on drive building and making extensive use of food and chase objects such as balls and Kongs, has come to the forefront. This has been enormously successful and transformative in competition venues. But the nature of this transformation is problematical to the extent that it exacerbates the ongoing separation between formal trials and actual police service in terms of breeding selection and correlation between sport success and suitability for real world service.

Men have been training dogs for untold generations, but the name most closely associated with the foundations of modern police and military training is that of Konrad Most in Germany. His 1910 book *Training Dogs, a Manual*, translated to English in the early 1950s, is even today the classic reference to the old school foundations of police dog training. (Most, 1910) Bill Koehler's book represents a direct descendant of this philosophy, and his name has come into general use as a short hand reference to this entire school; in this sense there is really no distinct Koehler method but rather a continuation and evolution of traditional methodology.

Training regimens tend to be based on a sequence of teaching, repetition and proofing. There is nothing magic about these words but they do provide a convenient basis for discussion and experience tends to show that these stages are a natural pattern in the training progression whether the actual words are invoked or not.

¹ For the benefit of my European or non-American readers, William Koehler was a very well-known and popular trainer, teacher and author of a number of very influential dog training books. He was a military trainer and later trained dogs for appearances in various movies. His methods were akin to those of Konrad Most, and his name has become a moniker for "old fashioned" training generally not using either food or prey objects such as balls and Kongs for motivation.

You teach the dog, for instance, by placing the dumbbell in his mouth and holding the grip, and then on command taking it back and praising the dog, who complies because you have physical control of his head and the dumbbell. In time this progresses to the forced retrieve, that is, compulsion in doing the exercise, which often can be accomplished in as little as five minutes of the lifetime of the dog, after proper preparation and with consistent follow up. The new school alternative to the forced retrieve is a more inductive approach where the dog is encouraged and



Schutzhund send out.

praised when he makes a tentative effort to take the object, this encouragement leading to enthusiasm and compliance. These are not distinct and opposing methods so much as the end points of a continuum, most real training incorporating a synthesis of both concepts according to the trainer's instinctive response to the needs of the moment.

Trainers become better and thus more successful by learning to adapt according to the individual dog and the needs of the moment. Mechanistic or cookbook training methods with a one-procedure fits all paradigm in general tend to produce mediocre results. There are rules,

guidelines and principles in dog training, but excellence evolves through developing the instinct and confidence to break the rules according to the needs of the moment. Instinct is the key word here, for if the trainer needs to go through an explicit mental decision making process even the most transient delay all too often results in a lost training opportunity.

The use of the forced retrieve is a subject of intense ongoing controversy, not only in terms of the specific exercise but the underlying training philosophy. The Koehler approach, evolving out of traditional methodology exemplified by that of Konrad Most in Germany, old school if you will, was based on teaching followed by repetition where failure to perform resulted in a correction such as a tug on the training collar, and compliance brought forth handler praise. The more inductive approach relies on the desire to comply spontaneously arising from within the dog rather than from compulsion.

Teaching merges into the repetition phase where the exercise is performed over time with increasing emphasis in quickness, enthusiasm and style in the performance, with corrections for noncompliance, subtle or substantial according to handler instinct, and rewards. The efficacy of both correction and reward are dependent on precise timing, for a moments delay in correction is just punishing a confused dog. A delayed reward does not have as much immediate negative effect, but a repeated pattern of rewards as random events will tend to make the training more pleasant for the dog but do nothing to reinforce compliance, enthusiasm or style in the exercises.

This repetition phase tends to be the longest, indeed extends over the entire competitive or service career. The various exercises can gradually be incorporated into a sequence corresponding to the trial procedure, generally referred to as pattern training. The advantage is that the dog gets into the flow of the routine, anticipating

and thus responding to the next exercise. The down side is that if something unusual breaks the pattern the dog may not maintain discipline or confidence in his performance. A further consideration is that the real world need for a dog does not occur in a foreseeable pattern of events, excellence in a police dog is in how he performs in stressful circumstances according to unfolding events and handler direction in response to the field situation. My view is that the competitive trainer should nevertheless do a certain amount of pattern training, including occasionally the entire trial sequence, but that this should be in moderation, a relatively small portion of the normal training routine.

Proofing is having the dog perform under distraction, perhaps with another dog present, or a man with a sleeve. An specific example of proofing or distraction training is having fellow trainers throw a ball or Kong among themselves while you do your obedience exercises, teaching the dog that not all balls are his and that commands are not suggestions in case there is nothing more interesting going on. The ultimate proof is of course the actual trial performance.

These phases are in reality abstractions and generalities without hard boundaries, that is, teaching morphs gradually into training as the emphasis changes from showing the dog what is required to insisting that he take responsibility. Training in turn merges into proofing as increasingly overt distractions are introduced.

Many training problems have a root cause in preliminary phases of teaching. Generally exercises are introduced sequentially, one at a time, and training focuses on the new exercise until compliance is well established, with previous exercises done intermittently. If an exercise is not sufficiently instilled and established as a conditioned response before the next one commences, the dog may become confused and exhibit stress or avoidance.

Overly enthusiastic trainers will sometimes introduce distractions much too early and in an unfair way, which results in a dog being punished for behavior he has no way of comprehending as incorrect. As an example, I can recall a training class where the dogs were lined up and each handler in turn threw his dumbbell for his dog to retrieve. Naturally it was not long before a dog went out after his neighbor's dumbbell, and the instructor indicated that a correction was appropriate. This was wrong, for the dog had not been taught that it was specifically his dumbbell and his handler's command that required the retrieve. Sometimes proponents of Koehler come to see the distractions as an end in themselves rather than subsidiary to the training process, usually with negative consequences.

Although the progressions introduced here are in terms of the obedience exercises, they lend insight into other venues such as searching or tracking and the protection or aggressive search work. These applications differ because the objective is to induce the dog to explore and develop his natural and instinctive capabilities, based on the canine physique, the sensitive nose and strong grip, for use under handler direction and control. Here the trainer takes on more of a passive and supporting role, that is, provides the situation where the dog can learn on his own initiative, encouraged by handler praise. But in order for this training to be successful the ultimate reward for the dog must be the work itself rather than pleasing the handler, the primary motivation and reward must come from within the dog. To come from within the dog these responses must be incipient in the dog, and this is the purpose of generation upon generation of breeding selection.

There is so much more to dog training than a sequence of rote obedience exercises.

All in the Family

Large and potentially aggressive dogs require living situations where there is a commitment to training and discipline, owners with an informed desire for a serious dog and the personal commitment and psychological attributes to be the boss. Unfortunately in most police breeds today pet or commercially oriented show breeders have evolved emasculated lines, impotent replicas in a sense, in order to provide dogs with substantially less in the way of aggression, energy and drive adapted to casual owners. When we became involved in the late 1970s this was much less prevalent; our first Bouvier des Flandres (out of the Bowles lines) went on to Schutzhund III and an advanced tracking title. In that era there was less distinction between work and companion lines, American and Canadian breeders having had stock much closer to the breed origins. Today, thirty years later, the commodity companions in most of these breeds, including the German Shepherd, Doberman and Bouvier des Flandres, are softer, less energetic and much less intense. The consequences of minimal obedience training or ineffective training are less serious than with actual police level dogs, but the potential for competition or service is also essentially nil. This section, while applicable to all dogs, is focused on these lower intensity or companion dogs. Those with dogs out of serious lines, even if not contemplating actual service or competition, need to become aware of the issues covered in the next section on competitive or service level training.

Training in manners and social behavior is not optional; the only question being whether good habits and desirable deportment is to be established or the dog is to establish his own behavior patterns and force you to adapt to his chosen lifestyle. Make no mistake, whether you realize it or not training commences the day the dog comes into your home in that specific behaviors are rewarded or tolerated and others discouraged. If the pup is fed from the table or allowed to sleep on the sofa the adult is going to persist in these things as well. It is not my place to dictate your behavior code. Indeed, if you come to my house you are likely to see an old bitch comfortably asleep on the sofa and a dog sprawled out on the bed. The point is that you must decide what is to be allowed and then consistently enforce your rules.

This is not a training manual, will not present the details of training methodology. You will of course want to refer to texts such as Koehler's basic obedience book and others as listed in the suggested reading section. But even the best texts will not directly provide the instinctive reactions in command, correction and reward that are the essence of training, which is why a competent instructor can be so helpful for the novice.

There is an enormous amount of intuition and timing in dog training, which is more in the realm of art than science. So much depends on the subtleties – attitude, timing, reading the dog. One can study a text and then go to the training field and do what it says in a mechanistic manner and yet, while the motions are more or less those described, the dog's perception may be very different because of variations in timing, emphasis and the nature of the individual animal. A split second can measure the difference between an effective correction that the dog perceives and responds to and merely annoying a confused dog. When it comes right down to it, no book can contain words that extend the gifts of perception and timing.

In training the dog is above all entitled to consistency; it is not fair to punish today what was tolerated yesterday. Teach him that he has to bark twice and roll over before entering the living room if you want to – just begin early and allow no exceptions if this is what is to be necessary for your satisfaction. Thus each dog owner needs to adapt his own rules, appropriate to his circumstances, preferences and life style, and then consistently enforce them.

Being a puppy is the time to grow, to develop and have fun. Most of the activity with the pup, and there should be a lot of time with the trainer, should be essentially

play. The confidence and self-assurance necessary for stable, responsible adult dogs takes time to develop; to attempt to accelerate the growing up process by putting pressure on the pup to perform beyond his maturity is likely to have negative long-term consequences.

The avenue to success is through firm but gentle training of the young dog, keeping the training sessions short and crisp, varying the routine and working under conditions that are pleasant, which means in the evening or at night during hot summer weather. In training, once is often enough; if a dog correctly executes an exercise, a barrier retrieve or a recall, then praise him and leave well enough alone and go on to something else. If you run it into the ground and finally cause a problem to surface then a positive experience has been turned into a negative one. Correctly timed praise, when the dog has truly been correct, is vital.

An element of force, and sometimes the infliction a correction, is inherent in every effective obedience program. The dog must come to accept that your orders require compliance. While the sessions should be generally short, sometimes it comes down to a contest of wills, of persisting because the dog avoids doing what he knows you require or does not take you seriously. On occasion I have been drawn into a lengthy test of wills in order to establish my authority in a situation where a physical correction was not appropriate or likely to be effective. For me this has often been a moving sit, stand or down in response to the command, a pattern of the dog doing one or the other but not the one corresponding to the command. On one particular occasion the dog, on doing the stand for examination, would be perfect right up to the end and then slightly move one foot. It was flat out defiance, pure and simple. A loss of temper would have been a setback, the next time the situation would have only been worse. It was a simple matter of waiting it out, repeating the exercise until the dog finally did it correctly twice consecutively and then praising him and ending the session.

By being patient and persistent the dog learns that doing what is required is the easier way. Thus the concept is to repeat the exercise as many times as necessary to make the dog understand that he cannot get out of it by playing dumb, without impatience or excess pressure. Then quit after two correct executions, being certain to praise the dog. In this way he is rewarded for correct action and hopefully next time will just do it in order to avoid the hassle.

But such confrontations should be the exception, for if you and your dog are not having fun most of the time something is seriously wrong. When there are problems with your training attitude or methodology it is necessary to resolve them before proceeding, for little will be accomplished unless both the person and the dog are willing participants.

There are a number of skills and procedures requisite to success in training, such as the use of the collar and leash as correction tools. Timing and technique are important factors that are best developed by experience and practice under the eye of one who can point out faulty execution.

But training procedures and tricks are ultimately of secondary importance, the essence of effective training is communicating with your dog. You must be able to understand his motivations, desires and fears and use this knowledge to make him understand what you require and motivate him to act accordingly. Whether your objectives in training are simply a safer, easier and more convenient life with your dog or trial competition, the primary objective should be building up the communication capability.

The physical and psychological demands of aggression-based training require much of the dog in terms of self-confidence, emotional stability and courage; attributes which come to fulfillment only slowly with maturity. The larger and more robust dogs required, such as the Bouvier, can take longer to mature to this level,

and the stress of overextending the dog can be less than apparent until damage is done. Young dogs, although becoming impressive, are often still quite juvenile at a year and in need of being treated as such, regardless of how large and rambunctious they may be. Many problems are caused by the failure to perceive that emotional maturity often lags physical development; and there are significant variations in the maturation patterns of individual dogs to which the trainer must be sensitive. This does not mean that training must be delayed until the dog is mature, but that it must always be according to the maturity of the dog.

While the tendency is to think of training in terms of classes and formal sessions, the reality is that we train our dogs as we live with our dogs according to what we encourage, tolerate or punish. You do not have a choice about training but rather only the options of doing it well and with wisdom or poorly through the tolerance or encouragement of undesirable behavior.

It needs to be understood that dogs are dogs, not little people or children substitutes, although a little discipline of children works from time to time too. Dogs should be exposed to and learn to cope with increasingly demanding experiences, such as being in the crate, not lunging on a leash, and not jumping up on others. This is a short list of things that can be beneficial for a dog to become acclimated to as he grows up:

- Spending a night in a crate.
- Being in a crate when the owner is out of the house for a few hours.
- Going to the vet, and wearing a muzzle.
- Staying in a kennel run for a few days
- Spending a day or two with someone else.

Not all of these are necessarily convenient or appropriate for every dog or the choice of every owner, but the more diverse the experience in the formative months the better able he will be able to deal with separation and other stressful situations as they occur in daily life.

Every dog should be acclimated to spending time in a crate; from an early age it is wise to crate train him, starting with a few minutes and progressing to several hours and then overnight. In this way you can confine and keep the dog safe – and the contents of your home intact – while you are gone, have service people in with doors open and other similar situations.

Transporting a dog in a vehicle should be in a well-secured crate. In a smaller automobile or utility vehicle the crate might be constrained by the size of the available location, but in a larger vehicle or the back of a truck the crate should be securely restrained. In the case of a traffic accident well secured crate will provide the best situation at the moment of impact and prevent the dog from getting loose and running away, being run over by traffic or becoming aggressive to police officers or others responding to provide medical assistance. Be aware of the fact that you might not be conscious to command the dog, and your lack of response will likely be extremely stressful for the dog, making his reactions less predictable.

In recent years public dog parks have become more popular. Some areas are set aside specifically for training, often further outside of residential areas, and often the people, who tend to be more experienced trainers, are responsible, careful not to interfere with others. We are fortunate enough to live on a number of acres and train in similar settings, but this is not always the situation. But other dog parks, particularly in an urban setting, are intended primarily for pet or companion dogs, and large numbers of loose dogs can be a volatile situation. If a dog park is an only alternative, consider going very early in the morning or when the weather is unpleasant but bearable so as to have minimum risk; for some reason the troublesome people and dogs do not seem to be early risers.

Competitive Training

Over the past thirty years there has been rapid evolution in working dog breeding, training and sport competition. Training and breeding have emphasized drive building, the creation of dogs which are perceived as energetic, responsive and happy in their work.¹ Increasingly, competition rules and judging have abetted this. This is in many minds, including my own, a double-edged sword, for there has also been a gathering trend to be less and less demanding, particularly in the protection exercises, particularly in Schutzhund. The attack on the handler exercise is gone, the sticks are padded, the distances and threat level in the courage test have been incessantly reduced. What we have is dogs looking better and better doing less and less; perhaps they will ultimately evolve to do nothing with perfection. Schutzhund, now rebranded as IPO, has less and less relevance to the realities of actual police service. These trends have in general had negative consequences for training strategy and practice in terms of producing and deploying real police dogs.

There is of course a positive aspect to these drive building trends, more emphasis on motivation and encouragement rather than defaulting to immediate compulsion, which was always bad dog training, is on the whole a good thing. As competition oriented training has increasingly focused on early drive building over past decades, training has commenced earlier and become less stressful for both trainers and dogs. Discipline and compulsion will always be fundamental elements of dog training, but by starting young and increasing intensity slowly and with perception, and applying pressure with sophistication rather than brute force, the innate potential for an enthusiastic demeanor as well as reliable compliance with command can more nearly be realized.

Establishing desirable behavior patterns in the young dog as he matures tends to minimize the need for severity in correction. Historically the need for harsher correction was rooted in the tendency to delay training until the dogs were mature enough to cope with it, but the problem was that less discipline as the dog grew up created the attitudes and behavior problems likely to require more severity. It was in a way the old chicken and egg paradox all over again.

Drive building based training commencing at younger ages has demanded of the trainer more sophistication, perception and skill in that too much pressure too early can limit the long term potential. When the inevitable precociousness of the high drive pup leads the impatient trainer into overly harsh remedies the advantages of early training can be negated. The trainer needs to be constantly alert for indications that it is time to go slowly or even back off to allow maturity to catch up.

The reprimand or correction is necessary for effective dog training; but too often it is rooted in trainer frustration rather than a carefully applied response to disobedience. In order to be effective the reprimand must be immediate, measured and in response to an actual disobedience rather than confusion. Early training applied with a heavy hand is likely to result in a resentful, sullen dog and set the stage for long-term training and life problems. It is difficult for the novice and experienced trainer alike to know when the leniency appropriate to the pup is called for and when the dog is mature enough to insist on adult standards of behavior; it is perhaps better to allow the devious young adult to get away with puppy tricks for a few extra weeks or months than to force responsibility on a dog that is not quite ready.

¹ Drive is a term that has come into use meaning energetic and enthusiastic fulfillment of inherent genetic propensities, as in prey drive or food drive.

In the initial stages of the protection training young pups are encouraged to bite and pull jute covered tugs and to run with their prize. This can gradually evolve to having a stranger present the tug, and then become gradually more serious in the game. At roughly a year of age, always according to the development of the individual, the young dog will be introduced to a relatively soft puppy sleeve.

Many years ago, in the early days of Schutzhund training in America, the teaching of the release or out command was generally delayed until a relatively advanced stage of the training, when the dog was biting with confidence and overt aggression. The down side to introducing the release at this stage was the tendency to require severe corrections. The universal practice today is to introduce the out very early, in play before actual bite building. The pup learns that the clean release is the surest way to the satisfaction of the next bite, and the session ends with the dog winning the sleeve and taking it off the field as a prize. In this approach, the only release not rewarded is at the end of the protection phase of the trial, a relatively small part of the over training regimen.

The danger in pushing the protection work too fast is that apparent success and the resulting over confidence on the part of the handler may cause the youngster to be pushed too hard and consequently break down. A young dog can show impressive progress and strength in one location and working with a particular decoy and falter in another place or when facing another person. He who pushes his pup can do damage that will take months to repair and may in fact diminish the ultimate potential. Facing a large and aggressive man with a stick is meant to be a test of the courage and character of the adult dog; it takes time and maturity to build up the young dog to face the hard protection work.

The inherent problem inherent in the drive building trends is not in the methodology, which is generally sound when discipline is sufficient, but rather that trial rules and judging have been so accommodating to the resulting rote performance, more and more failing to vigorously challenge and test the dog through variation in exercises, overt decoy aggression and other means of more faithfully emulating the realities of street service. The rules and judging, particularly in Schutzhund, have evolved on the principle that what drive building produces must be the right thing, more and more ignoring the realities of actual police service.

For me, the most important objective of training a dog is not obtaining a trial title or even good behavior but the pure joy of participating in the fulfillment of the dog. It is a satisfaction to follow him as he works out a difficult track, persists even though changes in ground cover or cross tracks are momentarily confusing, and works out the problems. The execution of a set of obedience exercises by a good team is a pleasure to behold, calling for maximum rapport between a handler and dog. The protection work is the most spectacular, makes the greatest impression on the casual audience. When done well it is truly a compelling demonstration of what a good man and dog can accomplish together.

The Koehler Era

For many Americans introduced to canine obedience in the 1960s through the 80s obedience training was according to the methods and philosophy of Bill Koehler, the man whose training, books and seminars rightly cause him to be regarded as the modern father of American obedience training.

The Koehler Method of Dog Training, first published in 1962, quickly became the standard. Koehler more than any other American taught that obedience as preparation for the formal working trial and obedience resulting in a successful home companion are and should be the result of the same fundamental process. Koehler was decidedly old school in that, after an appropriate teaching phase to establish

that the dog understands what is required; a level of compulsion is necessary and appropriate to produce reliable performance, even in the presence of distractions. Training with introduced distractions became the hallmark of the Koehler approach.

Koehler of course did not invent obedience training or the specific methodologies, in the early 1900s Konrad Most in Germany had produced an extraordinarily influential book, translated into English in the fifties. But the Koehler book formed the foundation for innumerable classes and provided cohesion and a common methodology for many American obedience club programs. Thus when I speak of the Koehler method it can be thought of as a good representative of a broad class of training methodologies emphasizing careful, patient introductory training and then the evenhanded application of reward and compulsion to produce consistent results. In the Bouvier world for instance, the well-regarded Dutch trainer Caya Krisjne-Locker – who was not particularly aware of Koehler when she came to America as a teacher – teaches a very similar approach.

Koehler stressed handler praise as the fundamental reward, and was in general negative about the use of objects such as balls or Kongs or food as motivation in training. In his era the distinction between sport and real training was not nearly what it has become today, and as many point out it is not practical to carry a bag of doggie cookies on police patrol; it is a bit difficult to imagine a police officer with his automatic, radio and a shiny leather hot dog dispenser on his belt.

There were of course those in that era negative on the Koehler method, portraying it as stressful and unpleasant, even unkind, to the dog. Much was made of the ear pinch as an aid in retrieval training and suspending or hanging a dog in a response to inappropriate aggression. Many painted Koehler as an overly forceful and unforgiving trainer. And the truth is that some training done in Koehler's name was and is unfair and unnecessarily harsh; some trainers applied it blindly and with their own inappropriate extensions and embellishments. Some instructors could not seem to grasp the difference between distraction training and tricking the dog into a mistake so he could be punished. (When done in a law enforcement environment this becomes entrapment.)

I was fortunate enough to converse with Koehler in conjunction with various seminars, a couple of times over dinner and via a number of letters. He was most helpful and encouraging when I was in the beginning process of pulling my original Bouvier book together and seeking a publisher. Throughout all of this his emphasis was always on consistency and fairness to the dog.

The Bill Koehler I knew and saw in action, when he visited my original obedience club on several occasions, and in California, was a soft-spoken, low key, even gentle trainer. While the book covers a number of severe corrective procedures, these are included as the last in an escalating series of solutions, efforts to deal with serious behavior problems, where the remaining alternative might well be putting the dog down. In almost all instances they are the consequence of strong or fearful dogs becoming out of control and with the danger inherent in a physically mature dog.

I am willing to take extreme measures, such as the use of a rubber hose on a dog, where necessary. But to keep things in perspective, I have, to the best of my memory, taken out a hose three times in some 35 years of training, and actually used it twice. Both dogs were mature male Bouviers in other home situations. One was a dog with the inclination to go after small dogs. I took the dog to training night at our obedience club and, with the owner's prior knowledge, approached a small dog. The male went after the little dog and I rung his bell, struck him quickly across the bridge of the nose. Hopefully he had no idea where it came from and stepped back in some confusion. We subsequently approached another dog, and this time even though the lunge at the small dog was much more tentative, the result was the

same. The third small dog was cause for a step back and that was pretty much the end of the problem.

Today the radio controlled shock collar has often taken the place of other, less sophisticated, methods of applying compulsion. This "hearing aid" can be an effective adjunct to training, but should come only after a thorough grounding in conventional training, and under the guidance of an experienced instructor. And of course the much cheaper and more reliable old-fashioned pinch or prong collar, properly applied, can even today be quite effective.

Overt compulsion in dog training tends to make the squeamish squeal. A prime example is the famous Koehler ear pinch as a means of reinforcing the dumbbell retrieve. The common picture conjured up is a long brutal struggle involving much resistance, pressure and compulsion. In general, the reality can be and for good trainers usually is quite different. Although I tend to use a prong collar as a correction in the forced retrieve, the principles are the same. My dog Iron was a good example, he was a very strong dog imported from Holland after police reports on behavior in the original home caused the breeder to get him back and offer him to me. Iron was subject to the appropriate preliminary training where the dumbbell is placed in the mouth and held until the release command is given, to make sure he truly understood what was required.

The fateful forced retrieve training occurred on one day. The dog was back tied with a two-inch leather collar; the pinch collar with the separate, foreword directed leash was put on. The dumbbell was offered and with a slight tug on the pinch collar the dog took and held the dumbbell. This was repeated a couple of times on the back tie, a couple of times off the back tie and a couple of times from the ground. End of the dreaded forced retrieve.

Not that it is always that easy. I trained one Bouvier male out of the fashionable Dutch show lines. This dog was entirely different. No matter how long the preparation was he would play stupid and resist the dumbbell. After a long and unpleasant session he would finally get the message and take the dumbbell. But two days later it was as if he had never seen a dumbbell before. The point here is that all dogs are not created equal, that the background, the breeding selection process in the lines behind the dog, has a profound effect on the trainability of the individual dog. Obedience training can bring forth and refine the genetic potential; but it cannot create what is not there, conjure out of thin air character attributes not latent in the genetic background of the dog.

As mentioned above, Koehler and others of his era was generally negative about the use of food and play objects as rewards in dog training. His general thesis was that these things are not reliable motivators; that you are essentially offering the dog a deal, do this and get that. This of course implies a choice on the dog's part, clearly not the road to reliability. In general the higher-level trainers have moved beyond this and incorporate play objects and food rewards in order to build drive and enthusiasm. Just as Einstein went beyond Newton in the understanding of the physical world without diminishing the stature of Newton, advances in training practice have not diminished the foundation laid by Koehler and the others of his era.

As a final point, many characterize Koehler, Konrad Most and the others of this school as being of the reward and punishment methodology. Punishment, defined as the infliction of delayed correction, is useless and abusive, for a dog can only understand an immediate action. But Koehler in his books, in person and in the obedience classes I began my dog training in emphasized above all else the timing of the correction and the reward. These accusations are false and dishonest, and reflect poorly on the people perpetuating them, whether out of ignorance or maliciousness.

The Post Koehler Era

Over the past thirty years, the use of food and prey drive objects such as balls or Kongs as motivation has become a fundamental component of many if not most training regimens. At an extreme, a few trainers promote what they refer to as a purely positive approach, where the dog is supposedly never subjected to correction or negative consequences. Koehler and similar traditional approaches are, implicitly or explicitly, often disparaged as old fashioned at best or as brutal and repressive at worst.

What is the truth of all of this?

The reality is that competitive canine events such as AKC obedience and the various protection sports such as Schutzhund and Ring have changed and evolved, with the emphasis on quick, crisp work and an enthusiastic demeanor. In order to accomplish this it has become increasingly necessary to select for what have come to be referred to as high drive dogs, that is dogs with an active spirit, great enthusiasm, and especially pronounced prey or object drive so that balls or Kongs can become primary motivation tools. The early training process becomes a matter of building and reinforcing these incipient drives, which have become fundamental to training for competition. An important open question is to what extent these trends in evaluation, training and breeding selection relate to discernible enhancements in actual police patrol performance, and to what extent they reflect and exacerbate further divergence between practical real world service requirements and increasingly artificial sport venues.

The research of Ivan Pavlov and other behavior scientists did much to consolidate and formalize our understanding of behavior, and his work on the conditioned response based on repeated cycles of reward for performance illuminates the process of training to create the conditioned response. A prime example is provided by animal acts, as in trained seals and dolphins, where the fish reward occurs during the actual performance. The adaptation of these conditioning and training methods from entertainment act preparation to higher scoring performances in dog trials is the essence of the modern school of canine training, and the effectiveness of this in terms of trial results is beyond question. The question that remains is what these evolutionary developments mean in terms of police dog performance on the streets.

Notice that the role of the human being in the performance based on the conditioned response is marginalized or even absent. The trained seal responds to the setting, the sequence of events and the expectation of the reward, the command of the man being secondary to the process, or even absent. The setting for the performance and the sequence of events are rigidly maintained to minimize distraction so that the conditioned response can play out. The sport trial obedience performance is in many ways similar, and the commands of the handler become almost secondary, reduced to the role of supporting markers in the sequence of conditioned responses. Trial judging is rapidly evolving into a world of style points rather than an objective recording of whether the exercise was actually completed correctly.

But the police canine officer operates in an entirely different world. There is no sequence of events and ceremony leading up to the conditioned response. The canine team responds to unpredictable unfolding events in an environment, often with serious distractions and extreme stress, where there is no do over, where a break down in discipline may have long-term consequences much more serious than a reduced trial score. The commands of the police officer to his dog are of course based on conditioning and training, but they are real commands rather than timing markers in a scripted obedience performance. Criminals are not apprehended because the police dog twists his body in a U shaped curve to stare intensely into the face of the handler, they are apprehended because the dog is alert, environment and

situation aware, responding to command, able to adapt to the unexpected, to improvise in response to unpredictable actions by his adversary.

Older training books, such as that of Most, generally mention food only in the context of training food refusal as a safety precaution in order to keep a dog from being poisoned, either on purpose or inadvertently by coming across spoiled or contaminated food. Tracking or search training in this era is often described as an extension of the object retrieve rather than the food hunt of modern practice, and I have seen Belgian training done in this way. There is a case to be made today that the use of food for motivation and reward is a further – and some would say undesirable – step in the ongoing separation of training for points and training for real service.

Dog breeding and training cannot and should not ignore the advances in understanding revealed in the work of scientists like Pavlov and innovative hands on trainers, revert to a previous less sophisticated era. But questions and issues remain. One question is to what extent these new school training methods are useful in the preparation of dogs for real police service. But a more important issue is whether the evolving training and trial scoring realities are producing breeding and selection decisions for rote dogs which are animated and precise but lacking in the initiative, hardness and fighting drive that comes into question when the pattern is no longer there to support the rote trained response.

None of this is meant to imply that we should ignore methods demonstrated to be effective and useful, but our focus should be to increasingly build up the requirements of the working trials through features such as variation in the order and pattern of the exercises from trial to trial, longer distances in the remote pursuit exercises, a call off, that is, a command to return to the handler when the dog is in pursuit of the adversary. Our current trend is to more and more achieve points through superficialities such as focusing on the face of the handler while heeling, transforming our trials into events eventually determined by style points.

So, are the old school methods associated with names such as Most and Koehler obsolete, as so many would claim or imply? My answer is no. The basic Koehler approach is still fundamentally relevant and generally appropriate for the companion animal in inexperienced hands. This is particularly true of working breeds destined to mature as large and powerful dogs.

The evolution of obedience competition to emphasize the quick rote execution and strong focus on the handler has meant that top level competition is increasingly restricted to specific breeds such as the Golden Retriever and the Border Collie and, indeed, into specific competition lines within these breeds. Similar evolution has occurred in the world of the protection sports, and played a role in the separation of breeding lines into competitive trial and serious police service factions. In the companion dog world this has resulted in a divergence of obedience classes into those focused on the garden-variety home companion with no expectation of trial competition and more advanced venues for the serious obedience trial candidate.

Thus the obedience competition trainer, while his training in many ways may retain elements of a Koehler style regimen, will adopt his methods to gradually introduce combinations of drive building methods, that is food and prey drive objects such as balls and Kongs, into his program. In short, competitive success today, while it can be effectively built on a Koehler foundation, needs to incorporate elements of the drive building methods which have come into common use.

Just as a fishing lure must first appeal to the fisherman in the store before the fish have a chance to give an opinion, some training philosophies pander to what the novice wants to believe rather than what is actually meaningful in real life dog training, as in the highly promoted concept of purely positive training, essentially, if taken literally, a cult with a focus on love and understanding to the exclusion of

compulsion. While this is probably on the whole preferable to the brute force of slave management, it is seriously flawed in terms of the basic nature of man and beast alike, for essentially the dog becomes an equal, and there is no leadership or control among equals; the truly useful and effective dog must obey commands promptly and reliably, which comes only through the discipline of consequences for noncompliance. The reality is that purely positive training is often more of a strategy to sell a book or draw people into seminars; in practice there is usually an element of compulsion.

Proponents of this approach will recite a litany of dogs they have seen or known of ruined through compulsion in training, which may have a basis in fact but indicates an inappropriate use of compulsion rather than that compulsion is not necessary. The implication is that by being nice to the dog you never have to force him to do what you want, that he will naturally reward your friendly, undemanding approach by performing according to your desire. Many of us have been witness to the sad result of similarly permissive theories of child rearing.

In a very limited sense you can train a dog to do what he naturally wants to do without compulsion; exercises such as catch the cookie for instance. The trained seal jumps through the hoop for the reward, the chunk of fish from the pail. There is no force or compulsion, but the trainer can carefully select tricks with a quick response, and if a seal does not want to do a particular trick it can be omitted from the act. But in serious canine training the dog must learn to do things he would prefer not to do, as in release the sleeve, and must respond reliably and with vigor when there is no expectation of an immediate, explicit reward such as food or a ball to play with. This is discipline, not really present in the trained seal act, but fundamental to a dog that is going to go in harm's way on the street. Discipline ultimately requires compulsion. It may have very little overt force, it may be subtle, but it must be there.

If this sort of non-compulsive training is an overreaction there has been a persistent element of brutal training to inspire overreaction. But the mainstream trainers whose foundation is the tradition of Koehler and Most were not and are not in any sense brutal, inappropriate or ineffective; but it cannot be denied that things done under this banner have gone beyond good training into brutal training in too many instances. There have been video clips on the internet and television of American police trainers suspending a police dog with his feet off the ground and kicking him without mercy. (In this instance the video was taken public by another police officer, showing courage and compassion in overcoming the general and natural tendency to honor the blue line.) I know directly from two KNPV judges that several dogs have died on KNPV training fields as a direct result of brutal compulsion in training. These are unusual and shameful extremes, but they are a reality that needs to be incessantly guarded against.

There are those in AKC, Schutzhund and KNPV who have used very compulsive methods. Sometimes they may seem to have good success for a while, but in the end both the trainers and the dogs tend to burn out. Such training creates conflict the consequences of which will inexorably turn up at the most inopportune moment. And of course severely conflicted training is a good way to be very seriously bitten. One remedy is in judging, that is, for the system to reward a happy, up performance by giving the judge the latitude to reward more than just rote execution of the exercise.

Some will perhaps perceive such training as abusive, but these are important issues which require candid discussion. I do not believe that dogs perform well because they love you. I believe that dogs perform well because they enjoy the experience of training with you. When I was a beginner as a trainer I came to realize that I had to make the dog go to training, and that something was seriously wrong. Now all of my dogs pull to go out for tracking, obedience and protection. This is not bragging, I just simply stop and figure out how to restore drive when I find it is not

present. Sometimes, this means finding a home for a dog, and that is the nature of breeding selection.

In all training, the time comes when track means track, heel means heel and out means out. The handler must be the boss; just as in my work I have a boss. When I was actively employed, my boss was usually a very good man, and we normally had an excellent relationship. Sometimes we might disagree, which is permitted. But in the end, the boss makes decisions and the employee carries out the plan or seeks a different situation. So it must be in dog training; there must be consequences to fail to perform an exercise the dog understands, and sometimes compulsion is necessary. No dogs in any serious sport or line of work perform at the top level without an element of compulsion.

The truth is that effective training is always a balance between compulsion and reward. It should be obvious that brutally applied compulsion, as in beating the dog if he delays an instant in fulfilling the slightest trainer whim, is stupid, cruel and more to the point fundamentally ineffective. But purely reward based training can also be cruel if the lack of real discipline results in an accident or a dog being disposed of as unmanageable, neither outcome likely to result in a good ending for the dog.

Effective dog training entirely devoid of compulsion, however subtly and cleverly applied, in reality cannot produce reliable, useful dogs. The slogan itself is primarily crafted to sell books, seminars or individual trainers to the gullible. The implication, and the appeal, is that one can train without any unpleasant compulsion or punishment; the reward of a hot dog chunk and pleasing the trainer can be enough. This is indeed the appeal of the slogan, but if this is applied literally it is preordained to failure.

If, on the other hand, "Purely Positive Training" in the end conveys to the dog that he can be positive that working with you will make his life pleasant – with the implication that less than the best effort will make life less pleasant – then it is little more than a clever slogan to sell a book, promote an individual trainer or attract training clients. In this case, the need of compulsion, while perhaps only implied, is nevertheless real.

Compulsion is a fundamental component of all effective training protocols, but used to excess or with a heavy hand is detrimental in that an intimidated dog will be timid in his work and erratic and unpredictable when confused.

In summary, I believe that:

- He who uses the least amount of compulsion to train his dog is the best trainer.
- He who uses just the slightest amount of compulsion less than necessary is destined to be a frustrated, unsuccessful trainer.
- He who can discern the necessary level of compulsion is the wisest trainer and will have the reward of the best his dog is capable of.

Obedience Classes

Although much of a dog's training occurs as a natural part of daily living or independent training, there is also a place for formal instruction. The options include amateur and commercial group classes with much variation in size and sophistication – and cost – and private instruction. Private lessons are likely to be more expensive, but much more focused on your particular level of knowledge, the attributes of your dog and specific problems as they occur. An instructor or coach can often spot incipient training problems and thus nip them in the bud rather than after a poor habit is ingrained and thus in need of extensive remedial action, an ounce of prevention being better than a pound of cure. Group instruction, properly run, can

provide good distraction training through the discipline of working in the presence of the other dogs, an opportunity to see alternatives that might not suit your dog and often become pleasant social experiences.

Effective dog training is on one level a relatively straightforward process, but in an era where many of us grow up outside the agricultural tradition, where dealing with animals was a routine part of life, there is generally a need for direct instruction. Training for competition or service is a more subtle and less forgiving process best learned hands on under the influence of a teacher or mentor. Experienced trainers can of course do much of their obedience and tracking foundation working alone, and even in later phases where others are necessary to provide distractions or assistance there is no particular need for especially skilled people. But ultimately to rise to his potential every trainer needs mentors and colleagues who can observe and point out faults or make suggestions.

When we first became interested in Schutzhund in the late 1970s, some of those in our obedience club and dog people in general were seriously concerned about the protection work; there was a fairly widespread attitude that civilian participation in the protection was inappropriate and that the dogs would become overly aggressive in inappropriate circumstances, a liability. Some obedience clubs would not allow guest training privileges for those involved. Although I have not been involved in AKC style obedience activity for many years and am out of direct personal touch, my general impression is that these concerns have abated.

Nevertheless it should be kept in mind that many people in general and some instructors are uncomfortable in the presence of high level or intense dogs and are thus best avoided. Also, some class situations allow or even encourage dog interaction, things like doggie playtime, which in my opinion is never appropriate for a serious police bred dog. In general those with police level lines, or generally with the associated breeds, need to ascertain the prevailing attitude of potential instructors or class situations and seek training assistance from those with enthusiasm and experience with such training, especially if the dog is to be involved in protection work beyond the basic obedience.

Protection training by its nature requires at least two people, the training helper and the handler, and is greatly facilitated by larger groups for things such as line handling and distractions. While this can and often is done in groups of two or three, in general larger groups – such as a sport club, police training unit, or even a commercial class – become the most effective approach.

Many amateur obedience training clubs offer classes, and these can be very high quality, cost effective solutions. There are of course many commercial establishments and individual instructors working out of their home or coming to yours. Begin your search with your social network, your friends and acquaintances, particularly those with well-behaved dogs. Ask around; inquire at your veterinarian office, do a quick internet search. Watch for an operation that has some history, has been going on for a while. Be especially sensitive to an empathetic attitude toward the police breed culture and the protection work.

In selecting a class, the novice should consider his level of experience, the time he is willing to devote and what it is he wants to accomplish with his dog. The highly competitive AKC obedience or Schutzhund competitor that offers classes to others is perhaps not a good choice for the inexperienced dog owner who does not really understand what it is all about; for the pressure is likely to be incompatible with his needs and desires.

On the other hand the person who has done some training and wants become competitive in trial situations is well advised to seek out the instructor who has personally been successful in such venues. He should understand and accept the pressure and expectation of persistence and consistency that preparation for serious

competition demands. He must also be prepared to accept that the instructor may inform him that his dog is just not good enough and that in order to be competitive he should get another one. (A second opinion is most definitely in order here, especially if this is coupled with an offer to provide a better dog.) This is simply the nature of things, for just as relatively few men have the potential to be a first rate athlete, not all dogs are good candidates for top-level competition, be it obedience or one of the protection sports.

In many urban areas there are a number of options from which to select a formal training class. Such classes are run by park districts, obedience clubs and private individuals of varying degrees of competence. (Anybody that wants to can hang out a shingle and be an instant training instructor.) There is thus a wide diversity in class size, quality of instruction, philosophy and objectives of the program. Regardless of the organization involved or the philosophy espoused, the most important factor is the capability, experience and enthusiasm of the instructor, who should be seen in action if at all possible before a commitment is made.

The ideal format would be four or five dog/handler teams that met for an hour or less two or three times a week so that the instructor could give the amount of individual attention necessary and so that a faulty technique would not be practiced for an entire week before being corrected. If at all possible, avoid the large class situation, more than ten or twelve dogs. Such classes tend to result in a mechanistic approach, with the instructor demonstrating an exercise and then mass confusion as the class attempts to duplicate it.

When a potential class opportunity has been identified, it is wise to observe one or preferably a couple of training sections. If there is reluctance to permit this, be cautious, there is probably a reason. Mention the Koehler book that you bought and notice the reaction. If it is an "Oh my god, not that" be on the alert. A strong negative reaction might be a warning signal, you need a compassionate and sensitive instructor, but one committed to discipline in the conduct of the class and in the development of the dog.

In observing the training you should be alert to the instructor's control of the class. Are problem dogs segregated for separate attention? If serious problems are dealt with in class by stopping and working individually with the problem dog others may benefit from observing the problem and remedy. But if this becomes routine, it can quickly degenerate to the point where the typical student winds up standing around wasting his time and money. In the obedience club we were initially involved in the director of training and perhaps another senior trainer would observe a number of concurrent beginning obedience classes and be able to pull out a problem dog and/or handler for one on one problem resolution. In the more advanced classes such a situation would be unusual, for the instructor is dealing with someone they probably know from previous classes and problems will have been identified and dealt with.

There is a lot of variation in instructor quality, the discipline expected of the participants, the general level of the clientele and the number in the class. Many classes tend to be oversubscribed in the expectation that there will be significant dropouts, people who will come for a couple of times and then just disappear. This can work to your advantage, for you might end up with a very small class or even a semi private training situation. But in a really large class the individual is likely to be more or less lost in the crowd.

Active trainers with increasing experience usually evolve into group training situations instead of formal classes, where experienced fellow trainers can make suggestions, point out things they can see from the sideline that you cannot be aware of and provide opportunities to train in the presence of other dogs and people,

as in procedures for reporting to a judge where two participants and their dogs are present, in the Schutzhund venue for instance.

Although my early obedience and Schutzhund training provided an environment where neutrality to all other dogs was a given requirement, apparently some contemporary training encourages social interaction among the dogs. This is a serious mistake. My recommendation is to avoid classes that condone or even encourage interaction with other dogs, impartiality and aloofness should always be an essential aspect of the training discipline.

There is a lot more art than science to dog training, and the instructor who has a set pattern and methodology that is expected to work for every dog may well be covering up a fundamental inability to deal with the dog and handler on an individual basis. It is an unfortunate fact that such an approach is almost a necessity when dealing with an excessively large class.

Thus the novice would do well to consider private or small group sessions with an experienced instructor. Such an approach might be somewhat more expensive in the short term, but when you consider that in a class situation seventy or eighty percent of the time is spent standing around individual instruction may well be the more cost effective option.

Dog Aggression

A fundamental requirement of police canine training and deployment is ensuring that each dog reacts appropriately in the presence of other dogs in training, on the street and in everyday of life. This is especially important in the police breeds because of the size, power and inherent aggression and inborn, instinctive tendency to dominance. Much of civilian training deals with dominance and aggression as undesirable attributes, problems to be solved through training and breeding. But dominance and power in the police dog are not problems to be resolved but rather essential attributes enhanced through breeding selection. In order to maintain general order and safety it is essential for the police dog handler to have a clearly established leadership role which precludes direct canine dominance initiatives, that is, dogs posturing and making eye contact with other dogs, behavior which unchecked will likely ultimately lead to dog fighting. This is among the reasons that much of police dog training is done in groups where appropriate relationships with other dogs can be established and potential problems identified and dealt with.

Although dogs are not simply domesticated wolves, the consequences of their extended family social structure based on group cohesion, and instinctive reactions to exclude intruding outsiders, powerfully influence modern canine behavior. The domestication process over time modified these natural relationships according to new canine roles, but much of the aggression and dominance of the wolf is retained as the basis of the working utility. Although the stock manipulation aspects of herding evolved as an extension of the hunting instinct, predation control is based on pack or group cohesion with strong instinctive reactions to exclude all outside intrusions. From a historical perspective the primary function of the herd guardians was to regard the herd as the extended pack or family and thus to drive off or if necessary fight intruders, be they man or beast.

The key to human and canine survival is flexibility and adaptability. In the lowlands of the British Isles for instance the Border Collies deal not primarily with sheep in herds, but with sheep who routinely roam free to find sufficient grazing in a sparse and often rough environment, that is with steep slopes and deep gullies. This is of course only possible in regions where predator pressure is vanishingly small, and the wolf has been extinct in the British Isles for centuries. Thus the herding role evolved locally from keeping the animals in a compact group for effective control and

defense to one of locating and retrieving effectively free ranging sheep. In this work the dogs of neighboring shepherds must often coexist in close proximity during the ordinary course of their herding work. But this style of herding is a recent evolution according to circumstances unusual from a historical perspective rather than typical of herding work in general. Over much of history and most of the world today the guardian role of the working stock dog predominates.

The fighting breeds, such as the Pit Bull Terrier, were for many generations bred according to the propensity to fight, to engage and persist onto death, any unknown dog. The cur, the dog not immediate and persistent in his attack, was ruthlessly culled. While the pit bulls on the streets today are often descended from among the rejects or excess fighting stock, and are often cross bred to god knows what, much of the blind fighting instinct can be and often is still present, even when not immediately apparent. Sometimes the owners of such dogs are unaware of this potential and thus careless and irresponsible in the management of their dogs; and sometimes they are simply on the lookout for the opportunity for their dogs to dominate and thus prove their manhood.

Thus on the streets and in the neighborhoods of contemporary America we have dogs from diverse backgrounds with widely differing social propensities, from those basically a generation or two removed from fighting stock to those from more cooperative backgrounds much less likely to initiate aggression or dominance. In light of this the only sane way to raise and train dogs for this environment is to reinforce from the beginning the concept that new dogs in new situations must be ignored, that guarded neutrality is the appropriate response.

Yet it has apparently become fashionable in many pet training circles to have doggie playtime as part of training classes and in general encourage playful interaction. In the newly fashionable urban dog parks, it is apparently the expectation that large numbers of dogs can just be turned loose together and expected to interact peacefully. (There are also many public training areas, and here there is a strong expectation that each owner will keep his dog under control and avoid interfering with their training.)

If you teach your dog that an unknown dog is an opportunity to make new friends, there is always the possibility that he is going to start a fight without really understanding what is happening. All dogs should be taught to remain neutral in the presence of other dogs, not to initiate interaction; one should be leery of any training venue where the instructor is not firmly committed to this principle.

The Electric Training Collar

Beginning in the late 1970s the radio controlled correction collar, which applies an electrical stimulation to the throat area of the dog – thus enabling a remote correction – has gradually come into common use. Although the early units were expensive and fragile, today's units have become quite sophisticated, reliable and affordable. Modern collars provide fine remote calibration of stimulation level and independent audio and vibration modes to communicate with the dog. When applied with skill and discretion they are enormously useful in many situations, both for general training and special situations such as smaller or more fragile handlers with larger or more hardheaded dogs. These devices are in common use by most police and military agencies and mainstream trainers worldwide, with very little incidence of inappropriate use, injury or abuse. In some situations electric collars are even utilized in on the street police deployment. A further benefit of the electric collar is that they enable people with disabilities to properly control and train their dogs, thus opening up a new world of companionship and pleasure in otherwise restricted lives.

Although the strength of the shock of the early units could be set by means of plugs or switches on the collar itself, there was no flexibility, no way for the trainer to apply differing levels of correction according circumstances arising during training. Modern units allow the adjustment of the level of correction remotely, according to the needs of the dog and the situation. Once the dog learns to associate the vibration signal with the electric stimulation it is often sufficient to use the vibration only, which is activated by a separate button on the remote control. Some units also have a remote sound beep. This sort of thing is enormously useful in training; my experience is that once the dog has been properly introduced to the collar the use of the vibration or warning beep is much more prevalent than an actual shock correction.¹

Unfortunately, humans being what they are, the potential for inappropriate use or abuse is there. The novice should not begin by strapping on the electric collar and experimenting on his dog, but rather should proceed through initial training in the conventional way, with a collar, long line as necessary and leash. The guidance of an experienced trainer or instructor leading up to the initial use of the electric collar will generally facilitate safe and effective use. More experienced trainers will generally introduce the electric collar according to their perceived needs and preferences, always with great care in the initial introduction and acclimation process. It is generally appropriate that the dog should wear a dummy collar or the regular collar turned off during preliminary training so as to lessen the association of the equipment with the correction; although most dogs quickly learn to associate the collar with the possibility of a correction, and, more to the point, the lack of a collar with an electric correction not being possible.

Effective electric collar use requires patience, timing and discretion on the part of the handler; attributes that however latent in the beginner need to be developed through the normal collar and leash training process. When you make a mistake in timing or correction level with the training or prong collar it is immediately obvious, the link between cause and effect is apparent. This tends to provide quick, obvious feedback and allows the handler to develop the skill of the appropriate, well-timed correction.

There are those who make a business of running expensive weekend seminars where the novice is led to expect that in two days he will be introduced to the E collar, probably sold to him at substantial mark up, and jump over all of the effort necessary to build skill and insight by traditional training methods. Such people are akin to the old-fashioned snake oil salesmen, and will likely be out of town counting their cash when the negative consequences of the poor training begin to emerge and become apparent.

As a consequence of the political pressure of left leaning animal rights political elements – the same people behind the banning of ear cropping and tail docking – the use of the electric collar is now banned in much of Europe. This is most unwise and inappropriate, for such devices have been used over many years by mainstream trainers, including most police and military trainers, with efficacy and minimal danger, injury or unfair correction to the dogs, which generally exhibit a demeanor of enthusiasm and happiness in their work. These bans also sometimes extend to other commonly used training equipment such as prong collars. Prong collars have been in universal use for at least half a century, and properly used are generally safe and humane. As opposed to other commonly used training collars, such as the metal link choke collar or slip collar, prong collars are inherently limited slip devices and properly fitted cannot and do not choke the dog.

¹ Bark prevention collars, which detect the vibration of the bark and apply a correcting shock are similar in construction but not remotely controlled.

Such bans are most unfortunate in that the remote collars are enormously effective in many situations. It of course cannot be denied that dog training imposes serious obligations to maintain the spirit and practice of sportsmanship, safety and humane treatment for all involved, most especially for the dogs. But abusive or inhumane training is a matter of personal responsibility and action rather than the specific equipment utilized; abuse is possible with even the most primitive and innocuous equipment, such as a leash and an ordinary chain, fabric or leather collar. All training is ultimately a matter of a balance between compulsion and reward, and excessive compulsion is a matter of the wrong training technique, faulty application on the part of the trainer or an inappropriate dog for the intended function. Properly applied, compulsion is often not apparent to the casual observer lacking training knowledge and skills.

All emotion driven public policy is subject to unforeseen and unintended consequences. Banning the electric correction collar means that trainers will revert to previous devices and technique which prevailed before the use of modern methods, equipment and procedures, many of which had their own dangers for the dog and potential for abuse. Much of this training involved long lines which can be used to restrain and correct a dog, which at a distance can inadvertently apply sharp force potentially injurious to the dog, and which can with a rapidly moving dog hang up on a branch, post, or other trainer and supply a sharp and potentially injurious jolt to the dog. Long lines are inherently much more dangerous and more subject to abuse than modern remote control units. Other methods of remote correction, which would likely come back into use, involved throwing light throw chains or pebbles at the dog. (At what point a humane pebble becomes an inhumane rock would become an important issue.)

The fact remains that properly used radio controlled collars are in fact the safest, most reliable and most humane devices in common use for dog training today.

Breed Considerations

Specific breed commentary has been avoided in this training discussion because it tends to evolve into excuse making and encourage reality avoidance in the enthusiastic breed advocate, especially the novice. The foremost principle is that one must train the dog in front of him rather than some abstraction of all dogs or the mythology of a particular breed, that is, adapt methods and temper responses according to what is experienced with this dog rather than preexisting expectations, often illusions based more on mythology than objective reality.

My experience has led to the conviction that at the elementary level dog training is dog training, that those learning the process should not commence working with a Rottweiler, Bouvier or Doberman based on perceived esoteric breed characteristics, but rather should train the dog in front of them, adapting timing, pressure and technique according to what is actually experienced rather than what is projected from expectations often rooted in breed mythology. With experience over a number of dogs specific breed propensities – the intensive defensive drive of the Bouvier, the flash of the Doberman, the stubbornness of the Rottweiler – will emerge as generalities, but one should discover and adapt to these things as the training progresses rather than proceed according to preconceived expectations. As one advances in experience and expectations expand to embrace more competitive scores in competition, seeking out guidance from those with a history of success in a particular venue or breed will help to evolve the insight and experience necessary to perceive and deal with emerging behavior characteristics in their early stages when they are easier to channel and correct.

That said, selection of a particular breed, lines within that breed and a specific pup or young dog within those lines has enormous consequences in terms of the

potential for satisfaction in a particular sport venue or service application. The appropriate sports equipment for IPO or one of the suit sports is a German Shepherd or increasingly a Malinois, and those whose primary objective is to wave a cup go directly to these breeds, and so should you if this is your priority.

Certainly the Rottweiler advocate should work within his breed, and when he goes on the sport field his dog is judged according to the same rules as any other. But the rules have primarily evolved under the influence of the German Shepherd establishment for IPO and the Malinois community for the other sports, and beyond the basic requirements of the exercises the winning points are in the style of the performance in the eye of the judge, who became a judge by convincing other judges that he could and would give the winning points according to the traditional expected style. Is this right or fair? Probably not, but it is reality. To be a "winner" the Rottweiler enthusiast needs to find a young dog that he can train to do a convincing German Shepherd impersonation, that is snappy stylish healing with the neck in a big U shape to stare intensely into the eyes of the handler and speedy recalls. But the Rottweiler was created as a massive, powerful, aggressive dog – one certainly capable of obedience, reasonable social deportment and completing a trial obedience routine. But it is unrealistic to judge such a dog in terms of the style, flash and subservience of a sport winning Malinois or German Shepherd.

One must come to understand that at the higher levels the dog sports are a political and commercial process and that those making the rules, certifying the judges and especially selecting the judges for elite events are doing so for their own diverse agendas, which ultimately relate to supporting particular breeds, national pride and commercial interests. If this offends your sense of amateur idealism, take note of the fact that the Olympic games have given in and openly embraced professionalism, overt commercialism and nationalism, with the façade of amateurism relegated to the disappearing world of university athletics participated in by rich young men with no need or expectation of a professional career. Today American college football is a world where amateurism is little more than an excuse to cheat the "student athletes" out of a legitimate share of the enormous profits. Why should anyone expect dog sports to be different?

At the end of the day, dog training can only be successful when one selects a candidate dog, training regimen and guidance according to his own goals and expectations, finds fulfillment and satisfaction from within himself rather than according to the manipulation of organizations primarily serving the interests of the establishment insiders and those seeking to derive income from their involvement.

Sport and Service

As we have seen, much of contemporary obedience training is based on the conditioned response to the cue or marker, one variation being clicker training, the objective being to take a dog to the trial field or ring and reliably, like clockwork, demonstrate a precise pattern of conditioned responses. The rules, judging and tradition are all geared to minimize distractions or variations in the environment or routine. But the police dog does not live in such a pristine, well-ordered world, must respond to unpredictable events and challenges, often under the stress of a hostile engagement. The old school Koehler style – typical of traditional training – puts emphasis on distractions and unforeseen challenges, on exposing the dog to so many novel situations and occurrences that he emerges well prepared to deal with the intrinsically unpredictable nature of the street working environment. This inherent, profound conflict between sport and service has serious ongoing consequences for police dog breeding and deployment, for rote sport training does not in the long term well serve either breeding selection or training for actual police service.

My expectation is that if this trend continues unabated police and sport lines will diverge to the point where they separate entirely; the emerging preference of KNPV and ring style Malinois for police service may well be the harbinger of things to come.

From the beginning, at the turn of the twentieth century, these training and evaluation venues had diverse and ultimately conflicting functions:

- Identification of suitable dogs for breeding so as to enhance the overall quality of individual breeds and lines in terms of willingness, initiative, physical aptitude, stability and courage.
- Fostering an emerging community of trainers and especially instructors and training helpers so as to evolve and propagate increasingly more effective training regimens and make this emerging body of knowledge more generally accessible.
- Provide a competitive sport venue as a recreational outlet for amateur trainers, thus providing an ongoing source or pool of young trainers, instructors and especially training helpers.

Multiple objectives unfortunately tend to have the potential to foster tension and compromise as conflicting priorities emerge. As sport participation becomes the primary objective and competition intensifies the focus is increasingly on trial points with less regard for other, often unintended, consequences of the training regimen. As competition becomes more intense winners and champions are increasingly those teams which can flawlessly display a precise rote performance. The need to differentiate between increasingly similar performances should have led to more demanding exercises so as to reveal the intrinsically better dogs, that is variation in the routine, novel distractions in each trial, greater distances and in general more physically and psychologically challenging exercises.

Instead, especially in Schutzhund, judging came to focus on stylistic aspects, such as intensive focus on the handler in the heeling or snappy sits, in order to differentiate among increasingly precise dogs. Even tracking and protection evolved to become stylized sequences of exercises with emphasis on rote obedience rather than more effective performance, where style points predominate over evaluation of attributes important for police work such as initiative and stability in the face of unforeseen and unprepared for occurrences. Most critically, initiative on the part of the dog becomes a fault rather than an essential aspect of his usefulness; all other things are sacrificed for the servile performance. The problem with all of this is that when increasingly formalized sport drives the selection process it will produce higher scoring dogs but not necessarily better or even in the longer term adequate police dogs; if you test for the wrong things ultimately you are going to wind up with the wrong dogs. As a consequence the cops, at least the smart ones, begin to look elsewhere.

In my professional career as an electronic and systems engineer, primarily concerned with the evolution and deployment of public safety radio and dispatch systems for police and fire agencies, it was my practice to spend as much time as possible on customer sites, riding along with a patrol officer or spending a night in a dispatch center. Interaction with the patrolmen, sergeants and dispatchers as well as the department technical and administrative personnel provided an enormously useful insight into real world police communication, dispatch and control functions. On one level system creation was a matter of antenna site design and placement, radio circuitry and integration of the communication infrastructure into the agency computer operations, but much more important was the way the system interacted with and enabled the personnel, the dispatchers and responders in the field. Such things simply are not obvious or even comprehensible to an engineer sitting at a

desk or running computer simulations in a research laboratory. It was not literally hands on experience, but it was the next best thing.

In a similar way the evolution and advancement of police dog breeding and deployment is most effectively realized through active police trainer, handler and administrator participation so that evolving breeding lines, training regimen and trial criteria can be based on realistic service requirements rather than arbitrary exercises conjured out of thin air by sport bureaucrats and show breeders. When police trainers and handlers, bringing street perspective, are not an active part of the process over time it tends to drift off course, serves the wrong training priorities and as a consequence ultimately produces the wrong dogs. Some venues such as Dutch KNPV have always had strong police participation, but Schutzhund and even more egregiously IPO evolved in the latter half of the twentieth century according to the needs and profit of show breeders and canine bureaucrats with little or no concern or empathy for the requirements of actual police dog service.

As a practical example, refusal of food from a stranger or found on scene is an important part of police service preparation, and part of the evaluation process in KNPV and ring trials, because poisoning the police dogs or inadvertent contact with spoiled food is a real hazard of service. But Schutzhund and IPO, where food as a motivator and reward is common in much of the training, do not have food refusal requirements, ignore the practical consequences. In a similar way, the arbitrary nose in each footstep style of Schutzhund tracking is largely trained by putting food in each footstep, not only creating a working style less and less relevant to practical work but potentially setting the dog up to be poisoned in his service.

This divergence in the priorities of sport and service has been especially disruptive in America, in many ways retarding progress toward an increasingly independent domestic breeding and deployment culture. A more effective American police dog culture can only evolve through police and civilian cooperation, which requires that sport rules and especially judging become more attuned to attributes important in actual police service rather than arbitrary style. As a specific example, IPO trials should incorporate food refusal at several points and thrown balls or Kongs as distractions during the obedience phase of the trial in order to demonstrate that the toys and rewards have not become ends in themselves.

Similar problems are becoming evident in Europe, but many experienced Europeans, and younger Europeans with established mentors, are much better able to carry on their breeding and training in the old ways, especially in unified and cohesive clubs and training groups. Unfortunately for Americans our involvement, in the 1970s and 80s, came at a time when this divergence was emerging, thus thwarting the establishment of police and sport cooperation, and fostering ongoing dependence on European support and dogs. Commercially, this has been to the advantage of many European breeders, judges, dog brokers, politicians and canine organization bureaucrats.

4

Canine Protection Training



An effective police or military protection dog is the creation of mankind through generations of breeding selection, emerging from the tending style herding lines of northern Europe, culminating in the creation of our police breeds at the advent of the twentieth century. Performance based breeding selection is a never ending process in order to maintain an ongoing supply of young working candidates, for one cannot teach or train effective aggression based service skills, they must be there, must be incipient in the heart of the dog.

Protection training, especially in the initial stages, is primarily a process of encouraging the inbred instincts to mature and assert themselves, overcoming social, man created, inhibitions so that the natural propensities can evolve into overt behavior patterns. Good dogs selected from proven working lines, properly raised in an environment promoting drive building and a minimum of heavy-handed discipline in general readily respond to the opportunity to engage the human adversary. In such instances the training quickly becomes a matter of control, procedure and technique, that is, teaching the dog to desist from responding to provocative actions at handler direction, to guard rather than engage as necessary and to release on command. It is a fine edge, for the dog must be capable of vigorously responding to direct aggression without handler action so as to defend the interests of the team when the handler is disabled or distracted.

Although the structure of this book is intended to make each chapter as much as possible a self-contained, stand-alone entity, protection training has evolved a convoluted terminology, involving references to concepts such as predatory drive and the self-preservation protection instinct. Those familiar with these concepts and terms are certainly welcome to proceed directly, but others, less familiar, would be well advised to review Chapter 2, *Age Old Skills*, for an introduction to the underlying concepts and terminology.

Historical and Social Perspective

Canine obedience training is universally regarded as a good thing; there is no rational reason to object to well behaved dogs under firm handler control. Protection training and the breeding of willing dogs, encouraging and enhancing the inclination to bite human beings, is similar to civilian gun ownership and recreational drug or alcohol use in that diverse elements of society have always had the inclination to endorse vigorous legal and cultural restrictions on such activity. Although much of this is rooted in the general population with no specific involvement in dog breeding and training, elements of the canine communities have also been ambivalent or antagonistic to the protection applications. In Belgium some of the early police administrators were generally opposed to civilian activity and elements of the early Belgian Shepherd establishment had a strong preference for herding, obedience and

tracking for civilian training and competition to the exclusion of participation in protection work. These minority reservations did not prevail, but did in fact exist, apparently for the usual reasons of appealing to the more genteel and pacifist attitudes of the emerging canine show dog establishment. Historically entities such as the AKC and the *German Shepherd Dog Club of America* were actively hostile to civilian protection activity and ambivalent toward police applications. Although this opposition has somewhat abated as registration numbers collapsed, beginning in the middle 1990s, the bureaucrats of the conformation establishment always stand ready to throw the heritage under the bus for their own advantage. All of this was exacerbated by the civil rights conflicts in the American South in the 1960s; snarling German Shepherds along with fire hoses and aggressive response by club wielding police officers was not generally regarded as good publicity.

But in spite of this squeamishness the police oriented breeds were from the beginning enormously popular among civilian populations. Total German Shepherd registrations in the homeland were closing in on 100,000 at the advent of WWI, enormous growth in little more than a decade, and in the aftermath of the war the Shepherd became overnight the top AKC breed in terms of annual registration numbers. In later years similar popularity surges for the Doberman Pinscher and Rottweiler demonstrated the staying power of this inclination; a significant segment of the American population has held an affinity for the police dog persona, and been quite willing to switch breeds in order to own the latest and most fashionable protection dog in spite of the fact that most of the puppies supplied to this market have come from increasingly softer, more servile, less serious breeding lines.

Conformation oriented breeders, in Europe as well as America, benefited from this and encouraged and abetted this virile image, for it provided an enormous outlet at very good price for pups that for one reason or another were deemed as lacking in show potential. In general this market for lowest common denominator dogs was typically larger, easier to sell into and more lucrative than the production of actual police or military potential dogs, the replicas soon becoming much more popular and lucrative than the real thing.

This commercialization has been an ongoing problem for police and other agencies in that, generally, viable candidates today come only from very specific police level lines, maintained by the more serious and traditional trainers and breeders. Thus not every dog from these breeds has the potential for successful training and deployment; winnowing the wheat from the chaff in candidate selection is an ongoing process for every prospering police or military canine program.

Thus society in general, especially in the English speaking world, has had a complex and often conflicted attitude toward these breeds; there on the one hand being significant support for the idea that biting dogs are a societal problem and that such dogs should be strongly discouraged or at least bred and trained under tight control for police service only. On the other hand, as mentioned above, such dogs have become enormously popular exactly because of the police dog persona; many of us are drawn by the reflected sense of personal vigor and masculinity such a dog is perceived as providing. Thus there is an ongoing conflict between pacifist elements which believe passionately that guns and aggressive dogs should not be in the hands of the population as a whole and those who find fulfillment and personal liberty in their possession and are equally passionate in defense of their rights as citizens to unfettered access to any sort of gun or dog. This conflict is a profound political, ethical and practical rift in western civilization today; emotional commitment and a sense of impending loss of personal liberty or societal order, peace and tranquility make compromise – common ground – very difficult to establish.

These conflicts and contradictions exist on several levels. The advent of the canine establishment in the latter nineteenth century – featuring formal breeds,

registry books, dog shows and national kennel clubs – transformed the structure of the canine world. Especially in the English speaking nations the ideals and formalities of this emerging canine establishment were those of the proper upper classes, with emphasis on their hunting and house or lap dogs, and with a sense of gentility disparaging overt aggression. Aggressive dogs were generally perceived as vulgar, working class outcasts in this elite social hierarchy, as witnessed by the long delay in accepting the Belgian Shepherds into the formal Belgian registration system, which evolved in emulation of the British Kennel Club. As a consequence, the emerging protection breeds became in a sense the forbidden fruit for the upwardly mobile civilian; for to endorse and flaunt the inherent aggression, the broad basis of the popularity, was also to embrace lower class values, thus jeopardizing one's social aspirations.

These dogs of the more refined social elements were conceived as the noble friends and companions of mankind, especially the right sort of mankind, and elimination of any residual potential for overt aggression was a fundamental foundation of this new canine world order. Upwardly mobile urban middle class show dog hobbyists very much wanted to become perceived as being of the right sort, to feel included in this world of gentility and privilege. In such a world dogs which bit people, especially those bred and trained to bite people, were perceived as grossly inappropriate. Just as the people needed to labor in the fields and factories or provide services were to be kept in their place, perhaps necessary but not the sort for your children to play with or your daughters to marry, working dogs – like working men – were to be segregated, to exist on the periphery and for the benefit of elite society.

The resolute guard or protection dog has always had the aura of power and masculinity and in the era before firearms hunting dogs commonly participated in the kill as well as the chase or search. The upper classes in this era, and especially those aspiring to higher social stature, might disparage overt aggression in dogs as well as men, but on some level the powerful, confident, capable dog was always desired and admired, covertly if not openly. Formal duels, bear baiting, the dog fighting pit and other activities for manly men, and the women who admired and married them, may have gone out of fashion and the realm of legal activity, but the desire to perceive oneself as strong, capable and bold, and to have dogs with these qualities to reinforce this aura, has always been an integral part of our fascination with such dogs.

The advent of the police breeds thus created a problem in that many of these better sorts of people sought such dogs out for fashionable breeding programs and show ring competition, but were unable to reconcile the conflict of breeds whose functionality was based in aggression in a world where canine aggression was perceived as vulgar and low class. The solution was to evolve a mythology, an unspoken agreement to pretend that real police dogs still lurked in the souls of these pathetic, emasculated caricatures of the show ring. Of course it was and is an enormous, obvious, blatant falsehood; but it has become the conventional wisdom, the rationale of show line pseudo police dog breeding everywhere, even the European homelands, even in Germany, even in the SV, the mother club of the German Shepherd.

In America there was much less conflict in the early years since protection applications of any sort were at the extreme fringe of the canine world, with virtually no civilian involvement. American breeders resolutely emasculated their lines, practical protection training activity was virtually nonexistent and police programs were small, sparse, short lived and entirely out of the mainstream. There were no American military programs prior to WWII and in the aftermath military canine activity was on a vanishingly small scale prior to the Vietnam conflict.



Schutzhund protection engagement. The padded sleeve is separate, has a bite bar, comes in both left and right arm versions. The leather pants are for decoy protection, the dog is to bite only the offered sleeve. Shoes generally have rubber cleats for good footing. Stick is fiberglass, padded and then leather covered. Dog is the German Shepherd Gass Moravia Artex or Chico, earning his Schutzhund III, owned and trained by Chris Hruby.

Thus while the police dog was becoming enormously popular in America, nobody quite knew quite what to do with them in terms of practical application of their working potential. As a result they evolved primarily as nonfunctional replicas for dilettantes, becoming increasingly soft and fragile show dogs whose popularity was in reality based on mythology and pretend masculinity and vitality.

In the 1950s and into the sixties working dogs in America were at a low ebb, all police department programs had gone extinct and training involving any sort of aggression was on the extreme fringe of the canine world, a small number of guard dog trainers with their old fashioned pillow suits and junk yard dogs. Schutzhund or any sort of amateur sport training was years in the future. None of the breed books of the era ever really said anything about Schutzhund or protection applications beyond vague references to war service and police work; somehow biting dogs were analogous to your parents having sex: they must have because you were there but nobody really wanted to think about it.

The reemergence of police canine programs in the 1970s, driven to an extent by our national war on drug distribution, the spectacular success of canine scout and search dogs in Vietnam and a little later the emerging popularity of Schutzhund created a surge in serious protection dog training in America, ongoing even today.

Civilian applications of canine aggression are generally defensive in nature, as in personal, business or residence protection; there are very few circumstances where it is legal or appropriate for the ordinary citizen to send a dog for an engagement at a distance. Deterrence is usually the preferred mode of operation, an alert, barking dog can often send a potential problem down the road or alert the homeowner or pedestrian to the potential threat, often sufficient to avert criminal or violent interaction. The defensive fight or flight instinct is generally sufficient and appropriate; the posturing of aggression associated with this behavior often works as nature intended, causing a potential adversary to stand down thus averting an actual engagement. A successful bluff is usually the best outcome, without risk of injury or the potential legal ramifications of the dog actually biting an assailant, who always has the potential to prevail in court at great cost to the dog owner.

But the police dog must bring more, must have a strong offensive game to complement the defense, the ability to engage enthusiastically at a distance, as in pursuit and engagement deployments or area and building searches. For the patrol dog the bluff is not enough, many adversaries will persist and fight back and the dog must prevail until the handler or others can gain control and affect an apprehension. In the early years defense of the officer walking a beat, particularly at night in an era prior to street lighting, and intimidation on the street was the primary police canine role. But today the purpose of the dog is to extend the reach of the officer, to employ canine speed, agility and potential for intimidation and aggression to apprehend a suspect, offset his potential for violence or, most desirably, produce an apprehension without a physical engagement. Because of this need for overt aggression at a distance the defensive instinct, while necessary and fundamental, is in and of itself insufficient. To go beyond the simple close in protection the dog must have sufficient fighting drive to carry the action to a distant adversary and prevail.

Today a fundamental issue in canine protection training, and particularly in evaluation, is the relationship between sport performance and police patrol service. In the ideal, the highest scoring and most successful sport dogs would on the whole also be the best police candidates, that is, the trial should test and verify those attributes and capabilities fundamental to effective service. Just as the nature of police service evolves over time, driven by technical advancements such as the routine use of patrol vehicles and ubiquitous radio communication, and societal expectations in terms of evenhanded justice, the parameters of police canine service, and thus breeding, of necessity evolve.

In general there has been an increasing emphasis on discipline and control, partially driven by the fact that civilian video recording, aided and abetted by technical innovation and increasingly protected by court rulings, is possible in even the most remote and isolated circumstances. The days of "what happens on the street stays on the street" are over; street justice is increasingly subject to formal judicial review as citizens of the lower social strata are increasingly aware of their rights and civilian video recording and increasingly vehicle based departmental video, makes all police action potentially viewable in court. These evolving dynamics extend to canine service, and today there are instances of police canine handlers winding up in prison because of unwarranted aggression and inappropriate bites. On the whole, these are good things.

An ongoing problem, to be explored more completely in subsequent chapters, is that increasingly sport competition has become stylized and come to favor the compliant dog in a rote display of a routine series of exercises. Today these conflicts are so far advanced that we are seeing an evolving division of these breeds into show, sport and police lines rather than the historical division between show and work. This is, or should be, of great concern to all involved.

Since most of my background and experience has been in Schutzhund, the tendency here is to speak in terms of sleeve presentation and other references to specific aspects of this style of training. In general suit training is according to the same foundation principles with adaptations for equipment, and variations in technique or training approach are discussed as appropriate. For instance the modern Schutzhund helper will often slip or release the sleeve to end an engagement, allowing the dog to carry it off; a maneuver not directly possible with a full body style suit. Ring trainers will typically use tugs and other preliminary play devices and have leg paddings which can be released for the dog to carry and various other adaptations to allow reinforcement and reward of the predatory drive. As another example of variation in training philosophy and practice, emphasis on the full grip upon engagement is strong in Schutzhund, important in Belgian Ring and KNPV and less so in French Ring. This needs to be understood both from the point of view of trial points and the consequences for subsequent field deployment.

Expectations

The job description of the police or military dog has variations according to the requirements of the working and deployment environment and the policies, culture and preferences of the particular agency. General functional requirements calling upon the aggressive potential include:

- Apprehension of a fleeing subject.
- Searching for and detaining or engaging persons hidden in a building or other area.
- Response to any attack on the handler or others.
- Guarding a stationary suspect, that is, prevent him from fleeing.
- Guarding a person under escort.

Guard of an object, such as a bicycle or jacket, was also often an historical requirement, and these exercises are still included in trial systems such as KNPV or the ring sports. Such things are less prevalent in actual service because routine foot patrol is unusual, because the dog on his own is more vulnerable in that his adversary is more likely to be armed, and because of liability in the event the dog engages an incidental civilian with no specific criminal intent. Tactical radio systems, vehicle based patrol and more sophisticated and better armed criminals have driven evolution in the tactics of and requirements on police officers and their dogs.

Crowd control was historically an important canine function, even the primary reason for the dogs in some situations, but has to a major extent disappeared from public view in more recent years, especially in the United States. In the current era large-scale public demonstrations are often planned and scripted by quasi-professional political activists rather than the spontaneous eruptions of ordinary citizens. A primary objective is to provoke police response which can be taken to the courts for redress or for publicity and propaganda purposes; the video camera and manipulation of the press have become primary tools. In the 1960s snarling police dogs and fire hoses became all too common on the evening news, and police agencies have become much more sophisticated in training and deployment. In America particularly the use of dogs has been greatly curtailed, and if present at all they are in the background, deployed in a way unlikely to result in a featured role on the evening news.

Many patrol dogs today have a primary substance detection role, typically drugs for police dogs and explosives for military service dogs, in addition to the protection and aggression roles. Although single purpose detection dogs of various breeds are in common use, the aggressive potential of the police bred dog is often desirable because of the natural intensity, the resilience in difficult environments and the

immediate visual identification as a police or service dog. The protection function of such dogs may be primarily the defense of the dog and handler as they perform their detection services, with less emphasis on wider area search or pursuit capabilities or other more specialized or advanced functions. In such applications deterrence is an important benefit, the dog can intimidate without harming people encountered at a crime scene or in a military engagement, especially in urban areas, as in our recent Middle East engagements, where the adversaries are difficult to distinguish from the indigenous civilian population. Other applications require dogs more exclusively focused on the protection functions.

A primary justification of the police canine is the use of less than deadly force. Converting this to practical reality is one of the most fundamental and challenging aspects of training and deployment, for a person of interest may be entirely innocent, and the deployed dog may encounter innocent people other than the intended subject of the action. A factory or warehouse may for instance contain an unsuspecting watchman or guard, perhaps asleep in some remote corner, or a child, as well as a possible thief. Or the dog may redirect toward some other person in his field of view when sent after a fleeing subject, sometimes another police officer.

Other police personnel present in an engagement are sometimes bitten by a police dog out of confusion, poor situational management or just old-fashioned bad luck; and even with the best selection, training and deployment practices this is always a possibility. Sometimes the inappropriate aggression is against the handler rather than another police officer; and shooting the dog to resolve a conflict is a rare but unfortunately not unknown result of such incidents. Overt aggressive potential without the commitment to stability and reliable handler control and discipline is a serious threat to the agency personnel and the general public and in the long term the credibility and thus the viability of the canine program.

An effective police canine service with good public relations is founded in a solid selection and training program, with emphasis on practices and tactics where safety and control are built in with the foundation rather than afterthoughts. Training for the call off and the bark and hold in a search situation are often endorsed as tactics contributing to these ends, and incorporated in practical qualification tests such as the KNPV trial. The call off is a command, usually verbal but sometimes a whistle or other device, to cause the dog to break off the pursuit of a subject and return to the handler or to go to the down position. The bark and guard on a search procedure is the trained response to halt in front of a found subject and bark intensely rather than biting, intended to intimidate the subject and let the handler and others know of a find if out of sight.

But to an extent these can be public relations ploys which prove to be less than effective and reliable in the field: calling off the dog requires that it be in view of the handler, but a fleeing suspect, potentially an innocent person reacting in fear and panic, may go out of sight around a corner or disappear from view in a wooded area. Bark and hold is dependent on a subject locking up into a motionless posture, possible for the trial decoy with extensive experience and the protection of the body suit, but often not a reasonable expectation of an unprotected, inexperienced civilian, criminal or otherwise. The dog in the bark and hold posture is also vulnerable to a subject with a gun. The work of a police dog and his handler are by their nature often extremely hazardous; good strategy and training can minimize but never eliminate these hazards.

Good public relations are fundamental for successful canine programs In a sport club, police unit or any other context. Therefore control and neutrality in the presence of non-threatening people, animals such as other dogs and unexpected circumstances are a fundamental part of selection and training. This is equally as important as the characteristics of courage, hardness and aggression so admired and

necessary in the police dog persona. The foundation of the aggression potential comes from breeding, and as a consequence much of the training, both initial and especially maintenance of the in service dog, is focused on proofing the dog against possible distractions, such as other dogs or people engaged in innocent activity.

Just as the bravest man will know fear and insecurity but overcome it in the course of his duty, each dog is potentially subject to insecurity and fear of things such as gunshots or threats from the stick or bat of an adversary. Fear is natural and necessary to elicit an appropriate response, but a significant aspect of training is preparing the dog to persist in the face of aggressive action from the subject, such as striking with a bat, stick or other object. Stick hits, pushing or driving a dog on the sleeve and verbal intimidation during an engagement are thus generally part of the training regimen and trial or evaluation process. Teaching the muzzled dog to fight is also a time honored practice, although more prevalent in police rather than sport training. Other examples of testing and training include long distance pursuits and engagements, for going out away from the security and support of the handler can bring out the latent fear and insecurity in the marginal dog.

The Bad Old Days

In its most primitive form protection training is based on raw defense, often implemented by isolating the young dog from human contact – negative socialization in a sense – to foster fear toward all unknown humans. As the training commences the dog is restrained to preclude escape, by chaining to a fence for instance, and applying pressure by a show of threat and aggression on the part of the decoy and striking or beating the dog as necessary. The lesson for the dog is that all human beings are a threat best dealt with by a preemptive show of extreme aggression. This was never pretty, and of only limited real utility; even a cornered rat will fight. But in a quick, dirty and very crude sense this is sometimes superficially effective.

In earlier years American canine protection applications involved a certain amount of "agitation" to bring out the aggression of an often reluctant or marginal dog, such things as flanking, that is, grabbing and pulling the web of skin between the hind leg and body, striking the dog or cornering and pressuring the dog until he snaps and bites out of fear. Most of this was driven by simple stupidity and ignorance, the attempt to turn random dogs into supposed protection dogs. Crude methods were used because more sophisticated breeding, candidate selection and training approaches evolving in Europe were not yet widely understood in America. Much of the historical repugnance toward protection training on the part of the public in general and the canine community, particularly in America, was based on the observation or reports of this sort of crude and inhumane training of dogs. The fact that the dogs were often inadequate or marginal to start with, because those doing the training did not really understand the requisite character, tended to exacerbate the situation.

This old-fashioned approach to training was primarily built on fear and defense, cornering or threatening a dog to elicit a fighting response because the possibility of flight had been precluded by physical restraint. Although some vestiges of this have limited applications even today, modern methods emphasize escalating response to the predatory drive in combination with lower emphasis on defensive reaction; basically evolving as increasingly serious games. The defensive instinct is a fundamental aspect of the canine nature, and must be sufficient and drawn out carefully in training, but initial training should as much as possible be based on the predatory instinct. A primary reason for this is that true defense involves enormous psychological and psychological stress on the dog, the serious fear and the release of adrenaline into the system for a desperate fight or flight response. This is difficult to invoke on a routine basis and unnecessary, the dog responding from the predatory

and fighting instincts rather than fear knows joy in his work and gains confidence that he will prevail regardless of what his adversary might do. Sometimes a little bit of defensive pressure, followed by the decoy cowering and retreating at the first sign of aggression, is used to bring out a reluctant young dog. This needs to be the work of an experienced helper, and should perhaps be taken as a sign that the young dog is not quite ready.

This junkyard dog style was typical of much or most of American training into the 1960s and 70s, and was largely responsible for the poor public perception of protection work. The inherent problem is that this tends to produce a dog essentially fighting from a foundation of fear, and the response to fear is unpredictable and context dependent, which means the dog is likely to be indiscriminate and difficult to control. When the dog is weak or genetically insecure it might look impressive right up to the moment he runs and thus allows the adversary to win and succeed in his robbery, rape or home invasion. To train a capable dog in this way, to create and build on insecurity, to focus on fear driven aggression, is a waste and puts a potentially dangerous dog in the world at large. Good dogs improperly trained in this way can become dangerous dogs, and very good dogs can become very dangerous.

To force an insecure or inadequate dog to take on primarily fear based aggression is morally wrong, is dog abuse and is fraud when the dog is sold for service or bred based on the deceptive perception. Eliciting response from the defensive instinct is a legitimate and important aspect of all canine aggression training, even today. But this needs to be in the context of a balanced program with emphasis on the predatory and fighting instincts. Eliciting a defensive response by pushing the dog to respond at an extreme fight or flight point is wrong and ineffective, but eliciting the earlier and lower level stages of the defensive response and channeling this into a prey or fighting response where the dog succeeds and defeats the helper builds confidence and allows inborn courage to emerge. An escalating pattern of such engagements can play an important role in preparing the dog for fearful and stress inducing incidents in order to succeed in field deployment.

Balance is the key to success, training the dog at the other extreme, entirely based on the prey response where the helper never sufficiently challenges the dog by overt physical aggression and body posture, where the dog becomes confident because the engagement is a script with his win preordained, can produce success in the trial. But a more demanding helper or adversary encountered in real service may go beyond sport scenarios, break the script and sometimes thus break the dog. This is never a good thing, and failure in the field is an especially bad way to make the discovery.

Although modern training has become much more sophisticated and effective even today remnants of the old-fashioned defense based methods persist. Cornering the dog by back tying to a fence or a tight hold by the handler, with the helper approaching with verbal threats, ominous body language and a threatening stick or whip and then suddenly creating a bite opportunity is a standard approach to training. Done with skill this can build confidence and aggression. But dogs which respond only to such an approach are of very limited potential and should not be used in service or breeding.

Americans are fond of gadgets and mechanical contraptions, and this extends to dog training. Innovations in bite sleeve construction, promising rapid training progress and automatic full grips, are continually offered by competing firms and vendors, and new features in bite suits and protective pants are continually introduced. Much of this is profit driven; a pile of discarded sleeves replaced by the latest and greatest model represents pure profit for the vendors.

Table training, going back to hunting dog practice, has become fashionable in the past twenty years or so. Such training generally employs a round table, perhaps six

feet across, with a post or ring in the center to which the dog is restrained, often on a harness. This brings the dog face to face with the helper and can bring a higher level of threat and conflict. The dog is restrained so when great fear is induced the option of flight is precluded, and ultimately the dog must fight, the idea is to teach the dog that the only safe place is on the sleeve. Sometimes dogs are under such stress that they lose control of their bowels and bladder. Dogs fighting desperately for survival can be enormously intense and aggressive, but only the novice is taken in, those with experience recognize, and are dismayed by, what they are seeing.

While table training has been controversial and often rightfully condemned, the table itself is just another training device, morally neutral. An enormous amount of bad training has been done based on the table, but there are trainers using a table, often smaller and square rather than round, in the process of perfectly good training. If something bad is going on in table training, it is not the table itself but the training. More recently, the training "box" has come into use, based on the same general principles. Here the dog is in something akin to a small open front horse stall, on a platform perhaps two feet above floor level, restrained often on a harness with a wall on either side. Regardless of the mechanical contraptions involved, good training is good training and bad training is bad training. And training based primarily on fear, the raw invocation of the fight or flight instincts, is always bad training.

In my mind the old-fashioned fear based training is morally repugnant, is animal abuse when the dog is weak and fights back only from primitive survival instincts. When push comes to shove in a real world engagement or under pressure in the trial the dog may very well rediscover the option of flight at the worst possible moment. Eliciting the defensive response, done with skill and restraint and built on a foundation of confidence established through primary reliance on the predatory instincts is useful in preparing the dog for pressure he may see in the field or in the trial. But fear should not be the primary mechanism of dog training, and when fear is the only way to bring out a response the dog is inadequate and training should cease, a better dog is needed.

The Schutzhund movement in the 1970s and 1980s and more sophisticated police program administration brought a generally much better approach to training to America, one based on balance in selection and training foundation. In this approach the young dog is brought along by playing with a jute tug or an ordinary towel, the biting is part of the game and the dog wins in the end. As the dog becomes stronger and more mature the play is a little more intense and evolves to bring forward the defensive or fighting instincts. Over time the dog must become more assertive and aggressive in order to win.

Selection and Preliminary Training

Procuring, training and deploying police, military or security dogs must be done in a business like way so as to produce a profit or run a governmental operation within a reasonable budget. Expending time and money before eventually discarding the marginal dog greatly adds to program cost; it is essential to start with the best possible candidates and to initially focus on testing as well as training so as to identify and discard inadequate dogs as quickly as possible.

Capable, cost effective protection dogs are most reliably – and thus most economically – drawn from among strong working lines. Not every pup, even from the best lines, is born with the inherent potential to become an adequate police dog, and it can take a great deal of time and effort to bring the actual potential into focus. For the casual amateur trainer this can become a matter of eventually seeking another dog or being satisfied with the marginal dog, perhaps capable of a home field title on a good day but not something for breeding or to take in harm's way. But for police or military training, where the time of both the handler and the trainers is

a substantial ongoing expense, expending inordinate time attempting to train a dog which will ultimately be discarded becomes a serious financial drain.

Modern police and military dogs often serve in the presence of innocent people, including the taxpayers supporting the various programs. Extreme, overt aggression with marginal control was at one time sufficient or desired for some military perimeter security or old style police crowd intimidation applications, but today the vast majority must be reasonably social, neutral in non-threatening environments, in order to be acceptable. Effective socialization of the puppy and a foundation of confident social neutrality and obedience are today prerequisites for most service environments. For these reasons, and the need to test the aggressive potential early in the full time training cycle, professional programs often purchase older dogs, or dogs with some training, where experienced personnel can evaluate the dogs and thus greatly increase the expectation of success. As an example, the United States military training operation, at Lackland Air Force Base in Texas, breeds some of its own Malinois, which are placed in foster homes as pups to mature in a supportive environment providing good imprinting and social foundations. (This emulates a practice which has been ongoing for seeing eye dog programs for many years.)

This is also why police and military programs today are reluctant to accept donated dogs, for the cost of processing, training and then all too often discarding such dogs becomes prohibitive. Misguided efforts to train inadequate or marginal dogs, even from the police breeds, is inherently wasteful and likely to produce disappointment in service even if such dogs are moved through a training program without being pushed hard enough to demonstrate a realistic expectation of street success.

The strong emotional bond between handler and dog is the foundation of effective service, and in the ideal the pup comes into the long-term handler's care when it leaves the whelping box. But this is not generally practical in a world where a large portion of candidates, even from the best of lines, are found wanting and moved on. For economic and logistical reasons, patrol dogs are often brought to maturity in other environments to begin training as a more mature dog, where the inadequate can be quickly – and thus more cost effectively – identified and discarded. The typical police officer may have only one or two partners in a career. Military tours of duty are normally not much more than a year; when dogs are in short supply, as they have been in the Middle East conflicts for the past ten years, the military dogs remain in service, that is are generally placed with a new handler when the current handler's deployment comes to an end.

Although there have historically been instances of programs where a single dog was partnered with several concurrent handlers, and very unusual circumstances where this is current practice, the most effective and normal situation is an ongoing team of a single dog and handler where the dog resides with the handler. Thus the police canine usually resides with the officer in his home, and the military service dog and handler are together more or less around the clock when deployed.

Dogs are typically trained by full time specialist personnel and then introduced to the handler in a relatively brief transitional training program. The foundation training may be done either by commercial operations for eventual sale to the deploying agency or trained by full time in house personnel. For these reasons, training the individual handler is thus focused on establishing a viable working relationship with his specific dog, already trained by specialists, and establishing the necessary emotional bond, discipline and control rather than training the handler to become a ground up dog trainer. Just as the military truck driver does not need to know how to design or repair diesel engines, canine handler training is specific to the skills and knowledge needed to deploy an existing trained dog. (Such handlers may and often do have or develop more advanced skills, sometimes moving up a step to join the

ranks of the training staff.) Military dogs often have relatively long service careers and thus routinely transfer to a new handler, sometimes several times.

Today most established trainers work with their dogs to build confidence and drive at a young age, balancing light obedience and impartiality in the presence of neutral people and dogs with early aggression encouragement. The older dog which has been subjected to heavy-handed obedience – or admonished or punished for exuberance and enthusiasm – may require a period of encouragement and patience to understand that aggression is permissible and praise worthy in specific circumstances. In general a good dog who has been well socialized and exhibits acceptable manners will respond well; ruining dogs by being too nice to them or insisting on obedience and deportment is unlikely. On the other hand, lack of socialization and building fear in the young dog is likely to have long-term negative consequences, in the extreme rendering the dog dangerous or spooky and thus useless.

The importance of bringing out and encouraging the young dog is sometimes illustrated by an older dog of good potential, but through a lack of encouragement and a figurative tight leash in his early years does not immediately comprehend that aggression is acceptable, and may exhibit symptoms of avoidance. If the basic quality is there, a patient handler and helper can sometimes bring such a dog around, but this can be time consuming, a little frustrating and sometimes less than fully successful.

On the other hand, delaying training until a year or so old, as was the conventional wisdom many years ago, at least in some circles, can have its own set of problems. I recall like it was yesterday taking my old Gambit dog to training at about a year old, some thirty years ago. The introduction was to be a puppy or young dog circle, where a group of dogs, each on a line with a harness or leather collar, were to be introduced to beginning aggressive response, the idea being that the vocalization and response of the group would bring out the initially unsure dogs, sort of a group excitement thing. The helper would go around the circle, shaking a rag or tug at the dogs, seeking to elicit a response, eventually allowing one to get the object. One way or another the puppy sleeve came within reach and Gambit took it, and the problem was not getting him to bite, and not building a firm or secure bite, but how to get him to release. There was some sincere verbalization from the helper to get the dog off, for puppy sleeves are compressible, and the man was in real pain.

Based on thirty years of more perspective, this dog should have been started at a much younger age, and the release should have been built in from the beginning. In that way the inherent aggression could have been shaped and directed as it matured rather than emerging all at once, fully ready to go. Things have changed enormously over the years, we were a couple of years into Schutzhund training before seeing a German trainer with a Bouvier actually let the dog carry the sleeve off the field. I was astonished to see such a thing, which indicates where we were at the time. We had so much to learn.

Formal Foundations

Effective protection training requires simulating an engagement in a way that is realistic for the dog, that is emulates as nearly as possible the situations likely to be experienced in service or the trial, and is safe for the human adversary, variously referred to as the helper, agitator or decoy. Although early stages of training may involve biting and pulling on an object such as a rolled burlap bag or tug, as the dog advances to actually bite the helper injury is prevented or minimized by the use of protective equipment, that is padded arms in Schutzhund style training and a wide variety of padded protection training suits. Such suits can be very elaborate and

expensive, that is often more than \$1000 US dollars, sometimes much more, not an insignificant sum for sports equipment.

Protection training is largely a matter of finding the right dog and getting out of the way, letting the dog out to become mature in confidence and strength by winning at each stage, first by making the helper flee and then by controlling the helper with his bite. When extensive and elaborate effort is necessary to bring forth the aggression and the willingness to engage and bite, generally it is a matter of the wrong dog or a dog where the natural behavior propensities have been suppressed through heavy-handed discipline, an overly dominating handler or home situation. Even when such dogs can be induced to bite in defense through pressure, the aggressive capability may be only on the surface, likely to evaporate in a street encounter.

Usually informal training of the pup or very young dog is a matter of increasingly intense play with the handler, involving the grip of a rolled up burlap sack or commercially produced tug toy. In the transition to formal training with the helper, he will often also play with the young dog in a similar way, perhaps with the same objects employed in the preliminary training.

In the beginning stages of formal training especially, the helper is the dog trainer while the handler plays a secondary, supporting role. The helper is in the best position to gauge the response of the dog, by the firmness and calmness of the grip as well as what he observes, to know when it is necessary to reduce pressure and momentarily revert into a more overtly prey oriented presentation and when pressure can be increased to build drive and confidence through one small success at a time. As the dog matures the helper begins to bring more pressure through the intensity of presentation, by fighting after the grip and later by the stick in order to bring the defense into balance and build the confidence to respond to the unexpected. The protection engagements are driven by the prey and defensive or fighting instincts, and the most effective training program continually adapts to bring these drives into balance, to produce persistence, reliability and vigor in the dog's performance. This is primarily the function of the training helper, and while physical attributes such as quickness and strength are important elements of this work the most important helper skill is the ability to perceive moment by moment what is in the dog's mind, to see into his soul and know his fears and the depth of his aggression, and instinctively react to build confidence and drive. Immediate, instinctive response is the key element, one must become able to perceive the emerging problem in the early stages and react; a few moments to consider a response will often mean that the opportunity to build confidence or allay fear is lost. This is why experience and practice as well as abstract knowledge are of such fundamental importance in this work.

When I became involved in Schutzhund in the early 1980s young dog training was generally more defense oriented than it has become today. Typically it would begin with the helper quietly, menacingly approaching the young dog, staring directly at him, a practice referred to as making eye contact. A good helper can have enormous presence – demand the dog's attention, intimidate the dog – with very little overt motion through demeanor, presentation and posture. (This is very similar to the famous "eye" employed by Border Collie style herding dogs.) The dog may hesitate, and then give a tentative bark, in response to which the helper immediately retreats, often going out of sight in a blind. This experience builds confidence, shows the dog that he is in control, can make the adversary flee. Notice that this exercise begins by bringing out a defensive response but immediately flips over into a prey driven reaction. In this era it was not the usual practice to have the dog carry the sleeve but rather focus back on the helper when it was released, sometimes by helper threat after the sleeve release to draw the attention back. Teaching the out, the release of the sleeve or body suit, was generally deferred to a later phase of the

training, which meant that it was often difficult and required vigorous enforcement corrections. (This was an important reason for the transition to the more overtly prey oriented introduction typical today, where the teaching of the release is integrated from the beginning and thus generally less demanding of force and more reliable in the long term.)

In more recent years there has been a trend to bring out the young dog more in prey, for instance attaching a line to a tug or the sleeve itself and throwing it to one side and then retrieving it, inducing the pup to chase it in prey, similar to playing with a kitten with a mouse or object on a string. The follow up is often a series of helper run by maneuvers, with the sleeve just out of reach, resulting in a strong grip when it finally is presented. The usual conclusion of the exercise today is slipping the sleeve for the dog to carry.

In my view a measure of defense and the potential for resolute fighting drive is also essential, and it is normal to gently probe for defense in the beginning, and if adequate potential seems to be present to leave it alone and progress primarily through prey, where the dog is driven by the excitement of the engagement. This also sets the stage for control, and when the young dog is taught from relatively early in the progression that the release is sure to be rewarded by another bite, and carries the sleeve off the field after the last bite, the extreme pressure sometimes needed to enforce the out on a strong adult dog is minimized or entirely eliminated.

This shift in emphasis toward early reliance on the prey response has been an evolutionary trend, a matter of focus and emphasis in the balance point, for these are not diametrically opposite methodologies, but rather end points of a continuum. Good programs will continually adjust the balance between prey and defense according to the short-term response of the dog. Generally I find slightly challenging the dog early on useful for gauging his intrinsic nature as a down the road reference point. A moderate awakening of the defensive instinct with transition to prey can build confidence and enthusiasm. I have always been a little more comfortable with the concept of fighting the helper rather than playing with the equipment, but perhaps I am just an old dog having trouble with new tricks. In the broader perspective these are secondary issues, for if the power and aggression are present in the heart of the dog emphasis on preliminary prey training is not going to diminish the ultimate intensity and drive. The key element is always the ability of the helper to perceive weakness or insecurity and immediately adapt on the fly to produce the win for the dog, regardless of underlying philosophical training issues. This is not a matter of right or wrong so much as observing the reactions and at the first indication of insecurity immediately adapting the exercise to conclude with a win, thus building confidence.

Training based on foundations in prey and play have proven to be effective in many circumstances, and when real aggression and response through fighting drive and escalating helper aggression, and confident response to unexpected threats outside the trial script, is incorporated in later training this is a perfectly rational and reasonable approach. But when dogs are only tested to the script, and when trials are adapted to remove the stress of standing up to real, unscripted decoy aggression, as in the instances of the removal of the attack on the handler and the old fashioned turn on the dog courage test in Schutzhund, we are entering the realm of pretend and fantasy protection training. This will not be viable in the longer term, for serious police and military trainers will be forced to look for real dogs from other sources, exacerbating the ongoing separation between real service and traditional sport training and national breed clubs.

This general trend to a more purely prey oriented introduction to protection training is perhaps a reaction, even an overreaction, to the historically abusive methods of earlier American training. Particularly in sport venues there is a tendency

to regard the whole thing as some sort of a game, to be uncomfortable with real anger and aggression in the dog. Many French Ring proponents are this way, but it is a general trend among a large component of civilian sport oriented trainers.

The normal sequence is to introduce the young dog to objects such as the tug and then progress through a soft puppy sleeve, usually introduced as a separate object rather than on the arm and finally the puppy sleeve on the arm. At each of these stages the helper pulls away, inducing the dog to bite more firmly and persistently in order to maintain possession of the object. Once the bite is engaged, helper aggression evaporates as he pulls away, showing passivity and avoiding eye contact or other aggressive gestures and postures.

Since the dog is firmly restrained by an agitation harness or wide leather collar, which the line handler must absolutely control, the helper can come closer and closer before fleeing. In early bites the helper tends to run by the dog or the dog is allowed to move forward, restrained by the line, to get the grip on an essentially fleeing opponent. The sequence is from gripping an object, to gripping the object held by the helper, to biting a padded arm on a passive or retreating helper to, eventually, the point where the dog in his mind is engaging the man rather than the object.

As the process progresses the helper will more and more step forward into the dog with a presented sleeve and allow a bite, to which he typically turns and pulls away, maintaining the horizontal sleeve position so as not to twist the sleeve in the mouth. This turning the head and body away, and shunning eye contact, is a submissive posture intended to give the dog the sense of winning, that is, building confidence. If the dog releases his grip the helper escapes, ending the fun and the game. This builds the strong, firm, persistent grips desired in the trial and service. Today the engagement will usually end with the helper slipping his arm out of the sleeve, allowing the dog to carry the prey object home in triumph.

As the training advances the helper is more persistent and aggressive, in time responding to the bite by stepping forward into the dog, with the opposite hand up with a stick or in a threatening posture. This evolves into a process, called driving the dog, of continually stepping into the dog with an increasingly aggressive demeanor and increasingly threatening with, and eventually striking with the stick.

Every dog is different and presents a new set of training challenges; there is no recipe to turn out good protection dogs automatically like apple pies. Thus there must be variation and ongoing adaption in the process of bringing out and enhancing the willingness and ability of a young dog to engage, to go to the sleeve or suit and take the desired firm, confident grip and fight the man even when he is aggressive and uses the stick to test confidence and courage.

In most protection training programs the desired bite is the full grip, in which the initial bite is firm and persistent, taking in and holding as much of the offered sleeve or suit fabric and padding as possible. Thus the full grip is the fundamental objective from the beginning of training, because it is the safest for the dog and the helper, because it is the most desirable in most deployment circumstances and because it measures and builds confidence in the dog. One important consideration is safety, for with the full, secure grip the weight of the dog is not brought to bear on the fangs, which function primarily to keep the sleeve or suit from slipping rather than bearing the weight of the dog and the forces arising from the aggressive motions of the helper. Since the teeth are simply keeping the sleeve from slipping rather than bearing the weight of the dog, broken teeth are much less likely.

Discipline

Much of the operational justification for the police dog is limited and recallable force, that is, a non-deadly option to the gun in deployment engagements. The concept of innocent until proven guilty, although not perfectly observed, is the

foundation of the modern judicial system and the deployment of canine force must be justified in these terms. For these reasons the ideal modern police dog should be recallable, engage with minimum practical force and release a bite and go into the guard mode upon handler command, or when the adversary ceases resistance. This is of course all fine in theory, but in reality adversaries flee or fight back in unpredictable ways and people, too often innocent people, get bitten; but training and deployment decisions need to strive for the ideal in a much less than perfect world. The adaptability of the tending style herding breeds to this mode of operation is a primary reason for their evolution into our police breeds of today.

Uncontrolled aggression, where the off lead dog is beyond effective handler control, has little practical utility in the modern urban environment. On their own dogs revert to primitive, instinctive reactions according to territory and social associations where unknown people are often by default adversaries; it is the responsibility of the handler to maintain control and to the extent possible direct limited aggression to the intended adversary rather than incidental people present, including other law enforcement personnel.

In the trial there is always an out or release command after a bite when the helper becomes stationary or locks up, to which the dog must respond by releasing and going into a strong guarding posture. In the early years of my Schutzhund experience the general tendency was to introduce the out or release relatively late in the training cycle, when the dog was showing strong aggression, often in the days or weeks leading up to a first trial. The conventional wisdom behind this was concern that the coercion necessary to compel the release would intimidate and confuse the dog and thus diminish the intensity and drive. The consequence was often a crisis in training because a great deal of pressure and compulsion was necessary to affect a release, and the dog would have the tendency to bite again immediately. Furthermore the out was a result of handler intimidation, which meant that the dog would be less likely to comply the further away he was. In the trial the handler is relatively far from the dog, and the dogs would often perceive that the trial situation was different, further reducing the incentive for compliance.

Training is reward and punishment, and in the old-fashioned mode of training the release was almost completely coercion, there was nothing in the dog's mind that was or could be construed as a reward in releasing the bite and giving up the engagement. In obedience a reward in the form of food or the expectation of a ball for a straight sit or quick recall was a practical ancillary approach, but balls and treats mean little to a serious dog engaged with the helper. These dogs were bred and selected for aggression, tenacity and fighting drive, and to give up the fight and release is contrary to this basic nature.

Contemporary practice is to introduce the out as much as possible based on reward rather than physical compulsion. The problem is that a ball or a treat are not practical or sufficient, mean nothing to the dog in the aggression mode. The solution was found in giving the young dog another bite as a reward for a clean release, with the dog carrying the sleeve off the field after the last bite so that every release is quickly followed by the reward of another so that the association is firmly established. Properly executed, this training process usually results in a quick, clean out and an intense guard because of the expectation of an immediate repeat bite. Rather than delaying the release to late stages in the training cycle, often under the pressure of an approaching first trial, the release is incorporated from the very beginning, sometimes even in playing with the puppy tug or burlap sack before the introduction of the helper. Some correction and coercion is often necessary, but it is secondary and transitory, reinforcing the basic reward based training process.

Tom Rose used to teach a sit stabilization method where the dog was on a long line and a harness and a second person, often the dog's handler, was behind the

helper with a separate line and a pinch collar. The advantage of this is that the correction is into the helper, which avoids a tug of war scenario. When the correction is from behind the dog, strong dogs will often become extremely stubborn and difficult, persist and become even more determined in response to the compulsion.

In the Schutzhund trial the decoy always comes to a complete halt, becomes locked in a fixed position, before the release command, and the dog is always expected to go into an intense guard mode. In ring sport the out is in some situations required before the complete cessation of decoy motion, and the dog is in some exercises recalled rather than expected to guard.

When the dog outs or releases, he must stay focused on the helper. With proper training the dog believes that he has won, and is challenging his adversary to continue the fight. This is, of course, the picture that makes the judge tend to give full points. And, even more importantly, it is the picture in the police patrol dog that makes the suspect just want it all to come to an immediate end, puts him in the frame of mind to accept apprehension without further resistance.

While the release and guard is the most difficult and important aspect of discipline, the dog must also learn to guard a subject under escort and to reliably stay in the heel position as the handler moves about the trial field, even though the helper is present and sometimes in plain sight. The protection or guard dog is made in breeding selection rather than on the training field, and the fundamental task of protection training is to build reliable discipline and control, and teach correct biting technique, that is proper grips, while minimizing inhibitions on aggression.

Ongoing Training

The normal training sequence is motivation, teaching, repetition, distraction proofing and testing or evaluation. This is not a linear process progressing sequentially one phase at a time but rather a continuum with emphasis on motivation and teaching in the early stages gradually evolving to build reliability and confidence through success in scenarios with escalating complexity, pressure and unexpected challenges. Helper presentation increases in presence, persistence and unpredictability. It is important to subject the dog to new and unexpected challenges beyond the trial, such as sudden direct attacks from unexpected places and long distance pursuits on a new field with a new helper. Distractions can also include the introduction of a second helper, barrels or buckets suddenly bouncing to the side or behind the engaged dog or throwing large, soft objects such as a plastic swimming pool or light folding chair at or to the side of the dog as he engages. Unexpected attacks away from the training field, on the street or in the dark, are also a common practice. (Belgian Ring incorporates this sort of unexpected occurrence into the actual trial.)

Distractions, unexpected occurrences during training and at other times, serve two purposes, that is, they build and maintain excitement, anticipation and enthusiasm in the dog and they create confidence that will carry on through the inevitable unscripted adversary responses typical of actual on the street service. Surprise events are also part of the evaluation process, for the dog who falters in a new situation, even if he regains composure through acclimation, must be questioned as an actual patrol candidate. It is true that this is less of a consideration in trial preparation, where in the popular systems there is little or no variation; but this is a serious and difficult to overcome limitation of the working trial and the reason why the trial or resulting title should not be the ultimate deciding factor in the suitability of a dog for service or breeding.

In general, while most of protection training is confidence building, acclimation to increasing threats and overt helper aggression and establishment of discipline in

increasingly demanding circumstances, it is necessary from time to time to test the dog, to create novel, unexpected threats to gauge the progress. When the dog does well training is on track, and if the dog should show insecurity the competent helper will immediately convert a testing situation into a confidence building exercise, show enough weakness to give the dog a win. This can often be done by fleeing and allowing the dog to catch up and take the sleeve or by going back to line agitation.

In commercial or agency environments, testing and evaluation are usually incorporated early in the training because elimination of inadequate prospects is a primary requirement, and must be done as soon as possible consistent with sound and humane training because the process is expensive; military or police dog programs cannot routinely put six or eight weeks of training in a dog only to wash him out. (Although inevitably on occasion a dog will be on the edge and thus be taken further in order to make a good ultimate decision.)

Testing is both informal and ongoing and formal in the trial. The working trial is a known and predictable sequence of exercises with consistency in trial helper behavior as a fundamental feature. The consistency of the exercise sequence is the strength of the system in that it is the foundation of repeatable testing; helps insure that each dog receiving a title has met similar challenges. But it is also the weakness of the system in that it does not emulate the enormous variety in adversary response – that is evasive and retaliatory action that the dog would encounter in actual police service. Good trainers and clever handlers are often able to conceal flaws and put titles on dogs, often with impressive scores, and this will always be true.

Because of these inherent limitations in the formal trial, it is necessary for the serious working dog breeder and trainer to take personal responsibility, to strive for deeper understanding than the trial can provide. Failure in a trial coming as a surprise is an indication of a failure in the testing aspect of training and the intrinsic competence of the trainer. It is true that there can be a bad day, the baseball batting champion sometimes strikes out, and professional football players sometimes throw interceptions rather than touchdown passes; but these are the exceptions.

Protection work can be like magic in that a skilled practitioner can deceive the eye by directing attention away from the action and by feigning pressure. The attack on the handler, where the helper suddenly appears and intensively approaches the dog in an intimidating way, demanding response to a serious threat, can actually consist of a quick show of threat and then subtly stepping back to draw the dog in; it happens so quickly that the inexperienced will usually be deceived. This show of threat and then weakness to let the dog win easily is the foundation of protection training, but is not a valid test to verify the dog. Such deceptions are created for a variety of reasons, including convincing a customer that his beloved pet has been transformed into Fang the wonder dog, selling a marginal or inadequate dog and passing a trial or certification. This is the inherent weakness of the Schutzhund trial, for a dog can be and often is certified working on a familiar helper who knows from experience the strengths and weaknesses of the dog and how to elicit the most impressive responses, where he can show pressure and where he must subtly ease off. This is why experienced people will very often ask to test a dog on a new and neutral helper of their own selection before purchasing a dog.

In canine protection work, as in so much of life, what you think you see is not always what is actually transpiring. Some exercises, such as a dog being agitated in his own vehicle, may be full of sound and fury but signify essentially nothing. Most creatures will put up some sort of a fight when cornered and seriously frightened; this the most primitive defensive instinct. Knowing what you are seeing is a matter of understanding what the dog must overcome. A strong, confident man facing a dog directly, wielding a stick, or stepping into the dog to accept the bite is a true challenge; the man running by the dog is much less challenging and weak or fearful

dogs will often bite a man turning away. Distance is also a challenge to the weak or marginal dog, every step away from the handler is into the unknown, and away from security. The KNPV trial features extremely long runs, often with a call off, in order to test the dog. The old style Schutzhund courage test lured the dog to a significant distance by a fleeing helper, who suddenly turned and charged the dog. The level of challenge and stress is demonstrated by the fact that this exercise was eliminated from Schutzhund by the conformation show politicians for the same reason they eliminated the attack on the handler, these were the heart of the old Schutzhund trial, and too many of the show line German Shepherds were proving to be inadequate.

In evaluating a dog it is necessary to know and understand what is truly challenging, reveals inherent flaws, and what is being set up to impress the less than sophisticated audience. Holding a dog in on a short leash while a familiar helper makes a big show of arm waving and intimidation is fine for beginning dog training, but not a demonstration of strong character, is a bit like the little guy in a bar whose friends are holding him back from the fight, scared to death that they might actually let him loose. In a similar way, leaving a dog in a vehicle with open or partially open windows and having a helper approach in an aggressive way is likely to result in a lot of barking and showing of teeth from even a relatively weak dog, yet many people are impressed with such things. Inexperienced people in the market for a candidate or trained older dog are often well advised to seek out, and pay for if necessary, assistance from a competent trainer in testing and evaluating the dog. A seller unwilling to have the dog tested on a neutral field by a new helper should be taken as an indication that extreme caution is appropriate.

The Helper

The training decoy or helper¹, the man who puts on the suit or sleeve to impersonate the human adversary, is the foundation of the training process. This work is quite demanding, both in terms of the requisite knowledge and skill and the physical strength and quickness to engage the dogs, many of which are big and powerful or quick and energetic, hitting and biting very hard. Working the novice dogs, trying to bring forth the latent aggression, often involves a great deal of skill and physical exertion. Although accidents in the sense of a bite on unprotected flesh are unusual, most helpers end their day with aches and pains from the physical impact. It is said, only partially in jest, that there are two kinds of helpers: those with back problems and those whose back problems have yet to surface.

Selecting a protection helper to work with is the prerogative of the owner or trainer, but once this commitment is made it becomes the training helper's function to provide direction, to devise and adapt his procedures according to the characteristics of the dog and where it is at in the training process. It is generally desirable for the young dog to work consistently with a primary helper for the sake of continuity, so as to adapt to the progress and propensities of the dog, and to give the dog confidence through familiarity. In this way the dog sees the same picture from session to session, without disconcerting differences in technique and presentation. Also by noting reactions and trends over time the astute helper is often able to perceive and resolve small problems as they emerge with minor corrections and adaptations rather than having to deal with a significant problem. As the dog progresses and gains confidence it is the normal practice to introduce gradually other helpers in order to present diverse presentations and styles. The handler of the titled

¹ The terms decoy, helper and agitator are used more or less interchangeably.



The Schutzhund catch on the long bite. Notice that the helper has the stick high to threaten the dog, that the sleeve is away from the body so that it can flex in as the dog engages and that the helper is almost at a stop, and in a fraction of a second will catch the dog with little forward motion and two feet on the ground prepared to flex on engagement. (Helper Wayne Singleton. Dog is Carla Smith's Attis Daisy Nina Dvora.)

or trial ready dog will often seek out diverse helpers in order to prepare the dog for whatever might happen in the next trial.

Although size, strength and quickness do matter in the decoy, ultimately such things are less important than intuitive knowledge of the nature of the canine, honed through experience for instinctively presenting the picture and challenge the dog needs to progress. While good communication between helper and handler is essential, one simply cannot expect to micro manage on the training field. The handler or person working the line

on the harness or collar must respond to helper direction; although there is typically a brief discussion prior to the session only the helper can effectively make the moment-by-moment decisions.

In many ways the training helper is similar to your personal physician; it is your prerogative to choose but once committed you need to accept guidance, follow the program and procedures in a cooperative way. Those finding themselves in disagreement consistently are working with the wrong person and need to adjust either their attitude or seek a more compatible helper to work with.

While the blatantly insecure dog is obvious, even to the owner if he is willing to see it, only the helper facing the dog, looking into his eyes, observing the subtleties of demeanor and feeling the strength, confidence and firmness of the grips, has the complete picture. It is a quick, intense, intuitive process and the handler must pay close attention and react quickly to direction, often nonverbal as in a nod of the head or a quick glance at the handler to indicate increased or lessened line tension or an out command. It is the skill of the helper which is ultimately responsible for channeling aggression, bite building and confidence establishment, and he must make the intuitive moment-by-moment hands on decisions. As the training progresses the helper will increasingly apply pressure in subtle ways involving eye contact, demeanor and sleeve presentation, observing reactions and adapting accordingly. As the training advances and the focus changes to discipline and control, these roles begin to reverse: the handler gradually begins to make more of the ongoing decisions, trains and corrects the dog and more and more directs the helper. In the refinement and polishing of the nearly ready dog, the handler normally directs the helper so as to create temptations and distractions so that he can correct faulty actions by the dog, such as nipping the sleeve during a guard exercise, which would result in trial point loss.

Excellence in the protection dog flows from his internal confidence and fighting drive, and to build and maintain such dogs the training exercises must be increasingly intense and focused, with the helper increasingly in the role of

adversary. Conflicts or misunderstandings between handler and helper, particularly on the field, interrupt the flow of training and are seriously detrimental to the progress of the dog. For the helper to slip out of character to engage in a running commentary or direct the handler verbally confuses the dog enormously, with the worst possible scenario being to stop and discuss things during a session, with the dog just standing there. When the helper suddenly flips roles from adversary to neutral person it immediately confuses and sucks the drive out of the dog; and when this occurs often in training it is extremely detrimental to the long-term progress and potential of the dog. The proper thing to do when there is serious confusion is to give the dog a good strong bite, a brief fight and then put him away. In this way the differences can be worked out in detail and a new session begun to resume the training.

Virtually all initial and drive building level training takes place on a line, attached to a harness or the wide leather collar, because there is minimal obedience in the beginning and because much of drive building is a process of overcoming inhibition, either innate social inhibitions or created in previous training. Handling the line demands a great deal of knowledge, skill and understanding of the process, which the novice trainer is, by definition, lacking. Often a third person will handle the line, in order to avoid dealing with two novices at one time, the dog and inexperienced owner.

Third party line handling has significant advantages even when the handler is experienced. The young dog is often uncertain and insecure, and can be overly sensitive to the presence of the handler, yet quickly accept a third person as just part of the equipment on training day. Typically in this situation, the line handler's role is to provide correct restraint on the line and perhaps coach the inexperienced handler, but direct interactions with the dog such as commands and corrections come from the actual handler. The third person can sometimes make verbal or other suggestions or directions which would be extremely distracting to the dog were the helper to take on this additional role. Sometimes there is pinch or chain correction collar in addition the control line. Corrections in many circumstances, especially in enforcing the out command, are much more effective when the line on the pinch or chain collar is such that a correction is toward rather than away from the helper. This is because a correction that pulls the dog away often only reinforces the determination to hold on.

Protection dog training is very serious business and an accident can produce a bite to exposed flesh and a serious injury, other injuries such as muscle pulls or strains or injury to the dog such as broken canine teeth. The handler or line handler plays a key role in safety by preventing the dog from reaching the helper at the wrong time or in the wrong manner or by restraining the dog when a potentially dangerous situation evolves. On occasion the helper will go down, either trip or be caught off balance by the dog. If on the line it is the responsibility of the line handler to protect the helper, which is only one of several reasons why virtually all of the early training is on a line. Older and more experienced dogs will generally hold the bite on the sleeve or suit if possible or refrain from biting or harassing the down helper. This is entirely appropriate for the in service police dog, guarding but not engaging the downed suspect gives the police handler and other officers the opportunity to deal with the situation. At the risk of excessive anthropomorphism, my perception is that most dogs have or develop a sense of fair play and are not generally looking for the cheap shot. When two dogs face off, if one goes into the down submissive posture usually the other dog will stand over him but not otherwise bite or harass, and similar response to the down human adversary is reasonably explained as a natural extension of this instinctive behavior.

Helpers or decoys serve two distinct functions or roles; that of training helper as discussed to this point and that of trial decoy, where the purpose is to test the dog

and reveal correct or improper response and verify the courage and control in the dog. The trial helper must be physically capable, honest and consistent, but reading and evaluating the dog, the core of the training helper's task, is much less important, for his responsibility is to test the dog so as to allow the judge to assign the appropriate points. Although many helpers easily step into either role, the best trial helpers are not necessarily great training helpers and many men who may be less physically gifted, or older, excel at training because of their intuitive grasp of canine reaction, honed through experience, and ability read the dog and devise an effective approach. The key trial helper skills and attributes are more physical than mental in that he must be strong, quick, reliable and honest, but not necessarily especially skilled in observing and reacting to the particular propensities of the dog before him. Quite the opposite in fact, his function is to work all of the dogs in a uniform way, setting aside his personal observations of the nature of the dog and leaving evaluation and commentary to the judge.

Suits and Sleeves

Canine protection training requires equipment and protocols that allow the dog to bite or grip with minimal risk of serious injury to the helper. Although the agitation muzzle can provide this protection in some situations, most training today relies primarily on protective equipment worn by the helper to take the brunt of the bite. The helper's protection comes in two basic forms: the full body suit where the dog in principal may bite wherever he can or a separate, padded arm sleeve where the dog normally bites only the presented forearm. Even with the best equipment safe training requires skill, knowledge and commitment on the part of the helper, the handler and third parties handling a line. An inadvertent dog bite is only one potential injury, as the high impact of the bite and the extreme athletic maneuvers, such as the dog pursuing from behind and leaping to grip the sleeve, can lead to all of the common injuries of serious contact sports, especially to the back and knees. Although I am not aware of any statistical data, my general impression is that serious and disabling injuries to the helper are much more often the result of a twist or strain, producing knee, shoulder or back damage for instance, rather than an actual bite. Safety for the dog is also dependent on good equipment and skillful work, for he is without protective equipment and dependent on both the helper and often the line handler to insure a minimal impact and secure grip. The full, firm, secure grip is very important to the safety of the dog, for in this situation the grip on the sleeve or suit is through the power of the jaws, with the teeth merely keeping the grip from slipping. The faulty grip can put the weight of the dog on the canine teeth, which can often lead to a broken tooth.

The historical configuration and construction of protective equipment has been according to the nation and sport, that is, the removable, padded sleeve and forearm only bite was characteristic of Schutzhund and thus associated with Germany and the German Shepherd. The rest of the European police dog world – the Dutch, Belgians and French – have from the beginning primarily relied on variations of the full body suit allowing the dog wide latitude in bite placement and style. The suit consists of pants that strap over the shoulders and a fully padded jacket, both intended to withstand bites. In the bite jacket especially protection from contusion and actual puncture is dependent on the skill of the helper in making a presentation that results in the bite to the fabric of the jacket itself, the arm being positioned within the jacket sleeve to avoid a direct bite. This is generally not entirely effective and minor injury to the helper is not the least bit uncommon. Helpers will often use an elastic bandage wrap (Ace being a popular brand name) commonly used for ankles and other applications in vigorous sports on the arms or legs where extra protection is desirable. Suit construction at the top level is complex and continually evolving, with many suits made to special order according to the measurements and



French Ring Suit. Top and bottom separate, bottom generally supported by suspenders over shoulder. Dog may bite legs, body or arms. In other exercises the helper will use a split bamboo stick.
Beauceron: Avatar des Ombres Valeureux, owner Tim Welch, helper Waleed Maalouf

preferences of the helper. The French Ringers and their suit makers tend to favor bright colors and elaborate decorative fashions, which resonates with the general tendency of the ring helper to be a performer, a part of the spectacle, rather than in the background to the dog.

These differences in equipment configuration and construction necessitate inherently distinct biting and training styles in that the forearm presentation of the bite sleeve allows the helper to aggressively run at the dog and accept the bite in a catch maneuver designed to dissipate safely the momentum of the dog, which is difficult to do with a body suit. The inherent problem is that this teaches the dog that his adversary is cooperative, will always present a forearm in a highly stylized manner, an unrealistic preparation for a real world where adversaries are real enemies with a natural desire to evade or strike back at the dog.

These contrasting protection trial procedures and practices are driven more by historical differences in equipment configuration than deep-seated philosophical considerations, which seem to have evolved more to justify existing practice rather than on their own internal, intrinsic merits. Equipment style selection and design is always a compromise. The use of the sleeve means that the dog learns only one style of bite, making variations in presentation and engagement scenarios more difficult to implement. The suit generally renders impractical running hard at the dog and demanding a full engagement as the criteria of success, one of the fundamentally most demanding and intimidating maneuvers. This philosophical division along national lines – the parties to which engaged in two gut wrenching twentieth century military confrontations – has engendered the irrational, deep-seated distrust and hostility normally reserved for religious differences.

Although Schutzhund style training involves the dog only biting the presented arm, and some dogs are occasionally worked without any other protection, dogs will at unpredictable times bite whatever they can get at. This can come from frustration, inexperience or plain nastiness in the dog; or an illicit bite may be the response to an inappropriate or poorly timed sleeve presentation. Thus when using the sleeve the

helper is also generally protected from inadvertent body or leg bites by a pair of padded pants, usually with straps over the shoulders to support the weight while still giving maximum mobility. A sleeveless jacket is sometimes also used. In recent years the trend has been toward much lighter pants, referred to as scratch pants, which prevent damage from the claws and minimize but do not entirely eliminate the pain and damage from a bite. This trend has in general been a consequence of more resilient materials increasingly available and reasonable in price. In initial training the ability of the dog to bite, the reach, is usually restricted by a line attached to an agitation harness or wide protection collar, usually leather. In this situation the safety of the helper is directly related to the skill and alertness of the line handler and effective communication between the two.

The dog goes to the sleeve because of the manner of presentation and training, that is, he is restrained by the line, and the sleeve is presented in such a way that it is the natural and effectively only way to get a grip. In training the helper often releases the sleeve so that the dog can carry it, making it in a way the object of the exercise rather than the man. Many would make the point that equipment orientation brings into question the commitment of the dog to persist in an actual encounter with an aggressive and unpredictable man. These are valid concerns, but proper training will also test the dog in more realistic, unpredictable situations and correct any revealed vulnerabilities.

Hidden sleeves are commonly employed to test the willingness to engage what appears to be a person without distinctive equipment. Such sleeves tend to be harder and more compact, and are worn under an article of normal clothing to conceal their presence. The elastic bandage can be wrapped over the arm under the hidden sleeve to provide more protection. The external surface which the dog bites is often leather rather than jute like fabric, but the diameter can be only slightly larger than the man's arm, allowing the larger dogs to gain a secure grip encompassing most of the sleeve. Purely sport trainers seldom employ hidden sleeves, or other ancillary training methods countering equipment reliance, because these are perceived as a distraction to the fixed scenario nature of the trial.

Dogs persistently failing to make a strong transition from equipment to the man are generally unsuitable for actual service, and the fact that some dogs relying on equipment for motivation do quite well in the trial is one reason that trial results are not definitive indications of suitability. Those making breeding selections or acquiring dogs for police service need to be aware of these issues and sufficiently test each dog to their satisfaction; the trial or title can never be the ultimate determination of quality or real value. This is especially true of the export market. Locally if a dog slides through a trial on a lucky day or with a soft judge, prospective purchasers generally have or can locate contacts with firsthand knowledge, but those purchasing an import, especially through a broker, are unlikely to have similar access.

Sometimes in training the helper will work with only the sleeve or with a leather apron for scratch protection, usually when the dog is securely restrained by a line. For obvious reasons, the experienced helper tends to work this way only when confident in the ability of the handler to maintain control over the reach of the dog by good line handling and proper equipment. This is often done with young dogs because it provides more mobility and thus animation in the presentation and because it is less tiring in warmer weather or when many dogs are to be worked. French Ring trainers often use a separate, detachable leg pad in young dog training for similar reasons of convenience and allowing the dog the encouragement of actually taking possession of the padded object.

Although the Belgian, Dutch and French systems all incorporate a full body suit, which the dog will bite in the way natural to him and according to his training, there are substantial differences in the construction of the suit itself and the style of

presentation and training. The Dutch police or KNPV suits are still relatively stiff and heavy and as a consequence there is a lack of mobility in training and trial maneuvers, while the French Ring trainers have evolved much lighter suits and much more active and agile helper behavior. Typically leg, thigh, arm and body bites are permitted or encouraged. In general in KNPV, bites are to the upper part of the body or upper arm rather than the leg or a presented forearm. An exception is that most KNPV participants train their dogs to go to the leg in the bicycle exercise, in which the dog pursues a person fleeing on a bicycle, in the interest of safety, although dogs going airborne and making a spectacular grab of an arm or shoulder have also been popular, especially for the audience. The French Ringers generally prefer the leg bite because of the style of the decoy work and the scoring of the judges. The Ring helper is expected to evade the bite by shifting his body and by deceptive maneuvers. In most other systems the function of the decoy is to present a consistent picture to each dog in the interests of safety and fairness.

In Schutzhund the dogs come in fast and hit hard on the long bite or courage test; the function of the helper is to safely catch the dog and then drive him, that is, push into and threaten him with the stick in an attempt to intimidate and cause a release, which results in failure if the dog does not immediately come back hard. On the long bite the helper runs toward the dog, slowing as the dog begins to engage, so as to minimize the speed of impact, which is the combined forward speed of the dog and the helper, while still maintaining the threat to the dog. The point of physical engagement is referred to as the catch, which is exactly what should occur: the dog will grip the sleeve and carry it forward while his momentum dissipates because the helper allows the arm and sleeve to flex. A hard impact where the helper holds his arm rigid relative to his body is faulty and very dangerous; this is sometimes referred to as jamming the dog. The helper must position the sleeve correctly and maintain relative position once the dog leaves the ground, for at this point the dog has little control over his trajectory, although he can to some extent twist his body in the air to adjust position slightly for the bite. The helper will typically allow the dog to swing to the side, dissipating momentum, and as the dog gathers his feet under him on the ground begin the drive of the dog. In addition to correctly executing the catch and drive, the helper is expected to wind up driving the dog in a direction providing an unobstructed view for the judge. The consistent execution is fair to all dogs and allows the judge to place himself for the desired point of view to score the dog. All of this requires an enormous amount of skill and practice on the part of the helper, which is why really good helpers are so greatly respected and valued.

The suit style decoys do not run at the dog but rather hold their ground and threaten the dog with the stick, which is split bamboo in Ring and a freshly cut three quarter inch sapling in KNPV. The KNPV decoy does not evade, but will strike the dog a sharp blow with the sapling before the dog actually engages. This can be very intimidating, and if a dog is going to fail this is likely to be the moment.

The French Ring helper on the other hand is, by culture and tradition, expected to evade the dog, that is, make last moment maneuvers to the left or right and otherwise deceive the dog. This results in the dog slowing slightly and looking for the helper to commit. Most French Ring dogs are rigorously trained to go to the thigh or leg because going higher gives the decoy more opportunity for evasive maneuver and the consequent loss of points.

My view is that the suit sports would in general be enhanced by an exercise where the helper aggressively runs directly at the dog in the most intimidating manner possible; but the mechanics and dynamics of the suit render a safe and yet intimidating final engagement in such a scenario very difficult. The ring dog, at one level or another, comes to understand that there is an invisible plane in front of the helper which will not be crossed, that safety and security are always just a step

back. This implicit plane of safety is an inherent negative aspect of the suit training, but credible and workable alternatives are difficult to conceive. Nevertheless the fact remains that aggressively running hard directly at the dog with threatening gestures and verbalization is enormously intimidating and in the ideal would be incorporated into every serious test.

On the other hand there is a credible argument that Schutzhund helpers making a predictable presentation and uniform catch on all occasions acclimates dogs inappropriately and thus reduces the intimidation of the test, does not adequately emulate the pressure of real world encounters. Real criminals after all are not often capable of or willing to behave in this way. Introducing systematic variation in the final approach would require that the dog hesitate, gather himself and react according to the action of the decoy, providing the opportunity of a more realistic and truly demanding evaluation of the dog's courage, judgment and discipline. Such an approach would also lessen impact and thus the danger of injury, without any lessening of effective real world engagement potential. But evasive action by a Schutzhund helper would be likely to result in dogs going to the exposed body parts rather than the sleeve, contrary to the spirit, traditions and rules of the program. These are difficult problems to remedy.

The dramatic high-speed catch is deeply ingrained in the Schutzhund culture, perhaps to the detriment of more effective and safer dogs. Recognition that long standing sport and trial traditions and procedures are becoming obsolete or having unintended consequences is not unique to the dog sports, for American style football is struggling with severe long term brain injuries as a consequence of the glorification of extreme physical impact, and thoroughbred horse breeding creates such extreme lightness in bone in the feet and legs that every day horses routinely collapse and are put down because the power of their muscles and ligamentation simply snap bones bred at the edge of fragility for lightness and speed.

In the early days the decoy's suit tended to be heavy, stiff and awkward which limited mobility, rendering the helper less agile and more awkward. This was an impediment to realistic training scenarios and drained the energy of the helper. These awkward suits were primarily a consequence of the available materials, usually leather, coarse jute and padding. The old-fashioned American pillow suit, looking very much like the Michelin man of automobile tire fame, was a good example. Photos of the earlier European suits, while still quite restrictive, give the appearance of being more mobile and thus more realistic.

These material and design limitations of early bite suits were perhaps a factor for the German preference for the bite sleeve. By putting the primary bite padding into the sleeve and making the rest of the suit relatively light to protect only against an inadvertent bite they were able to make the helper more mobile and minimized energy expenditure.

As mentioned, over the years, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, modern materials such as ballistic nylon or Kevlar began to supplement and replace the heavy leather, fiber and jute padding of traditional suits, making them much lighter and much more flexible. KNPV and to a lesser extent the Belgian Ring program have been conservative and largely retained original materials, designs and training procedures. But these material and technical developments revolutionized French Ring almost overnight, changing it into a virtually new sport and replacing the predominance of the German Shepherd at the competitive levels with the lighter, quicker, much more mobile Belgian Malinois, and putting the focus of the sport on the skill and mobility of the decoy. As with any fundamental change there are positive and negative consequences, French Ring has become much more of a game for the agile dog and an arena for the initiative and showmanship of the helper rather than a test for the powerful, aggressive dog.

The sleeve sports, Schutzhund and IPO, have also benefited from modern materials through lighter and more flexible equipment, which has enhanced durability and made the work physically less tiring for the helper. The effect of this on the actual training process has been marginal, has not had the profound effect on the nature of the training and trial as has occurred in French Ring sport.

As we have seen, in Schutzhund the dog is trained and expected to go to the arm, which is presented according to rules, custom and style to allow a safe bite even when the dog engages at high speed and with much power. Although in the trial the Schutzhund helper usually wears a vest like padded jacket to protect the body in the event of an errant bite, the sleeve itself is a separate piece of equipment. While soft puppy or young dog sleeves can usually be used on either arm, the trial sleeve is left or right handed and incorporates a built up section on the forearm known as the bite bar. Although not used in formal trials, police and protection style trainers sometimes use more compact sleeves or arm protection, known as hidden sleeves, which are worn under a shirt or jacket to determine to what extent the dog is reacting to the equipment rather than the actions and demeanor of the helper.

The helper's equipment is always a compromise: the lighter, less bulky and thinner the gear the more quick and mobile, and thus realistic, his performance can be. Thus the willingness to risk contusion, abrasion or an actual puncture by one or more canine teeth determines the potential for quickness and mobility. In addition to freedom in working the dog, lighter equipment is less tiring and thus enables one to work more dogs and for longer periods.

The agitation muzzle is a mask or cage like device worn over the dog's muzzle to prevent a bite but still allow unrestricted or minimally restricted breathing. Such muzzles are relatively massive and heavy, since they must allow the dog to engage and butt the helper with the muzzle, minimizing the possibility of injury to either party. It is typically heavy leather held together with sturdy rivets and strapped securely behind the ears to prevent an actual bite but allowing the dog to head butt or otherwise engage and fight the helper. Careful design and construction is necessary to prevent the muzzle coming off because of material failure or the dog slipping out of it, which has obvious implications for unpleasant consequences.

Not all muzzles are suitable for agitation work; some are intended to merely restrict the dog, that is prevent a bite in inappropriate situations as for example when he must be in close proximity to people or other animals. Examples include a police dog in a crowd or when providing veterinary aid to an injured or aggressive dog. Such muzzles are typically of fabric or plastic construction rather than the more expensive leather agitation muzzles.

The agitation muzzle historically played an important supporting role, especially in the early years when suits and protective gear was primitive, that is, heavy, bulky, stiff and hot. When the dog is muzzled, the helper is able to work without a suit or other protection, thus becoming much more mobile and agile.

Use of the agitation muzzle in sport work, where the bite occurs in a very stylized and restricted scenario, is unusual. In my experience of some thirty years in Schutzhund I cannot recall an instance of the use of the muzzle in protection training. It is also absent in the KNPV trial, although it may be part of some training programs. The French Ring people use a muzzle during part of the obedience exercise, but not in the actual protection work. There is some muzzle work in the Belgian Ring.

American police trainers use the agitation muzzle more extensively. A primary reason is that it acclimates a dog to aggression against a man without any specific equipment, which is of course what he will see in service. The person emulating the suspect in training the building search or an outdoor search can more conveniently hide or be concealed and much more realistically represents actual service. Dogs do

to some extent become equipment oriented, that is, associate the suit or the sleeve with the occasion for aggression, sometimes becoming confused or tentative in the absence of the equipment. This is fine for the sport situation, but unacceptable in the actual service dog; a solid foundation in aggression in as many scenarios and circumstances as possible, with the decoy as closely as possible emulating field situations, is fundamental.

I have never done any serious decoy work with a muzzled dog, but the people that have tell me it is hard, demanding and exhausting work when done well; an enthusiastic muzzled dog is very punishing. Bites or lacerations may rarely occur when a muzzle slips off, but a lot of soreness and bruising is routine. As mentioned above, the hidden sleeve is another effective tool for bring realism to the protection training.

The case could perhaps be made that the evolution of the modern suit, so much lighter and more flexible, has negated the original rationale for the use of the bite bar style sleeve, that the fundamental reason for the Schutzhund style of training has been eliminated by modern technology. The counter argument is that no matter how light and flexible the suit, it is still not adaptable to aggressively running at and engaging the dog, and thus in a serious way limited. In the Schutzhund long bite the points go to the dog that launches himself without hesitation to make a spectacular bite, relying on the skill and honesty of the helper to make a proper catch. But in a realistic police encounter the actions of the man are going to be unpredictable with no formal arm presentation to facilitate a good bite. Seen in this light, the value of the courage test is in what it demonstrates about the character of the dog rather than practical on the street engagements.

Each style of equipment, that is the suit or the sleeve, is a compromise that in its own way limits the freedom of the helper to maneuver and engage, and thus restricts his ultimate potential, both in training and testing. My view is that we need ongoing reevaluation of much of this in light of modern equipment, training methodologies and breeding; that trial procedures should be periodically reevaluated in terms of current police deployment realities. Both French Ring and particularly Schutzhund have been diminished by sport and politically motivated compromises; become much too stylized, put too much emphasis on features that do not relate to real world service. The removal of the attack on the handler and the old style turn and attack courage test in IPO were serious degradations, inappropriate concessions to show line breeding and political correctness. The KNPV program has been very conservative and tended not to take advantage of modern materials; new thinking could perhaps bring more mobility and quickness to the work of the KNPV helper. We need to refocus on these trials as gauges of suitability for actual police service, incorporating modern materials, knowledge and technique – and accounting for evolution and change in police deployment practices.

Trial or training scenarios can only emulate and approximate a minute sample of the enormous range of unpredictable events that could potentially occur in the ongoing police engagement. Even for the most experienced canine team, the next encounter may produce entirely unforeseen, threatening challenges. No dog or man is ever perfectly prepared; this is the nature of life. In the end the determining factor is not the equipment or abstract philosophical foundations of the training, but rather the intensity, dedication and vigor of the decoy and the determination of the trainer and decoy to challenge the dog in training as fully as possible rather than merely preparing for a rote trial performance. Ultimately it is the courage, instincts and trained responses of the man and his dog that are decisive, rather than the training equipment or underlying philosophy.

Man's Best Friend

In the police dog world the hard biting, aggressive dog is greatly admired, and the man with one tends to have a little more swagger in his step. But in a broader social context unwarranted dog aggression is an enormous social burden worldwide, resulting in death, disfigurement and a lifetime of disability – physical and emotional – for thousands of men, woman and especially children. Dog bites and aggression contribute significantly to the national cost of medical care, as reflected in insurance rates and increasing limitations by insurance carriers. Roughly a thousand Americans are daily bitten severely enough to seek hospital emergency treatment, resulting in thousands of hospitalizations often generating enormous bills, a significant ongoing social burden. All sorts of dogs are potentially dangerous and become involved, but those bred for size, power and aggression are for the obvious reasons the most physically capable of contributing to the carnage. Small dogs may be pugnacious or even nasty, but when they bite it is without the power of the larger dogs, and adults and older children can much more effectively fend them off.

Dogs are so useful because of their inherent genetic pliability; through breeding selection we are able to create diverse types or breeds vastly different in size, physique, behavior propensities and aggressive potential. Thus the potential for damage from the individual dog is according to his breeding, both in terms of physical capability and social propensities. But ultimately all dogs descend from wolves, fierce predators driven by innate hunting, social aggression and defensive instincts and drives, which are often not apparent in daily life, but never entirely absent.

In creating the police breeds we have produced dogs which are larger, more robust and much more aggressive than the norm, and taken on an enormous responsibility to maintain control of individual dogs and to keep the wrong dogs out of irresponsible hands. Demonstration of stability and control has been an increasingly predominant factor in breeding selection and more prominent as a prerequisite to on the street service. Although some handlers and units have perpetrated or condoned on the street brutality involving savage canine bites on passive, incapacitated or handcuffed suspects – and sometimes wound up in jail – generally our record is credible, demonstrates ongoing responsibility from the top down, that is police and sport administration right on down through individual breeders, trainers and handlers.

This pliability of the canine genetic potential is a double edged sword, providing the baser elements of mankind the potential for enormous evil rather than good. The blood sports – canine bull and bear baiting and dog fighting – have a long and sordid history on the dark side of our canine heritage. The dog fighting community has been condoned, excused and even justified. Apologists make reference to higher class acceptance and participation by supposedly respectable people with clean hands such as lawyers, bankers and politicians. But lawyers, bankers and politicians – as well as main stream clergy – have condoned, profited from and participated in slavery, prostitution and abuse of the working class as well as dog fighting; clean hands, fancy clothing and social status has never in reality been correlated with moral rectitude or social justice. The truth is that the breeding of dogs to fight for the entertainment of perverts is and has always been closely linked with crime and gambling, notwithstanding participation by those with social advantage. This is a shameful chapter in the story of man and dog, an abomination.

Most canine attacks resulting in human fatality in America are a direct consequence of this dog fighting heritage, perpetrated by animals bred over generations for the fighting pit. In the years 2005 through 2012 canine attack resulted in 251 deaths in America. Pit Bulls were responsible for 151 of these fatalities or 60% of the total. Rottweilers, in second place in this grisly compilation, killed 32 Americans in this time period. Fatalities are of course just the most

dramatic and press worthy incidents; thousands more are maimed, disabled and traumatized with relatively little attention because such things are so routine and commonplace.

Smooth talking apologists contend that the Pit Bull inclination toward overt aggression and savagery merely reflects irresponsible owners, that all breeds and lines are inherently similar, that inappropriate aggression is primarily the result of environment, upbringing and training rather than the genetic propensities present at birth. This is an absurd canard. Pit Bulls were created by blending Molossers and terriers to create fighting lines through breeding selection, eliminating or minimizing the normal instincts for self-preservation, the tendency to stand down from a confrontation except where life is at stake, to remove through breeding selection all inhibitions against senseless violence.

The word "game" was coined to venerate this perversion of the partnership between man and dog, this glorification of the relentless, senseless propensity to attack and kill for no reason except entertainment, to provide the thrill of blood and gore for the perverts standing in and around the fighting pit. Even several generations away from pit fighting selection these dogs, like unexploded bombs rediscovered decades after a war, have the potential to revert to their pit fight legacy and strike out to maim and kill. It is, after all, the losers, dogs defective even in this bizarre world, which were discarded to become the foundation of urban street breeding. This glorification of the game dog is the shared shame of this perverse community. Michel Vick, famous American football star – personally torturing his dogs onto death for the crime of losing in the pit – was not an aberration, but rather was the quintessential personification of everything evil the pit dog fighting culture stands for.

Although individual law enforcement personnel have from time to time condoned or engaged in dog fighting, the fact that it is patently beyond any civilized moral code and almost universally illegal in civilized nations demands absolute separation from police canine breeding, selection and deployment. Beyond these issues the fighting line dogs have become the symbols and agents of the cruder and more brutal criminal elements, owned, postured and paraded to bolster fragile egos and intimidate the most vulnerable elements of society. Police deployment of such dogs would be rightly perceived as symbols of brutality and oppression rather than service and protection.

European evaluation venues such as KNPV and the ring sports generally preclude participation by fighting breeds or lines, and venues that do not strenuously exclude dogs of the fighting heritage, and any association with those involved, are simply pandering to the perverts; there is no other honest way to say it.

5

Canine Scent Work



Malinois tracking in the Schutzhund style, notice the intensity and nose pushed deeply in the grass. Line attached so as to pull nose down. Strap at rear unusual but permitted. Photo Donna Haynes

When the distant ancestors of mankind began to walk upright they greatly enhanced daytime visual effectiveness because the point of view was moved high above the ground, allowing the man to scan large areas and spot potential adversaries or prey at a distance. The placement of the eyes close together enhanced distant sight and depth perception, unlike a grazing animal such as an antelope or horse, where the eyes are placed for a wider view to detect a predator in any direction at the earliest possible moment. Depth perception greatly facilitated the eventual effective use of the bow and arrow or the throwing spear.

As in all evolutionary turning points compromises were inevitable, capabilities lessened as well as enhanced, for the nose of the upright human is far from the ground and thus much less effectively placed for the use of the olfactory capability. Most of the odors useful in seeking food, tracking or locating game or detecting the presence of potential adversaries reside in the layer of air close to the ground, held by the dampness and shade of the vegetation, resulting in a significantly reduced level of human olfactory acuity. In order to see further and better, and gain the use of his hands, man gave up much of the effectiveness of the ancestral scenting capability.

In the daylight the vision of a man is superior to that of his dog, which lives in a world of scent that is as literally beyond our comprehension as sight is beyond the man blind from birth. Relative to human beings, canine vision is much more effective at night, primarily motion sensitive and with much less capability to distinguish color. Visual acuity, the ability to perceive detail, is much less in the dog than in man.

Binocular vision, the overlapping field of view of the two eyes, is the foundation of depth perception. Thus the canine eye set determines the field of view and the effectiveness of depth perception. Relative to man, the dog has better peripheral vision and less effective binocular vision. The nose of the dog, always close to the ground, incorporating enormous nasal cavities, is much larger in size compared to a human being, and the cells for scent detection in the nasal passages are orders of magnitude more sensitive and numerous. The size and placement of the nostrils and nasal sensory organs is a design problem in that the eyes literally have to be placed so as to see around the nose. While dogs in general have wider set eyes compared to human beings, and thus less effective binocular vision, there is significant variation in breeds and regional types. The sight hounds, for instance, are much more visually oriented than other breeds or varieties. As a consequence, the placement and size of the nose and the frontal vision is the reason for the characteristic head configuration,

with more stop in the profile view, allowing better forward vision but lesser scenting capability. For these reasons using a sight hound for any sort of scent work is usually a poor choice.

In the night the dog regains the visual advantage, and when the man retreats to sleep the night away it is often his dog which provides the night watch, especially of the flock or herd. These vastly different yet complementary sensory adaptations and capabilities are basic to the human-canine partnership. A man and dog together can have the best of both worlds, for the man is able to see at great distance and constantly scan the horizon or distant areas, alert for an adversary or potential game animal, while his dog is there to bring his acute sense of smell to the partnership, to seek out prey animals or follow a wounded animal so that it can become a meal for everyone. The sharp canine hearing, olfactory capability and night vision become aggregate sensory assets of the team, are in many ways the foundation of the value of the dog to mankind.

In order to benefit from the dog's olfactory prowess, it is necessary to teach him the desired behaviors according to situation and command, that is, begin tracking when the line is attached to the harness or collar or commence searching in response to the handler's demeanor and direction. Motivation is the foundation of dog training, even at the most crude level as in do what I want or I will hurt you. But correction as primary motivation is ineffective in scent work foundation training, the emphasis must be on positive motivation, must rely on the inherent instincts of the dog. As in any aspect of training, once the foundation is there, the dog understands what is to be done, then appropriate and proportionate correction may become necessary, but this generally has little to do with the work itself but rather the obedience aspects. This is much more relevant and important in sport competition where the judge will deduct style points for arbitrary behavior, such as taking a step off the track to check the odor, having nothing at all to do with success in the task or the usefulness of the dog.

In reality, you cannot teach a dog how to track or search, you do not even really know how a dog tracks; all you can do is teach him the desired procedures, to respond in specific ways and adapt particular styles. Motivation for tracking or area searching draws on the natural prey or hunting instincts, essentially adapts and redirects natural propensities. Substance detection is more difficult and subtle in that cocaine, marijuana or gun powder are in and of themselves of no interest to a dog; other reward mechanisms must be introduced.

Generally speaking practical canine scent work tends to focus either on living creatures or the detection of objects and substances. The former category encompasses all of the variations of sport and subsistence hunting as well as applications focused on human beings, such as lost persons, criminals or enemy soldiers in a military engagement. Substances and objects of interest include crime scene evidence, truffles in the woods, illicit drugs and bombs or explosives among many other things, the list being virtually endless.

Human focused scent work naturally breaks down into searching where an unknown number of persons, often disaster victims or lost persons, may or may not be present in a specific, and often quite large, area and tracking or trailing where the object is to find a specific individual starting from a known or conjectured point of presence. Although there is significant overlap, large-scale search and rescue is generally conducted by well-trained volunteer civilian groups and tracking or trailing is more often the province of police, military or other governmental personnel.

Cadaver work, searching for the remains of deceased persons, is another specialty, often taken on by civilian volunteers, sometimes in conjunction with search and rescue operations. Well trained dogs can be taken on a small boat to find bodies entirely under water in a lake or larger stream. The variations are almost endless,

including things such as searching for buried avalanche victims in a ski area. In addition to the police applications and searching for truffles mentioned above, innumerable other object and substance applications have evolved, include detecting leaks in buried natural gas pipelines. (Johnson, 1975)

The Scenting Process

At first impression the most remarkable aspect of the canine olfactory capability is perhaps the sensitivity, that the dog can detect scents that are remarkably old or dilute. But even more remarkable and useful is the power of discrimination, the ability to identify one odor among others that are much more fresh, intense or pungent. Not only is this important in hunting or when seeking a human being in an area where many others have been more recently present, it is also critical in drug detection, where the dog must alert on a trace of an illicit substance among much more numerous and concentrated ambient odors or the odor of substances in which drugs are hidden in order to mask their presence.

For the dog the sense of smell is a primary communication mechanism, just as important as sound or vision is for us. Scientific research has revealed the existence of pheromones, chemical and biological bodily secretions that serve as biological signal agents. (Syrotuck, 1972) These biological signals are thought to be primarily effective for communication within a species, such as for sexual attraction when a female is ready to breed. The distance from which the female in heat can attract the male is remarkable, a concrete demonstration of the efficacy of these pheromones. It is also thought that such chemical messenger agents may enable the dog to sense

and interpret these odors in another species, perhaps allowing a dog to sense human emotional states such as fear or aggression.

The primary sense of smell resides in olfactory sensor cells in the nose, which bind with particles or water born substances drawn into the nose to create nerve signals to the brain, just as the receptor cells in the back of the eyeball convert packets of light energy, photons, to nerve impulses. Syrotuck indicates that while a man normally has about five million of these olfactory sensor cells, a larger dog will have perhaps 220 million. In a similar way, the region of the brain devoted to interpreting these sensations is much larger in the dog than in man.

Although it is a slightly arbitrary distinction, the odors that a dog is able to detect are thought of as being either air borne or ground scent. By its nature the air borne scent carries with the wind or breeze and over time dissipates, eventually to the point that even a dog can no longer detect it. Even when there is no or little breeze, as in the interior of a closed building,



Naval drug detection dog Jake with handler Blake Soller
U.S. Navy photo Vance Vasquez

the scent constantly dissipates, spreads out, until it is distributed in the available airspace. If the source, such as a concealed man or illicit substance, remains present in a confined air space it continually emanates scent particles and gasses, in which case there is usually a gradient, a lessening in intensity with distance from the source. The ability to sense these infinitesimal odor intensity gradients is what enables the dog to locate quickly the source, that is, the sought person or substance.

Airborne scent can sometimes be seen in action when a dog is searching in a field or open area, where the natural tendency is to move in increasingly wide circles with the nose relatively high; when the dog makes a sudden turn directly into the breeze and goes straight to the person or concealed food it is the air borne particulate matter and evaporated substances that he is detecting and following. While discouraged in most sport tracking, this behavior is the foundation of the area searches for lost persons and the effectiveness of the military scout or patrol dog in detecting a hidden enemy as the patrol advances.

When a dog is following a ground scent he will tend to push his nose close to the ground or in the vegetation and in general proceed slowly and deliberately. The dog is of course not sensing particles or scent tightly bound to the vegetation, dirt or pavement, for if it is contained at the surface he cannot by definition smell it, for the sense of smell is dependent on drawing the airborne particles and gases into the nose. Ground scenting or tracking works because the dissolved particles or gasses are gradually being released into the air close to the ground or because in sniffing the dog is actually drawing the scent off the surface of the grass or earth. By pushing his nose into the grass the dog is gaining access to the most moist and intense scent, because the air within the grass layer is sheltered from the sun, moister and more concentrated. In the sniffing process moisture is produced when the dog exhales, thus providing moisture to lift a scent off of a surface in a dry environment.

When a dog air scents a person, he is detecting among other things particles and dead cells constantly shed from the skin or released through the breath. Substances in the persons clothing or personal hygiene products such as deodorant or perfume may also contribute to the aggregate odor. The more active the person and the warmer the air the more intense the odor becomes; and the greater the distance and age at which the dog can detect it. The shedding of cells is a fundamental part of life, estimates are that fifty million cells in the human body die every second, and one way or another eventually shed into the environment. The skin in particular is continually replacing itself, which is why a cut heals so rapidly; the average life of an individual skin cell is only about 36 hours before it is shed. (Syrotuck, 1972)

Since as the skin grows the surface layer of cells which sheds particles will generally consist of cells which are no longer living. But bacteria which are always present will continue to live and multiply, creating by-products and thus generate odor as long as there is available organic material. Moisture is necessary for this process, so sunlight can reduce odor both by drying out the raft of dead cells and by killing the bacteria directly. Also, although the odor decreases over time, and eventually disappears, an increase in moisture can for a time increase the odor present and make the tracking easier for the dog. A light rain or mist on your track might not be an entirely bad thing.

Tracking and Trailing

There are two primary modes of operation when a dog follows the path taken by a person, such as a lost child or a crime suspect, according to the source of the odor being followed.

Tracking is the process of a dog following a person by sniffing the ground footstep by footstep, with his nose constantly close to the ground, pushing into the

vegetation, sensing primarily crushed vegetation or other ground disturbances rather than the actual odor emanating from the body of the subject. In general tracking is not specific to a particular person, for the dog is primarily following the ground disturbance. Some residual body odor is always present, and the dog will most likely be aware of it; following only the vegetation or surface disturbance is a trained response. But training never entirely eliminates the dog's tendency to act on his own according to age old instincts in unusual circumstances.

Trailing is the process of searching with the nose carried a little higher much of the time and sniffing the air and ground scent to detect the actual odor of the person. The trailing dog is primarily following the intensity of the person's air and ground odor, that is, the particles and gasses constantly emanated and drifting in the air or clinging to the surface. Thus the dog is seeking a specific person, which is usually identified by allowing the dog to scent an article of clothing or other personal object at the beginning of the search. In following the trail the dog may deviate significant distances from the path actually taken by the subject person, following the air current dispersed scent. The Bloodhound generally works in this mode, and is regarded by many as the quintessential trailing dog. Trailing dogs tend to move faster than the typical tracking dog, partially because the tracking dog is carefully trained to be slow and methodical. Because the trailing dog departs from the actual path of the person he is more likely to miss an object inadvertently dropped by the subject, which might be important evidence in a police application or provide useful information in the case of a search for a lost person.

But these are in many ways artificial distinctions, end points in a continuum, for the dog is always taking in a complex set of impressions from all of his senses and processing them according to instinct, training and experience to guide his search. This is a process that we cannot hope to comprehend completely because it is so foreign to our almost exclusively visual worldview. Generally formal tracking, devoid of air scenting or visual checking, results when the style is trained and enforced, that is, when the dog is compelled to adapt tracking in a particular formalized style to obtain points from a trial judge. Left to their own instincts and inclinations most dogs proceed in an ad hoc manner, occasionally or predominantly sniffing the air higher above the ground or visually scanning the surroundings.

When the dog is in a primarily tracking mode, that is, pushing his nose into the vegetation or close to the ground, the question becomes precisely what is it that he is following? Secretions from the body, lungs and clothing will not be concentrated on the track or path, but will disperse according to air currents and temperature. Some material from the soles of the followed person's shoes or boots may abrade onto the ground and then give off an odor, which is a possible factor when a person is being tracked on concrete or other artificial surfaces. But in general it is believed that what the dog is predominantly sensing is disturbances to the vegetation and soil, the damage being done by the footsteps. Whether a dog is ever entirely in tracking mode, that is, absolutely ignoring residual personal odor, is something we cannot be certain of, but if he is in this mode then the search is truly independent of the particular person, that is, the dog would not be able to identify the person.

Although the sport dog may be trained to focus on the actual footsteps, often reinforced with bits of food in unpredictable foot impressions, he has been trained to ignore the usually present residual body scent on the ground in that the tiny flakes and body odor continually emanating from the person are always falling to the ground, with the heavier particles likely falling closest to the path. Although these tend to end up slightly down wind the motion of the air of the walking person can result in some body scent slightly up wind. As discussed in detail by Syrotuck, the variation in intensity of the body odor and the odor of the disturbed vegetation can vary independently over time and according to ground conditions, with one or the other predominating over the course of the track. (Syrotuck, 1972) This is very

important in training, in that those teaching formal tracking for a trial will want to avoid track ages corresponding to the likely predominance of body odor or air scent. (Johnson, 1975)

Because of this the dog can often discriminate, that is, often pick a particular track or trail out of several or many with remarkable effectiveness, and usually select the right direction when introduced to a track from the side. This is partially according to the age of the track but probably also reflects that the dog is usually able to detect and process the body odor to some extent.

Just as in other working attributes, dogs by their nature are not equally adept at tracking. This reflects physical variation, the actual sensitivity of the olfactory organs and the structure of the nasal passages, as well as the working willingness in this venue. For this reason trial systems test the olfactory effectiveness in various ways. The Schutzhund dog follows a track twenty minutes to several hours old, always made up of straight segments with two or more right angle turns. There will be two or more articles, such as a glove or block of wood, which the dog must detect and identify to the handler. At advanced levels there will be cross tracks which the dog must ignore.

The KNPV dog must do a search for a coin or brass bullet casing tossed in the grass, which must be picked up and presented to the handler. He must also search for an object or a man, with the protective suit, in a wooded area. Upon finding the man, he must bark intensely and guard to signal the handler and the judge. The Belgian and French Ring trials have no tests of the olfactory capability of the dog, a serious limitation on their effectiveness for police work breeding selection and training.

In the judging of the Schutzhund style of track the dog must proceed systematically footstep to footstep in order to receive full points. Since this is not the natural way a dog works it is in general taught or reinforced behavior, and also behavior selected for in breeding since the higher scoring dogs are preferred. This style of tracking is generally, but not universally, created by putting food in the footstep and withholding food prior to training to make it more desirable. Sometimes tracking is taught by extending the retrieve, that is, concealing a ball or other play object in the grass and encouraging the dog to sniff further and further to find the reward.

Sometimes trainers utilize fairly heavy compulsion, that is, correct the dog when he deviates from the footstep-to-footstep style of work, sometimes using a short tracking stick attached to the collar. The dog is trained with the lead attached to the collar and then passing between the front legs so as to pull the head down as the dog pulls into the track. A very short grip on the lead can be used to restrain the dog in the beginning of the training. Dogs are in some venues, such as AKC tracking trials, generally trained utilizing a tracking harness, where the lead is attached at a point on the dog's back that allows him to pull into the lead without obstructing breathing. Schutzhund style tracking puts great emphasis on methodical tracking with a deep nose and loose lead, so the attachment point is low on the neck and the lead passes between the front legs. In this configuration, pushing forward tends to pull the nose down and slows the dog. The collar is usually a chain link collar, but attached to a dead ring so that it cannot choke the dog or restrict airflow.

According to the rules, the Schutzhund dog can work off lead in the trial, but I have never seen this being actually done. I have observed a French dog trained for independent work, where the handler steps up to the beginning of the track and sends the dog with a swing of the arm; the dog works the entire track, including turns, while the handler remains as the starting point. When the dog finds an article at the conclusion of the track, he picks it up and returns it to the handler, still at the

beginning of the track. This is a most impressive demonstration of training and tracking skills.

The problem with all of this is that it does not necessarily translate directly to real life application. In police work, the building or area search is more common than a track, in urban police work dogs seldom if ever need to track in this manner. Furthermore, our criminals are not required to shuffle their feet, go in straight lines and make right angle turns, they are going to run, to change direction, to go over fences and obstacles. In many instances the dog that works according to his natural inclinations, sometimes moving with a head up, will move faster and expend less energy. And when something unusual happens to the track he needs to search and perhaps air scent, things he is corrected for in the formal Schutzhund training. Syrotuck reports instances of dogs ignoring a body or hidden person when passing within a few feet because of such training. (Syrotuck, 1972) Dogs useful in serious police or military work need to retain the initiative to break the rules and react according to circumstances, and as a consequence the highest scoring sport dog is not necessarily the best dog by any realistic criteria.

Over the years all of these sport systems have moved incessantly from the realistic toward the formalistic; have evolved toward rote pattern training, the performance of a sequence of exercises rather than preparation for useful police work. This is especially true in the search work, tracking and/or trailing, where only the KNPV has anything remotely realistic.

In America especially this has tended to perpetuate the gulf between police procurement, training and deployment on the one hand and the increasingly stylized sport programs on the other. In the end, the ultimate question is what is the point of putting so much effort into establishing Schutzhund or other programs in America if so few dogs are bred and trained within this system for actual police procurement and deployment, if there is to be so little real interaction or mutual support between these sport and police trainers? Increasingly sport trainers and judges alike are devoid of any real comprehension of practical applications, any interest in the practicality of what they are training and testing for. This gulf between sport and police work is a primary reason for the failure of both programs to approach their full potential in America.

My initial experience in dog training took place in the later 1970s, laying tracks for my wife's young German Shepherd. This was AKC style tracking, and the dog was naturally quite good, perhaps because we did not know enough to correct it out of him, and I became more and more creative in devising means of challenging him and keeping his interest up. Although we did not understand the significance of it at the time, while the dog had been acquired from a show oriented breeder the sire was a good working line German import and the other side of the pedigree was favorable.

In training I would normally hide at the end of the track and peak out to see how it was going, but this became a problem in that the dog would occasionally take a quick look and, if he saw me, run directly to me. I gradually became quite creative, sometimes jumping as far to the side as possible – I was much younger and more agile then – and then heading off at an acute angle. The more difficult you made the track, the greater the intensity of this dog became. It was a real learning experience; I think the dog taught us a lot more than we taught him.

Throwing a ball or Kong for a dog is a source of never ending fun, but also the opportunity to observe how the canine sensory capabilities – scent, vision and auditory – come into play. When I throw a ball or Kong for my dogs they will retrieve it by sight as long as it is in motion, but if it comes to rest before they locate it they will use their nose to search for it, even though it is in plain sight for me, at a much greater distance.

As an example, I am in the habit of playing a game with my dogs, primarily at this moment a male and his mother. We are fortunate enough to have several fenced acres, with a lot of shrubbery, garden areas and some patches of longer grass or weeds. The game is fairly simple, we have a number of Kongs with an 18-inch line and a knot on the end, which can be swung underhand to produce a high arc and a hang time that would be the envy of a football punter,¹ which can be placed with some accuracy. When the Kong is thrown so that the flight is in view the dogs can clearly follow the motion and are generally near when it finally comes down, after several seconds in the air, illustrating how keen their perception of moving objects is. (They are also very sensitive to the sound when the Kong strikes the ground, and often able to go directly to it on this basis alone.)

To begin the game, I will place the dogs down, or select a moment when they are distracted, so that I can throw the Kong outside of their field of view. Often the Kong winds up in the grass, clearly visible to me because of a bright orange ribbon, but at other times I purposely throw it into an area where it will be concealed, sometimes hanging up in a tree or bush. I often try to trick the dogs by putting the Kong in an out of the way or concealed spot. (Swinging your arm pretending to throw the object is considered very bad sportsmanship, and the bitch particularly will get in my face and bark intensely.) Often the Kong placement is perfectly obvious to me because of my upright stance. The dogs will dash out and begin circling, in a seemingly random pattern rather than a formal grid search as a human being might use. Often they pass very close to the object, close enough that you would expect it to be in plain view, but continue on. Typically this continues, with the nose down until one or the other stops abruptly a few feet away, and then raises their nose slightly and goes directly to the object.

This illustrates the natural search and scenting process, and gives real insight. I am not entirely certain, but my impression is that it takes time for the odor to disperse and drift, so that part of the delay is because the initial odor is very close to the object; as the dogs are circling the odor cone is spreading. Although the search pattern at first seems random, if you pay close attention there is a general center of attention where the dog expects to find the object. The overall pattern is one of repeatedly circling at an ever-expanding distance. Since we have areas separated by fences with open gates, the dogs will eventually go into the adjacent fenced off sections to search. Also, if the initial search does not turn up the Kong, they will eventually go to previous hiding places, or start to look up into the trees to see if it has hung up. This is a lot of fun, and provides a real opportunity to see how the dogs solve the problem in the most natural way without any influence of training or a human conception of the "correct" approach.

The general problem with sport training exercises can be that in tracking it is the track and the style in which it is worked that matter, but in practical service it is often what is at the end of the track that is important. It is common practice to place a bowl of food or an object such as a tug or Kong at the end of the track, but many dogs will, after a couple of tracks, want to dispense with the footstep by footstep approach and go into search mode, that is, make big circles until down wind and then go directly to the desired reward, which is the natural and often best thing to do. Thus much of the training is teaching the dog not to use his natural and most effective search tactics.

In the early years of the twentieth century, as the formal police dog was coming into use, there was a great deal of enthusiasm for the detector dog, the dog which could solve crimes by use of his olfactory prowess. Although the enormous potential

¹ American Football, where a punt is a hand held kicked ball.

for applying canine olfactory acuity to police work was there, as in many new ventures there was the tendency for the enthusiasm to create unrealistic claims and expectations, things that experience has proven to be outlandish today. It was for instance widely believed that the dog seeking a person was always following the odor of that person and thus always capable of distinguishing the track of an individual person from others that might be present.

Beginning in 1913 and continuing after the war Most in Germany produced overwhelming evidence that this is not in general true. (Kaldenbach, 1998) One of his demonstrations was to have two track laying persons start from a distance and walk directly toward each other. Upon meeting, each would make a right angle turn, so that they walked directly away from each other. The general belief in the era was that a tracking dog following one of the tracks would, at the meeting point, make a right angle turn to follow the track of the person he had been following. Most demonstrated that when trained tracking dogs were actually put on such tracks, they almost always proceeded straight on at the turn, shifting to follow the track of the other person, thus demonstrating that it was the track, the damage to the vegetation, rather than the person that they were following.

Colonel Most did extensive research with hundreds of repetitions. In order to further demonstrate the nature of the tracking process, he constructed tracking wheels with wood or porcelain protrusions, artificial shoes, to create tracks absolutely devoid of human presence, which the dogs tracked perfectly well. He did experiments where a track was laid by a person who was literally lifted away from the ground by a cable arrangement at a certain point, with the tracking wheel going on from there. The dogs reliably followed the track with no problems at the transition, conclusive evidence that it is fundamentally the ground disturbance that the dog is working, or at least that he has no difficulty continuing on when the body scent becomes absent. This is further verified by the fact that most trainers lay the vast majority of training tracks for themselves, for reasons of convenience and availability, and there is no particular problem when the dog goes to his trial and another person lays the track.

None of this should be construed to mean that dogs can not follow an individual person, even in the presence of tracks or trails of many other people, but rather should be understood to mean that a dog tracks or trails according to his training and his nature, and that when trained specifically to track it is the ground disturbance rather than the odor of the person that is being followed.

Dogs trained differently can and do follow specific persons, as in the trailing dogs which by instinct and training are encouraged to sniff higher off the ground and focus on the man scent. Furthermore scientific investigations demonstrate and quantify the fact that odor can pass through substances such as the leather soles of boots and even through rubber boots.¹ These investigations verified the plausible expectation that the longer the person wears the boots, that is the more vigorous exercise and the hotter the temperature, the more the feet sweat, the greater the odor. This indicates that the personal odor emanating from an old, well-worn pair of boots can be expected to be greater than new boots. To what extent this is detectable by a dog in specific situations is difficult to know, but the fact that dogs trained almost entirely on training tracks laid by the handler do well in a trial with a different track layer do just as well would indicate either that the odor coming from the boot is insignificant or that the dog has become trained to ignore it. This research also has important implications for the detection of illicit drugs which have been packaged in supposedly impermeable packing material.

¹ Research of Dr. W. Neuhaus as reported by Haak and Gerritsen. (Gerritsen & Haak, 2001)

The factors effecting odor sensing acuity and accurate indication are complex and not always well understood. The extreme sensitivity of many dogs to handler cueing, inadvertent or malicious, is always a legitimate concern when guilt or innocence, a substantial prison sentence, is at stake. Thus honest criminal prosecution requires that canine olfactory evidence should only aid in finding a suspect and provide supporting evidence; should not be enough to produce a conviction as sole incriminating evidence.

For training, the sensitivity of the dog's nose can be a problem in that it is difficult for the handler to tell if he has left the track to follow a rabbit or if the track actually does take a turn, and nothing can set back the training more than the handler correcting a dog because he cannot perceive what is perfectly obvious to the dog. As Tom Rose once commented, training a dog to track is sometimes a matter of following him around until he teaches himself to track.

Today most Schutzhund or IPO tracking is trained by use of food on the ground, sometimes starting with small pieces in an area and more often put in each foot impression in a short track. There is great emphasis on the deep nose, the dog going footprint to footprint.

Historically the older books often describe tracking training as an extension of the object retrieve, with the object being thrown and further out, and eventually being placed at the end of a track when the dog is out of sight. The older Belgian Bouvier trainers I have talked to have usually described this sort of approach; the extensive use of food seems to be a relatively recent innovation. In general the older training books, such as Konrad Most, mention food only in the context of teaching the food refusal.

Search and Patrol Work

In many applications such as broad area wilderness searches, disaster scene recovery and military patrol the objective is the detection of any person present rather than seeking a specific, known subject. In such applications the reliable negative result, that is knowing that an avalanche scene is clear or the area into which the canine led military patrol is advancing are free of human beings, is extremely important. In such situations a false negative, failing to detect a snow covered person or enemy sniper, is likely to have serious and perhaps tragic consequences.

In such situations there is no specific starting point as in tracking or trailing. Thus the handler must broadly direct the search or detection operation, as in a search for a lost person where some sort of search grid must be established or a military patrol where the focus of the dog is directed toward the direction of expected travel, with the dog on the alert for a potential concealed enemy. In these search and patrol applications it is the airborne scent that is the primary detection mechanism, although scent close to the ground can be important to the search process. In these situations the senses of sight and hearing also play a role in the detection process, especially in the dark.

In the case of the military patrol dog ground scenting is generally discouraged, because it takes the attention away from the air scent which is the primary mechanism of enemy detection and alert; a civilian search dog can ground scent because while time is important a few moments or even minutes with the nose down is not likely to be of great consequence. But for the military scout dog time is of the essence, even a few moments of delay in giving a warning can be fatal. Because of this, it is important that the military patrol dog handler be aware of wind and air currents, as air moving with the direction of travel will carry away the odor of a potential adversary, greatly increasing vulnerability. The hunter must also be

continually aware of airflow and direction for similar reasons. In training the tracking dog, airflow from behind carries the human body odor away from the dog's nose, thus making the ground scent in the actual footsteps more predominant. For this reason initial tracks for the novice dog are often laid with the wind or breeze at the track layer's back, because otherwise the odor of food in further out steps would tend to drift toward the dog's nose, tempting him to go directly to the food rather than pushing his nose into the intervening footsteps.

Wilderness or disaster search operations are often conducted by organized civilian volunteers. Search and rescue, as the service is generally known, typically involves numerous people and dogs systematically seeking out an unknown number of persons, perhaps injured or dead. Persons lost in a wilderness area or in the aftermath of a natural or man created disaster, such as an earthquake, are typical situations. Perhaps the most evocative instance for Americans is the rescue efforts in the aftermath of the September 11 attack in New York. Search and Rescue operations often involve trailing in addition to broad area searching, that is, starting from a known or conjectured point of presence and attempting to follow the path of a specific search subject.

Civilian search and rescue groups typically utilize diverse breeds and individual dogs, which are generally much less inherently aggressive than the normal police patrol or tracking dog. Search and rescue dogs for wilderness area work generally tend to the 50 to 90 pound range, as smaller dogs have difficulty pushing through the vegetation and covering the terrain, and larger dogs are more difficult to transport and unless extremely fit subject to fatigue. Disaster situations such as earthquakes and building searches in the aftermath of an explosion favor smaller, more agile dogs.

**Homeland Security
search dogs – 2011**

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Labrador Retriever | 148 |
| German Shepherd | 26 |
| Border Collie | 22 |
| Golden Retriever | 21 |
| Malinois | 19 |
| Mixed breed | 9 |

To provide a general idea of the breeds in use, the 2011 U.S. Department of Homeland Security roster of Urban Search and Rescue Certified Disaster Canine Search Teams included 251 dogs as listed in the table. There were no other breeds with more than 2 representatives. These dogs would be for diverse applications such as earthquake recovery, building explosion, hurricane and other similar disasters where the rubble would put a premium on agility, caution and reliable response to handler direction. It would certainly be interesting to know the backgrounds in

more detail, that is the percentages of the Retrievers from real hunting lines and the traditional police breeds from working lines.

In training and selection it must generally be assumed that the objects of the search are likely to be injured, sick or incapacitated by exposure to the elements, often children or similarly vulnerable persons. Since the search subjects are typically in a severely stressed emotional state it is very important that the dogs are not only under reliable control, but that their natural reaction when encountering a person is overtly friendly rather than threatening.

In wooded or natural areas, fear and panic are often the real problem; on one occasion many years ago I can recall walking in the woods, preoccupied with the vegetation and scenery and, upon looking up realizing that I had no idea where I had wondered to, every direction looked the same. By just standing still for a moment I was able to hear voices off in the distance and became reoriented, but even relatively experienced people can be subject to panic and fear. But in general those out and about in forest or wilderness terrain today often have cell phones and GPS location units, which if used with moderate care head off many lost person scenarios. Thus as a generality, the object of search and rescue operations is increasingly

tending to be elderly persons, sometimes with dementia, and smaller children, sometimes with some form of autism or other mental affliction. Sometimes such people are frightened or do not want to be found, which can be a serious problem because if they are passed over in a grid search another pass may be greatly delayed. If the search subject is mobile he may purposely move into an already searched area, which means that a completely covered grid may not actually encounter the person. In such situations the best hope of success is in a dog detecting and indicating a track, and the handler being alert enough to detect this and encourage the dog.

Searches over large rural or wilderness areas tend to incorporate other resources such as systematic horseback and all-terrain vehicle patrols. Canine searches are mapped out and scheduled to avoid overlap with other dogs and provide complete, systematic coverage. In general the dogs work off lead in order to quickly range over larger areas than a handler could possibly keep up with, and to avoid entangling any sort of lead. When the dog makes a find, he may be trained to bark continually to lead the handler to the scene. Alternatively the dog may be trained to return to the handler and indicate, perhaps by jumping up, then on command leads him back to the found person. Often the dog and handler are accompanied by other search team members to handle the radio and other logistical matters so that the handler can focus on directing and reading his dog, which requires that he be aware of terrain and wind currents so as to provide maximum coverage and not leave areas unchecked because the search never passes downwind of a lost person. Search style and range vary according to the training and propensities of the dog, with some being wide ranging and out of sight for minutes at a time and others remaining closer and under more handler direction. A dog will typically detect an airborne odor of the subject and make a turn to approach him directly, following the airborne odor to the source. If the dog is in sight, the experienced handler is likely to become aware of the imminent find by the demeanor and behavior of his dog.

Although mostly volunteer the work of the search and rescue canine handler is demanding, requiring maintenance of good physical fitness for the person as well as the dog. Wilderness or rough area skills such as working with a compass and a comprehensive knowledge of survival skills are essential; the search team must come prepared with terrain and weather appropriate clothing, water for the dog as needed and appropriate footwear. No search and rescue director needs a team member becoming lost or injured themselves and becoming a consumer of search resources rather than part of the solution.

These search and rescue volunteers sacrifice an enormous amount of time, effort and uncompensated personal expense. Training is time consuming and often must be done away from home in order to have access to appropriate terrain, and deployment can involve traveling great distances on very short notice, sometimes only to be held in reserve and ultimately be released to go home without actually being deployed. Days away from home – traveling, waiting and routine searching – are much more common experiences than the occasional dramatic find or a brief moment of attention in the national press.

Substance and Object Detection

Historically canine search functions, especially involving the military or police, focused on seeking out persons, such as those lost or suspected of criminal activity. This did not involve especially novel training methods, but was rather a natural transition of the genetic hunting or herding behaviors to seeking out persons rather than game or domestic animals. More recently dogs have become enormously useful for detecting the presence of substances such as illicit drugs, explosives or fire accelerants. This detection capability has proven effective at finding objects, such as

evidence in a police investigation, in a wide variety of environments such as open fields, forests or virtually any sort of crime or incident scene. Dogs have come to be commonly used at national entry points such as airports to detect the presence of illicit agricultural products, the introduction of which could carry disease and pests capable of devastating entire agricultural enterprises, thus doing serious economic and social damage. The canine substance and object detection potential is almost limitless, with novel applications such as disease detection or natural gas line leaks continually being explored.

Although the canine substance detection potential was well known in principle, the widespread utilization of drug and explosive detection dogs has taken on enormous importance in recent years, roughly since the Vietnam War era, in response to urgent law enforcement and military needs. Although there were WWII



Young German Shepherd training the passive drug indication.

era attempts,¹ generally unsuccessful, to develop mine detection dogs more sophisticated approaches have gone on to make such applications practical in recent years. The essential problem was that substances such as drugs and explosives have no natural, inherent attraction for the dog, rendering compulsion as the fundamental training mechanism ineffective and counterproductive.

The traditional police and military aggression based applications, that is guard or patrol work, had inherent rewards in that the motivation, the fighting drive, came from within the dog; there is no need to reward a good dog for engaging the decoy with food or a thrown ball. Since drugs or explosives are of no interest, it is necessary to provide a reward, generally food or objects such as a balls or Kongs. As late as the Vietnam era food was the primary reward introduced in the U.S. military training documents, but in recent years the use of toys or objects has become widespread but not exclusive.

Today, as a generality, military programs involving the traditional Shepherds and Malinois, because of the intense prey drive, tend to focus on a tennis ball or Kong as a reward, while the more civilian oriented specialist dogs such as the Labrador Retriever tend to be trained using food as a primary reward. These are not hard and fast rules, for many Labrador Retrievers and similar breeds serve admirably in the military and non-military government agencies also have diverse programs and methods.

In recent years drug detection has become arguably the most important and cost justifying aspect of police canine service. While the basic training with a high potential dog is straightforward, legal requirements to minimize damage to citizen property and insure a legitimate indication, rather than a response to a subtle handler cue, renders training more complex and time consuming in that the drug dog needs to do minimal damage to a vehicle or premises, which may in fact be entirely free of drugs. The dog is usually motivated by the search for a tennis ball or other play object, and the very intense and driven dogs selected for this work will by nature be inclined to become excited in the presence of the ball, or the drugs which produce the expectation of the ball, as a reward. The dog will tend to scratch and dig

¹ Details in chapter 14, The Dogs of War.

when he senses the presence of the desired object or substance, which can do significant damage to a vehicle or building premises, or even a person in possession of the drugs. This scratching and digging at the drug or hiding place is referred to as an aggressive alert and is generally easier to train because it is the natural reaction of the dog.

An increasing number of trainers prefer the passive alert where the drug dog indicates by going into a sit position and staring intensely where the drugs are hidden, rather than digging at the site with his paws or becoming unruly. This is generally regarded as more demanding in training and discipline. The passive alert is helpful in avoiding inappropriate property damage and to provide the clear indication of a find legally helpful in successful prosecution. This demands a great deal of restraint on the part of the dog, that is requires a response directly contrary to his highly driven nature and intensity.

A good comparison is the pointing style of bird dog used in upland game hunting. The dog searches on ahead, using his nose to detect the presence of the pheasant or other game birds and then snapping into the classic, one foot in the air pointing posture. The dog is instantly aligned on the position of the bird and provides a positive, unmistakable indication, allowing the hunter to step up to a safe position with a clear shot before the bird is flushed. Similar stylized indications are very desirable in the drug dog and especially the explosives detecting dog.

Professional trainers and handlers debate the merits of these approaches, and like most things there are shades of grey; it is one thing to paw or nose the found object and another to aggressively dig and, unless the handler can restrain the dog in a timely manner, do significant damage to property or evidence. Every type of work and individual dog presents a new situation which must be evaluated on its own merits, and some individual trainers or institutions continue to prefer the active or aggressive indication. The one absolute principle is that bomb and explosive dogs must always make a passive indication, and the dog that cannot be reliably trained to do so should be eliminated from the training program.

Although sniffing around a vehicle or a quick tour of a building may seem like a walk in the park, real life drug detection work is arduous and physically demanding. The ideal dog tends to be high in energy, play object driven, agile, wiry and medium to smaller in size.¹ Agility and medium size allow the dog to search more easily in restricted spaces such as a vehicle, the interior of a cargo plane or a warehouse with higher shelves. The coat needs to be adapted to the predominant search weather and climate, and while naturally rough or longer coats, which can be routinely maintainable, are fine the elaborately groomed profuse coat fashionable in the show lines of some breeds are counterproductive. High object or play drive is essential. Many young dogs are willing to play fetch, but the drug dog candidate must maintain intensely as he matures, gets older and when it is hot or at the end of a long hard day.

In police service, simply finding the drugs is not enough. The handler and prosecuting attorney must be able to convince the court that the dog did indeed find the contraband on his own, rather than in response to handler prompting, either maliciously or inadvertently. These legal niceties might perhaps be slightly flexible in the instance of lower level drug sellers, but higher level offenders have access to entire teams of attorneys and supposed canine experts, sometimes former police canine trainers or handlers, who make a living convincing judges and juries that the dog may have been subtly cued by the handler in order to provide probable cause for

¹ If this sounds a whole lot like a Malinois, the rapidly increasing popularity of this breed sort of snaps into focus.

an otherwise illicit search, or routinely produced so many false indications that any indication by that particular dog and trainer are unworthy as evidence or cause for a legitimate, legal search. Detailed training records, indicating false positives as well as failures, are the key legal requirements in order to sustain the validity of the search and thus obtain a conviction. Many people in the field believe that certification, where an outside agency tests the dog and handler to provide convincing evidence that the dog can indeed accurately detect and indicate the presence of contraband, should become a universal practice.

A complicating factor in drug traffic suppression is that there are a number of illicit substances to be detected, including marijuana, cocaine, opium, heroin and methamphetamines. Effective dual purpose patrol dogs or specialist drug dogs must be able to work with most of these substances, which is not a difficult problem in training in that once the dog grasps the concept of an expected reward for finding one drug, others can be introduced in combination so the dog quickly associates the new odor with the expectation of his reward.

Another very important aspect of this training is to make sure that the dog is responding only to the actual narcotic substance, rather than associated objects and substances such as plastic bags, filler material used to cut the drugs or the scent of the person placing the sample to be found.

As noted, training dogs capable of searching for multiple substances is relatively straightforward and routine, and adding a new substance is simply a matter of incorporating it among the samples used in search. But training a dog that a formerly forbidden substance is to be "taken off the list," that is, ignored, is much more problematic. Until recently this was not particularly an issue, but individual states are today taking much more lenient attitudes toward marijuana, some states completely legalizing it. In the United States marijuana use is still against federal law at this writing, and how all of this is going to play out is difficult to foresee. If tolerance becomes widespread then there will no doubt be a series of court decisions on the new legalities of search, with the possible conclusion being that an indication on a legal substance as a basis for further search violates civil rights. If this were to become a strict interpretation of the new legal environment, an enormous number of dogs would need to be retrained or retired, a huge expense and a major setback in the effort to suppress drugs such as methamphetamines which would still be illegal.

It is generally preferable for the dog to perceive the object coming from the found substance, a primary reward, rather than from the handler, referred to as a secondary reward. One way in which this is done is by constructing a wall with a series of openings in which drugs may be stashed. Above each opening is a passageway with a tennis ball or other reward object, which the handler can release at a distance by means of fine line, such as fishing line, so that the reward ball drops down into the opening for the dog, with the dog perceiving the reward as associated with the drugs rather than the handler. The training room may have forty or more lines going back to a central location, each with a numbered tag on the end to indicate which reward is to be released.

Although they tend to be much more expensive, there are also radio-controlled devices that can remotely release a ball at the site of the drug find. In the training I watch, there seems to be a balance between such primary rewards and secondary rewards where the handler throws or bounces the ball and gives verbal praise after a correct passive alert, that is, a few moments after the dog is sitting still and intensely focused on the hidden drugs.

Normally the alert posture, the taking of the passive sit or down position, is a formality. In the words of Richard Dickson, well known police trainer:

"The true indication of the presence of drug or target odor is not the actual scratch or sit, since that is the trained behavior, but the body language

that takes place prior to that action. I always say that the scratch or sit is just for the tourists.

"A false indication is not the fault of the dog, it's the fault of the handler. A dog's body language will not lie but the dog can incorrectly illicit a reaction from the handler. If a dog gives the alert reaction (sit or scratch), without the proper body language prior to the alert it should not be rewarded or recognized as an indication. The indication must be made as obedience to the odor. A well trained handler should be able to recognize the specific odor that his dog indicates and whether it is actual or residual. Most handlers are never trained to this level however." ¹

Although there are so-called pseudo narcotics intended to approximate or emulate the odor of actual drugs for training, most trainers prefer the use of actual drugs. This requires a DEA² license and very close monitoring and surprise inspections to insure that the practice drugs are not being sampled for personal use or sold. Licensed trainers tend to be very scrupulous in maintaining control over their sample drugs, as their livelihood depends on maintaining their license to possess and use the drugs in their training.

Packaging and hiding marijuana or other substances is a constant game of cat and mouse between law enforcement and the drug distributors. The ace in the hole for the cops is the enormous canine capacity to detect extremely minute airborne quantities of the illicit substance in the presence of heavy concentrations of other substances, both normally present and introduced into the packaging to cover the drug odor. Drug traffickers are continually attempting to mask the odor of the marijuana or other illicit substances, but even when it is enclosed with outer layers of coffee, pepper, foodstuffs or other substances a good dog can usually make the find. The molecules of the illicit substance are continually evaporating or separating into the air from the illicit substance and once airborne continue to diffuse through the available air space. Almost all packing materials, and the vast majority available to the criminal, allow a continual, small quantity of airborne substances to escape from the packaging, either through cracks and seals or directly through permeable bags or containers. Police trainers and handlers are extremely reluctant to discuss details of effective drug concealment and packaging, for the obvious reasons.

When a drug package is removed from a vehicle, the interior of a building or the clothing of a person, residual odor lingers for a significant amount of time, because it has already evaporated or emanated from the substance and is thus present in the ambient air and on the surfaces. Also, small bits or flakes, not visibly apparent, may have broken off and still be present. If marijuana has been used in a residence or vehicle, the process of removing it from the bag, rolling it in paper or a pipe and disposing of the remains can be quite messy and leave a lot of material on the scene.

This is a serious practical, training and legal problem. If the drug dog makes an indication in the presence of residual odor, should it be considered faulty? If not, then there is no real requirement for good training and accuracy, for every false positive indication can be explained away as "residual odor." Not only are false indications a serious annoyance for the person whose vehicle or premises have been searched, it is a violation of his constitutional right to freedom from arbitrary search. This is a very difficult problem in terms of training, deployment tactics and legality, a history of false indications is a primary reason put forth by defense attorneys to obtain a dismissal.

¹ Richard Dickson, by private communication.

² Drug Enforcement Administration

Drug or explosive detection training often takes place on the premises of a professional dog training establishment, usually involving patrol dogs as well as substance detection dogs. Typically such facilities cover several acres in order to provide both indoor and outdoor training, with fields for protection training, obstacle courses and related facilities. These usually include elaborate indoor areas with rooms containing furniture appropriate to a bedroom or kitchen and metal lockers along a wall to provide more realistic training. A training wall with approximately 30 or 40 openings, each capable of releasing a ball as a reward from a remote location, is usual. This is a description of the facility I am most familiar with in northern Illinois, judging from photographs in the various magazines and web sites, operations in more favorable climate tend to have more outside training.

A number of older cars and trucks are often provided for teaching a vehicle search, no one wanting to use their own vehicle with the possibility of having the interior torn up by an enthusiastic dog; the passive alert may be the end point of the training, but there are inevitable lapses in control and restraint in the training process. There are often kennel facilities, as these professional operations usually are in the business of importing, breeding, training and selling service dogs.

The Bloodhound



Bloodhound

The hound, the dog which evolved for the hunt, is an ancient type, extending back to the origins of the human and canine partnership. There are numerous breeds and varieties with diverse roles according to the style of the hunt and the nature of the quarry. Sometimes the hound participates in the kill, but at other times leaves it to other sorts of dog in the pack or the hunter himself. Hounds often pursue their quarry, such as a raccoon or mountain lion, until it goes to ground or takes to the trees. Foxhounds generally pursue until the fox seeks shelter in a den or other hiding place. Coonhounds were specifically bred in the American South to run in packs, actively baying so the hunters could follow their progress according to the tone and intensity of the baying and tell when the raccoon had been treed.

Hounds are broadly divided into the sight hounds such as the Irish or Russian wolfhounds or the racing Greyhounds and the scent hounds such as the Coonhound, Foxhounds and Bloodhounds. Other than their common chase hunting function, which requires tenacity and endurance, these two classifications have little in common. Sight hounds tend to be larger for longer stride, more lightly built, with a decided stop to the skull shape to provide better binocular vision and relatively low levels of olfactory acuity. The scent hounds tend to be more massive with pendulant ears and a more plodding gait, and have been bred over centuries for the greatest possible olfactory acuity, their defining feature. A few breeds such as the Rhodesian Ridgeback are considered to be intermediate types.

Prior to the advent of firearms, the terms hound and hunting dog were more or less synonymous. In more recent times the hunter equipped with a shotgun or rifle, especially the bird hunter, generally makes the kill himself, relegating to the dog the task of locating and indicating the prey or retrieving downed birds. Thus pointers and retrievers emerged as new breeds, the gun dogs. Hunting dogs, both hounds and the gun dogs, have historically been the province of the rich and higher classes, which employed gamekeepers to persecute the working man or tenant farmer with the audacity to hunt for the purpose of putting food on the table. Historically hunting was sport for the noble or rich, and poaching for those of the working or peasant class.

Although the concept of the formal breed, with the rigidly closed gene pool, is a modern creation, over the centuries individual patrons or communities evolved uniform types for particular hunting traditions such as packs of foxhounds. In general there was a great deal of regional variation, and bringing in outside breeding stock was common in the pursuit of superior performance.

The Bloodhound evolved early in the Middle Ages from relatively large deer and boar hunting hounds as a specialist man-trailing dog. In this era the "Chien de Saint-Hubert" or "Dog of Saint Hubert" was first bred in Belgium by the monks of the Saint-Hubert Monastery, from ancient stock, and became emblematic of Belgian canine affairs. Since St. Hubert is the patron saint of the hunter the Belgian national canine organization became the *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* and the St. Hubert hound is incorporated into its emblem. The modern Bloodhound is the direct decedent of these dogs, and when the original St. Hubert lines died out in the nineteenth century the breed was later reconstructed from Bloodhound breeding stock.

Although many tend to think of the Bloodhound in terms of a pack of savage dogs in full cry chasing down an escaped slave, prisoner or fleeing criminal, as portrayed in the movies, the reality is quite different. It is certainly true that such packs of dogs were once common, and a few remain, but they were generally different sorts of dogs, often Bloodhounds crossed with Mastiff style dogs or other much more aggressive hound varieties. Often packs were made up of different types, some primarily for the chase, others for the attack at the end of the trail.

The typical police or search Bloodhound today works as a single on lead dog, which is generally relatively docile and friendly, although there are exceptions. Even the most staunch Bloodhound enthusiasts describe the breed as gentle and inquisitive, but not especially intelligent. Lack of intelligence is in my mind something of a misnomer, the breed has been created to be single minded and obsessed with the trail to the exclusion of all other things. Attempts to train other behavior run against this grain and frustrates the misguided trainer, which is more the result of misapplication and misunderstanding of the nature of this particular beast; the dog simply wants to get on with his track. Generally the breed is subject to genetic defects and very short lived, often expiring at about eight years old.

The Bloodhound, like other working breeds, has degenerated into show and working lines. Show lines tend to be lethargic, emphasizing size and wrinkles, with 100 pounds being fairly typical and much larger dogs not unusual. Some working trainers tend to prefer more mobile and agile dogs in the seventy to eighty pound range, which are likely to hold up better over longer distances and be more mobile in rough country, where sometimes the dog needs to be helped up a rough section or over a fence. Other equally well regarded authorities indicate a preference for larger dogs. Show breeders tend to emphasize the gentle giant persona, with some substance, but reports of nasty Bloodhounds circulate, as with any breed. Formal obedience competition is not their forte, and many individual dogs take serious convincing that one must not follow the crossing deer or other animal track. Some individuals, as in any breed, seem to have a propensity for dog aggression, which many handlers seem to be able to deal with if the dog is good in his work. In the words of Jerry Nichols, noted breed authority and a retired police Bloodhound handler with many years of experience:

"The Bloodhound today is primarily used by law enforcement and Search and Rescue. A Bloodhound can be a large and very powerful dog. Some can reach 150 pounds while the average is around 110-120 lbs. We have always trained handlers to work with these dogs on a long lead. The Bloodhound is a hunting breed and once it is given the scent to follow, it can be relentless running a man to ground even if it kills them. The lead keeps the dog from getting too far ahead and allows the handler to keep control of the dog. When they are on a trail these dogs can tune out what is going on around them to the point they could run right into traffic unaware of the dangers. I am aware of only a few prisons in the south that may still run their Bloodhounds off lead followed on horseback after escapees. For Law Enforcement and SAR, it is typically one dog and one handler."¹

¹ Jerry Nichols, personal communication.



Bloodhounds, and to a lesser extent other breeds, are able to work in difficult or unusual circumstances, such as after rainfall or snow, and can persist over asphalt and other hard surface segments. Often this is in areas where there has been extensive human activity; the ability to sort out the one person's odor is perhaps the most remarkable aspect of these dogs. They can easily follow a child when picked up and carried by an adult, and persons using a bicycle. They are able to detect scent hovering over a body of water and search downstream to pick up the odor.

There is an enormous amount of Bloodhound lore out there, and a little bit of mythology, making it difficult to cite realistic operational expectations, what a good well trained Bloodhound in typical service can be expected to be able to do, that is how old a trail the dog can effectively follow over useful distances. Such things are like war and fishing stories, tend to get better as they are told, and as the storyteller feels compelled to match the exploits of other storytellers. Reviewing what has been written, my general perception is that about a week is an extreme outside limit under ideal circumstances and conditions. This means that a few exceptional, expertly trained and handled dogs can under favorable circumstances work favorable trails that are a week old or even somewhat older. (Schettler) These are experts with well trained dogs talking about once or twice in an active lifetime of experience, not routine expectations. More realistically 48 to 72 hours, under favorable circumstances, is beginning to push what a good dog can be expected work on a routine basis, anything beyond that being more or less a bonus.

Even when entirely enclosed, the forced air ventilation system in a modern car or truck continually expels passenger compartment air with the scent rafts and other components of odor, which means in principle that a dog can follow a vehicle with a party of interest. There are of course severe limitations, the person who is able to drive many miles at highway speeds is almost certainly beyond any dog's capability, but in instances of lower speed, shorter delay time and shorter distance it is sometimes possible; there are reliable reports of criminals under favorable circumstances being located and convicted after such a search. (Stockton, 2004) In rural areas one strategy is to traverse a highway by vehicle, stopping at each intersection to have the dog sniff and indicate direction.

How practical is all of this? Bloodhounds are indeed sometimes capable of following a person in a vehicle, but many authorities, including a well-known author, portray this as of marginal utility, say that is simply not practical in the real world. On the other hand there are well documented instances of police handlers that have been able to indicate the path of a vehicle with an abducted person, or the body, for a number of miles on a limited access highway, identifying the correct exit and leading to the find. Much of this was video recorded by television reporters.

Not every Bloodhound is an excellent working candidate; just as in any other line of work breeding must proceed according to selection for proven excellence on the track. For police work, or any other specialty, a good dog is a good dog, and a not good dog is just a waste of time. The Bloodhound is the ultimate specialist, created and maintained for man trailing, that is seeking out a specific person from a known point of presence, usually in modern police or search work as a single dog on a harness and line. The Bloodhound is not used for man aggression, building searches, or substance detection; these things are left to the patrol dogs such as the Malinois. While capable of wilderness area search and rescue the Bloodhound, because of size, bulk and working style, is not as well adapted to disaster scenes resulting from terrorist bombings, earthquakes and similar disasters.

Many police searches are handled by an available patrol dog, a Malinois or Shepherd, because he is there and because he will alert aggressively or engage when the suspect is found. When the trail is older or the available dogs are not suitable a good Bloodhound is often the dog of choice. Since the Bloodhound is not man aggressive sometimes an apprehension dog, such as a Malinois, serves as a backup to deal with a potentially aggressive suspect. Lacking an apprehension dog, an "over watch team" can provide the cover and step in to make the apprehension.

When a person has departed from a known point a well-trained Bloodhound is often the dog of choice, but it is not automatic. Just as the bite and aggression must come from within a Malinois, but is only useful when the response is encouraged and controlled through discipline and training, a Bloodhound must not only have good working selection in the breeding, he must be schooled and trained to know that he cannot go back to the game following instincts of his ancestors and must follow the trail indicted by the handler through the personal scent item. One year of training prior to useful deployment is often cited as a reasonable expectation, just as in so many other areas of life, great Bloodhounds are born and then made through training.

In exploring the world of search and trailing one quickly comes to appreciate why the sport community generally sticks to tracking or area search exercises: for tracking you can do most of the training alone and special skills are not necessary in the decoy for the area search exercise, which involves little wait time. Trailing is different in that as the dog advances there are hours and even days of delay between laying the trail and sending the dog on his search. In this era of busy lives, finding people to send out to trail and waiting for the dog, even if they come back to the end of the trail later, is difficult.

American police agencies must work within budgets, and the primary limitation on Bloodhound deployment is creating situations where a specialized, single purpose dog can be provided enough work to justify the cost of maintenance, training and the dedicated handler; the specialist must compete for budget dollars with the multipurpose protection, search and drug detection capabilities of a Malinois or Shepherd.

Many Bloodhounds are owned and trained by individuals devoted to the breed and serve on a voluntary basis, both through civilian search and rescue groups and for police agencies. Individual police officers making available personally owned and trained Bloodhounds are not uncommon. To give a sense of how common police Bloodhounds are, it is reported that at the time of this writing there are three Bloodhounds in service in California handled by police officers and about another dozen in civilian hands regularly available for volunteer service. These are relatively small numbers when compared to the dual purpose patrol and drug dogs.

In contrast to European superiority in patrol dog breeding and training, America is on the whole the leading nation in practical Bloodhound breeding, training and deployment experience, with enterprising Americans touring Europe to run seminars, in reverse of the usual flow of working canine instruction.

Perspective

Over the years research to produce technology for artificial scent detection and discrimination has been ongoing, with periodic predictions that the technology to produce effective scent detection instrumentation would soon make drug sniffing dogs as obsolete as the horse and buggy in the age of the automobile. This may in time come to pass, but for the moment ongoing research and development only seems to push the demise of the sniffing dog further into the future; artificial scent

discrimination devices with the sensitivity of the canine nose are proving very difficult to create.

In conclusion, the acute sense of smell, the marvelous olfactory capability, is among the most important factors – indeed perhaps in the modern world the most important factor – in the usefulness of the dog to mankind. This is a general truth, applicable to the hunting and herding dogs as well as the police applications of interest here.

6

The Ring and the Trial



Malinois on French Ring Sport scaling wall.

The emergence of the dog as a working partner in the primitive past was based on immediate and direct hands on selection: those perceived as useful were kept and fed and others were likely to be abandoned, pushed out to fend for themselves or culled. When times were good the ineffective dog could perhaps linger, be fed and tolerated as some sort of pet, but hard times would mean that only those contributing to survival would survive themselves. As the human social structure became more advanced and complex, good dogs would have been sought out from neighboring bands, tribes, farms or villages, based on observation of the dogs at their work and perhaps some informal testing. This was effective as long as the social structure was simple enough

to enable meaningful observation of the dogs as they went about their work; that is the man needing a dog would be personally familiar with the dogs available or the parents of pending litters.

At the advent of the twentieth century the Industrial Revolution was far into the process of changing a centuries old way of life throughout Europe, altering the very fabric of society. The population was shifting from rural areas to rapidly expanding industrial cities, and uniformed police forces were evolving to deal with crime in the crowded industrial districts and to maintain order throughout the city.

Across much of northern Europe diverse groups of men came to realize that the indigenous working dogs of the farmer, drover and stockman were in imminent danger of being lost forever because of rapid industrialization and the mechanization and modernization of agrarian life. Separately and in small groups they sought to gather together and preserve these various regional working types and form them into breeds. Their legacy to us is the German and Belgian Shepherds, the Rottweiler, the Bouvier des Flandres and the other herding and working breeds as we know them today.

Since the purpose of these men was the preservation of this centuries old working heritage, it was quite natural that as they created their various organizations and evolved formal standards of appearance and structure they also devised a number of working trial systems. The primary reason for these trials was

to serve as a gauge of working character so as to facilitate the selection of desirable breeding stock. In this way, the working trial served the purification of the soul just as the conformation show served to consolidate the desired appearance and physical structure. The sporting aspect drew in many who enjoyed the training and then the competitive nature of the trial itself; it would seem that the desire to go out and see whose horse is faster or whose dog is stronger, quicker and more courageous is as old as the domestication process itself.

In the early years this was essentially a northern European phenomenon. Subsequent to WWI, in the 1920s, the German Shepherd especially and later some of the other breeds became enormously popular in America, but this was primarily for family companionship and conformation exhibition rather than dogs with a serious working role. Actual American police dog deployment was sparse, marginal and transient. Breeding and training according to working capability and function was beyond our comprehension, did not exist in any meaningful way. In the 1970s this would begin to evolve as police canine deployment began to proliferate and amateur involvement through the emerging popularity of Schutzhund began to bring European ways and more work capable dogs and training to the new world.

The Euro Way

Just as working class European immigrants – the Irish, Poles and Italians – looked to America as the land of opportunity, with dreams of gold paved streets, in the earlier years of the Schutzhund movement we, the enthralled Americans, believed that Europe was the land of working dog opportunity, that there was at least one training club in every village or town, easy access to working pups and serious dog training as a way of life. And so it was. But it was also an illusion, a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow that we could approach but never quite grasp and bring home to America.

When I first went to the Netherlands in the 1980s it was all there: the clubs, the dogs, and above all the people with years of breeding and training experience. Belgium and Germany were more of the same, abundant picturesque training fields, often with a cozy clubhouse and a friendly bar complete with old timers conversing or playing cards over a beer, sometimes French fries on the table. Trophies, ribbons, photos and trial posters, going back for decades, adorned the walls. These were people of every walk of life, and the clubs provided an opportunity for the ordinary man to participate and achieve according to his willingness to work and his luck rather than his money. The young trainer was commonplace, and many were aspiring decoys, anxious to put on the suit and engage the dogs. A training field on public land, where you could perhaps have a clubhouse for your own use, seemed easily available, just as American parks have a tennis courts and ball fields. Pups of proven working lines were affordable, especially for those with a more experienced trainer as a mentor. It was typical to see several young men doing the helper work, often with a couple of older men directing in the background. The young enthusiast would often have a father, uncle or family acquaintance who could take him along to the club and, if the interest was there, help him find and train a first dog. Clubs were plentiful and close by; stopping by the club in the evening was a short drive or even a walk with the dog. It was a training life style most Americans could only dream of, but the dream was to become increasingly elusive as the years passed.

Dog training is a way of life for many Europeans used to a selection of training clubs in the neighborhood or just down the road. Many years ago, visiting an old friend near Hilversum, a KNPV judge, she remarked as we were pulling out of the driveway that it was going to be a long ride; that we were on our way to an especially distant club. Along the way she would point out a KNPV or IPO club, often with a comment on why it was not appropriate for this day. Finally, after an arduous

twenty-minute drive we arrived at the desired far distant club, just in time for training. We had gone perhaps 20 kilometers or 15 miles, a short distance most Americans can only envy.

On another occasion, a warm late afternoon sitting outside a clubhouse in Belgium, near the Dutch border, Turnhout if memory serves me, as we sat idly sipping our beer a little old man with a large Malinois male appeared and began his obedience training. In a way it was not very impressive, for the man was slow moving and low key and not much seemed to be going on. A little while later a helper, a very young man, casually came onto the field. After a few words, the helper took up his position on the opposite side of a pond, probably ten to fifteen feet across. The man and his dog moved off to the other end of the field, where the dog was sent with a soft command. The dog burst across the field and over the pond, but at one low key command from the handler stopped, took a regretful look at the helper and returned. On the next go round the dog was, much to his enthusiasm, allowed to complete his attack.

In talking to my friends, I learned that this man, while never quite a big winner, had participated in Belgian Ring for most of his life. A little later, I noticed the man heading out for home. He had a three-wheel cycle arrangement, homemade with two dog crates and bicycle parts, into which he loaded his two Malinois and peddled off home. I am sure that this is a little bit unusual, that many more Europeans load up the Mercedes station wagon, perhaps with an expensive, high tech aluminum dog trailer, than a homemade three-wheeled bicycle on training night. But the access of the common man – the young man with a family or the old man on a fixed income – to the training sports has always been a fundamental, and I believe necessary, part of the heritage. Somehow, we have never quite been able to make this a reality in America.

European training offers diverse opportunities, from the casual social trainer seeking an evening out with his dog to the driven, ultra-competitive fanatic. Some trainers traverse both worlds; I knew a Dutch IPO judge who was training director at a local club and on another evening drove down into Belgium to work with a more competitive, exclusive group. In this way he was able to carry on two distinct and rewarding roles. This was viable because the distance he drove in a month was likely less than the typical American Schutzhund trainer drives in a week; everything is so close together in Europe that even international travel for training can often be done in an evening!

Quality helper work is the foundation of protection training, and historically many European trainers would take up the suit or the sleeve to one extent or another so that the burden was distributed.¹ Many clubs have several helpers with roles according to their age, experience and physical condition. The older men tend to serve mostly as teachers and instructors, only occasionally picking up a sleeve or suit jacket to demonstrate a point or fill in. And, of course, there are a few older men in denial, determined to put the callow young men – the whippersnappers as it were – to shame. But on the whole the bulk of the work is carried on by younger men with the knowledge and experience to work on their own. At the bottom of the pyramid are the novice trainers, eager for opportunity and recognition. Although some helpers prefer the role for its own sake and seldom train a dog, many are also trainers and take for granted that their dogs will receive excellent work in return, since the club with one exclusive helper is very unusual. Not every club has this ideal situation, but most have several helpers, so that the serious trainer can routinely work near to home with good helper several evenings a week.

¹ Participation by women was generally unusual prior to the 1970's.

In Europe as in America modern technology has created a series of distractions – radio, television, video games, the internet – increasingly occupying discretionary time, especially among younger people, chipping away at social activities such as soft ball leagues or dog training. The same trends exist also in Europe; generally amateur dog training seems to be in moderate decline. Police breed registrations have fallen in half or more around the world starting in the mid-1990s, including the German Shepherd in Germany: the European popularity base is eroding in the face of current social and population trends, with ominous, unforeseeable consequences.

Beginning in the 1970s the emerging American Schutzhund movement was a time of excitement and promise, of better things to come. We had come to believe that dog training was fundamentally different and more exciting in Europe, that an all-pervasive working ethic predominated in working breed affairs, that the credo that form must follow function was the universal mantra. Somehow we believed that every European was above the venality of the AKC world; that working the dogs was a serious matter, that what counted was what a dog could do in his work even more than his appearance. Our faith was general, in all breeds, but above all else was in the German Shepherd mythology, so effectively nurtured by von Stephanitz: that form must follow function, that every German Shepherd must pass a rigorous Schutzhund trial as a prerequisite to breeding, each an incipient police patrol dog.

But the reality proved to be disillusioning: not only were insipid show people the norm, not all Schutzhund trials were honest, and what was worse this was known and condoned at the highest levels of the SV. Except for the Malinois community, a significant majority of Europeans involved in the police style breeds were and increasingly are primarily show oriented, just as in America, paying little more than lip service to work. The SV, the legacy of von Stephanitz, was perhaps the greatest disappointment, for in time we were to come to see that the Schutzhund trial was being prostituted, that judges were too often pimps and that titles were increasingly being given to show dogs void of serious police level character through emasculated trials, lenient judges and outright fraud. Most of us had come to accept that American bred German Shepherds were evolving into a deviant breed, but it was almost inconceivable to us that these German show lines were being allowed to degenerate in the same way, just as in America.

Although our expectations – in hindsight grossly unrealistic – led to disillusion, all was not lost, for outside of the SV establishment and the all-breed show dog world there remained diverse pockets of old style working German Shepherds and true guardians of some of the other breeds. Rather than focused on Germany itself, today many of the better dogs are in neighboring nations, that is places such as the Czech Republic, the Netherlands or Belgium. The good dogs from within Germany are coming from lines outside of the establishment mainstream, such as remnants of the old East German breeding or those maintained by the older hard-core German trainers and breeders. Thirty or forty years ago one could look at the four or five generation pedigrees of the winning show and working dogs and see a bit of commonality, dogs which in extended pedigrees were producing both working and conformation winners. In recent years, this has become almost unknown; only a fool tries to cross the lines.

Beyond the German Shepherd the other breeds, often with a scattering of really excellent individual dogs, existed only as fragile communities. In 1984 I saw some excellent Rottweilers, a wonderful Beauceron or two and some of the Bouviers I was looking for, but in a broad sense these were breeds in decline. Although my younger readers will no doubt suspect that I exaggerate, the Malinois was simply not on our radar screens, very few of us, even those of us venturing out to the new Schutzhund clubs, were even aware of the breed.

In America today, some forty or more years after our initial wave of enthusiasm, Schutzhund is still marginal: our vision of prospering amateur clubs available to large segments of the population, with the ambiance of Europe, remains unfulfilled. Among the reasons is our inability to achieve critical mass, to have enough clubs close enough together to bring in the young trainers which carry the bulk of the helper work burden. The sport is increasingly commercialized; with the purchased titled dog still predominant on the field, and helper work more and more a commercial service rather than amateurs working together in a club environment. Young people especially are finding Schutzhund increasingly out of their reach in terms of both time and money.

Our personal experience is an illustration of these trends, for our first Bouvier des Flandres came from the du Clos des Cerberes kennel of Edmee Bowles, driven from Belgium as WWII commenced and living just outside Philadelphia, the founder of the breed in America. We were able to train this male to the Schutzhund III and the FH, the advanced tracking title, in relatively short order. The dog was an excellent natural tracker and strong in protection. The obedience was marginal, mostly because of my inexperience as a trainer and because there was no one with experience to help; I often wonder what the dog could have become had I been better trainer, or if there had been a mentor.

But there was a serious down side to this, for we came to believe that in general the European Bouviers were serious working dogs, that all of their lines were fundamentally sound, that belief in working character could be taken for granted. As a consequence we acquired a few dogs of the then very fashionable Dutch show lines, with the expectation that a little selection would enable us to insure the appropriate character. This turned out not to be true at all, the dogs were in general lacking in sufficient drive for the protection work and difficult in obedience and tracking, exhibiting passive resistance rather than enthusiasm. These lines were eliminated and we went on to establish relationships with people in Holland who were active trainers with police line Bouviers, which provided us a reliable source of excellent dogs. But it was a major detour, a loss of time and a waste of money.

Some might perhaps comment that we should have known better, and there is a grain of truth to it. But this was before the internet and the advent of European travel for the typical American training enthusiast. These were difficult lessons to learn, and even today many spend too much money and time to understand that dogs coming out of mainstream European show lines, of all breeds, fall far short of serious police service potential, are in reality no better than the typical American breeding.

Dog Sports

Why do men engage in violent sport, a ritualistic, limited form of aggression? Today there are enormous amounts of money involved, but this was not the purpose in the beginning. Men engage in boxing or football primarily as condoned and controlled outlets for aggression. Since society at large has generally endorsed, glorified and rewarded this, it is a reasonable premise that maintenance of a certain level of aggressive and competitive drive has always been necessary for the vigor of the social fabric, necessary to enhance and maintain a population with physical fitness and potential for combat prowess. Throughout history the male warrior role, to defend the hunting band or the crops in the fields, has been fundamental to every viable social structure, from the age of hunting and gathering through the military and police service of today. Success in the hunt or an abundant crop meant nothing if outsiders could take by force what time, labor and skill had produced. The fundamental dilemma of mankind is that while war and conflict bring only suffering and deprivation, we glorify the warrior and the implements of war, from the knight with sword and lance to the military aviator. In a similar way, men admire and desire

aggressive dogs, even when there is no social justification, as witness the age-old practices of bear or bull baiting or the fighting pit. Uncontrolled aggression becomes tyranny and oppression, but eradication of the manifestations of aggression through social emasculation and political correctness creates vulnerability at every level.

Just as young men have since antiquity been encouraged in aggressive outlets, pups and young dogs by their nature routinely engage in mock fights and roughhouse play, and much of this propensity carries over into the adult. Just as sport in the ideal teaches the young man to engage and compete within the context of a set of rules and limits, sport training instills in the dog the sense of appropriate, proportionate reaction to specific provocations or simulations, making the dog controllable when the threat is not imminent and thus useful in police service and similar related roles.

Sport, ritualistic aggression, is much more than game playing. In human society, in the era of the Greeks and Romans, and indeed most primitive societies, sport evolved as preparation for war; and reflects these original purposes even today. Although modern working dog training has become increasingly ritualistic and obedience oriented – seriously detracting from the original purposes of breeding selection and service preparation – the training is still essentially sport in this fundamental sense. In the protection work particularly we play out ritualistic aggression without the intent of actual injury for purposes of developing physical fitness and skill in adversarial engagements, to solidify and enhance the instinctive confidence and tactics to prevail in meaningful confrontation.

From the beginning of the modern police dog era the breed founders and police canine pioneers devised functional tests or trials to provide the screening process for breed worthiness and as practical prerequisites for service. Examples include the Belgian Ring Sport, the Schutzhund trial in Germany, extended to all FCI nations as IPO, and the Dutch police or KNPV trials. All of these trials became popular as civilian training, social and competitive venues, a way of life for thousands of amateurs.

Every police breed and line has been based on such trials. In the homeland of the German Shepherd a dog needed to prove his mettle on the Schutzhund field in order to produce progeny worthy of carrying on the heritage, to be members of this noble breed. In the Netherlands the KNPV trial was created to be a police service qualification, primarily a test of readiness for patrol duty, but also emerged as the de facto breeding requirement for the Malinois and the working Bouviers. The Ring Sports of Belgium and France are suit based programs similar to KNPV but somewhat more civilian oriented, but with little practical emphasis on the scenting or olfactory capability.

Schutzhund, and to a lesser extent the Ring Sports, were primarily created as breeding certifications and sport rather than to produce dogs ready for immediate deployment in a police patrol role. Thus in some ways these exercises, relative to KNPV, can be seen as less practical and less directly related to service. In the older days this was of relatively minor practical significance, since innumerable Schutzhund titled dogs historically went on to exemplary police service with minimal additional training; a good Schutzhund dog was indeed usually transformable into an exemplary on the street patrol dog. When the trial was sufficient to challenge the dog, to reveal and discard the insecure, unwilling and unstable, the details of the exercises were relatively minor issues, the resulting dogs easily adaptable to street service.

But in more recent years the lowering of standards in the IPO program, and the emphasis on style and rote obedience rather than challenging the dog physically and in character attributes, has diminished the credibility for police service. Much of the rising popularity of the Malinois in police and military applications is related to this degeneration in IPO and the consequent diminished confidence in German Shepherd

working lines; a good German Shepherd is still a remarkable police patrol candidate, but the proliferation of show line Shepherds with suspect IPO titles has debased the currency. The IPO title is no longer a serious universal indication of police potential, and police level German Shepherds are today virtually unknown in these show lines, virtually a different breed from the heritage of von Stephanitz.

Schutzhund as we came to know it after WWII did not exist in the early years. Prior to the WWI there was a police dog certificate which predated the Schutzhund title, held by a significant number of the influential breeding males of the era. But this was mostly a matter of evolving programs and terminology, the expectation of actual proof of performance as a prerequisite, although not always honored, was an objective from the beginning.

Thus it is to be understood that in the early years the process was imperfect and sporadic, not all or even most German Shepherds actually held a Schutzhund, police or herding title and the tension between emerging show breeders and the police oriented trainers intensified in the 1920s as explored further in the chapter covering German Shepherd history. Toward the end of his life von Stephanitz implored:

"Take this trouble for me; Make sure my shepherd dog remains
a working dog, for I have struggled all my life long for that
aim."

The real concern was not so much the external societal influences but rather the enemy within, the show and commercial elements this man struggled against throughout his leadership tenure. This internal struggle for the soul of the German Shepherd is not novel, was incipient in the beginning, even prior to the SV in the days of the Phylax Society, and is ongoing today.

The working trial in the ideal serves to set a minimum level of physical prowess and inborn character attributes – intensity, trainability, stability – for breeding. But even when honestly and diligently conducted this is an inherently flawed process, for no matter how severe the written requirements and diligent the judge and decoy it is still artificial and contrived, cannot recreate the reality and stress of street engagement. As a consequence, trainers have always been ahead of the curve in their ability to prepare a marginal dog to pass the trial, even if with indifferent scores. Thus even the KNPV certificate or an impressive Schutzhund score does not guarantee that a dog will succeed in actual service, and every serious working breeder and police trainer knows this.

But for purposes of breeding selection this does not negate the essential validity of the ongoing process. Training and certifying marginal dogs is arduous and unpleasant work, and does not enhance one's standing in the esteem of his peers. Knowing that one's reputation is based on the actual serviceability of the dogs produced, and that the breeder will most likely need to train the progeny in their turn, provides a strong incentive to select for breeding the strongest and most trainable dogs.

Thus in the beginning, and for many years thereafter, even today, it was and is the selection through the training process itself rather than the actual titles, or the relative scores, that were of paramount importance. Dogs had value not only because of a working title, but because they and their line were known and acquired locally by those who had seen them work, or had friends and associates who could provide first-hand knowledge. The fact that the dog had a lucky day and barely made it through, or was a particularly strong dog losing points through enthusiasm, was available knowledge that had its own influence on the value of the dog. The point of the trial was not so much that bad dogs will fail and be eliminated but rather that the breeder and trainer, since he must title each dog, will make a strong effort to improve his lines so that the training takes a reasonable amount of time and effort, and is a much more pleasant and rewarding experience.

This natural competitiveness played out on the trial field is a fundamental aspect of the process. When I take my dog on the field in a club trial or when a European trainer takes his dog into the stadium for the most important and prestigious European event, scores, diplomas, titles and who is first or second are of secondary importance. What is most desired is the ongoing respect of one's peers, the people who have shared the struggle on the training field over the years. These people are not fooled, see through the points and the pieces of inscribed paper and know and respect the good dogs and programs, the trainers who have struggled to produce them. This is the mechanism by which the trial system maintains and enhances the working breed, this is why the individual breeders and trainers struggle each year to come back with a better dog and earn the ongoing respect of the community.

In the 1970s and 80s Americans in increasing numbers became aware of these titled dogs and were willing to spend ever increasing amounts of money to obtain one. Acquisitions for individual need and desire quickly evolved into the concept of brokering dogs, of buying dogs on speculation with the idea of a substantial profit through eventual resale in America and other remote nations lacking an indigenous working dog heritage.

This was a critical juncture, for it profoundly changed the dynamics of the European training community. When the dogs remained within the local community it was knowledge of the work of the dog and the reputation of the lines, the trainer and the training club, that established the value of the dog. The advent of brokering dogs, selling them into distant and unknown environments, tended to change the titled dog into a commodity. In these new circumstances, a piece of paper denoting a working title took on new and unreasonable value. A dog with such a certificate had significant foreign sale value even if the title was earned in a marginal way, on a lucky day, under a lenient judge or simply fabricated, an untitled dog fraudulently sold with falsified papers.

For the European trainer with one eye on the dollar this meant that the quickest route to the title, regardless of the actual quality of the dog or his training, became a primary consideration. Why put extra work into a dog which is going to disappear into the broker's hands the day after the trial, never to be seen again? Rather than training the dog with the objective of laying a foundation for ongoing training and serviceability the remainder of his life, training just to get through the trial, by any means, becomes the profitable approach for the quasi-commercial trainer.

Thus the trial based training and breeding system is a fragile process, susceptible to outside influence, primarily in the form of money. When ignorant Americans will buy a dog based on the title alone, for what are seen as incredible prices in a largely working class training community, the system is corrupted and weakened at its very core. The desire for the quick title and the money from the consequent export sale rather than excellence and personal satisfaction can quickly become the primary motivation. When the Americans are joined in ignorant enthusiasm by the newly rich Japanese, Chinese and others willing to expend enormous amounts of cash the heritage is prostituted, in danger of collapse.

In summary, the reality is that a title is a piece of paper, that the presence of a title does not in and of itself guarantee that the dog is capable of effective service. Aside from the fact that the title might be fraudulent at some level, which does happen, the dog may have been slid through under a lenient judge or just had a lucky day. Every person buying a dog needs to regard the title as an indication that the dog is potentially worthwhile, but base the actual purchasing decision on more comprehensive testing and confidence in the seller of the dog. In buying a dog, especially an ongoing series of dogs as in a police program, knowledge of and confidence in the seller is even more important than the evaluation of any individual dog.

For the person new to the working dog world it can be quite difficult to grasp that while the working trial is the foundation of every successful working line the title on the individual dog is of only limited value, is not and should not be taken to be a credible guarantee of working potential. This is always a paradox for the novice, and we all begin as a novice. This paradox can only be mastered gradually through experience and observation over time. The tendency is to make one of two errors: either believing that the title is literal proof of working functionality, or the more treacherous converse, that since the title does not always correlate with working excellence in the individual dog, it is not of fundamental importance in the ongoing breeding process.

This fundamental principle, the absolute necessity of testing working stock through training, has at times been an enormous difficulty for those in what have come to be known as the alternative breeds, that is, breeds other than the German Shepherd and the Malinois. Since it is very unusual, almost impossible, to find lines in these breeds generally based on the title as a breeding prerequisite, overly credulous enthusiasts come to believe that these breeds and these lines are or can be viable sources of reliable working stock. Sometimes, depending on the integrity, dedication and skill of the individual breeder solid, reliable lines do exist. But all too often this is not true, the program is based on emotional appeal and clever promotional schemes, as many have learned through personal disappointment. Thus many enthusiasts for these breeds are in a perpetual state of denial, choose to believe things that common sense, the evidence available through observation and accumulated wisdom, have made obviously untrue. But widespread denial of objective reality has only tended to accelerate rather than retarded the demise of these unfortunate breeds, as I know too well.

Schutzhund and IPO



Doberman Pincher Buster Wimmerhaus
Decov Rolando Salvador

In America, Schutzhund was the big new thing in the latter 1970s, an exciting alternative to the dreary obedience programs of the era, where passive compliance was the preordained role of the dog. This was a venue where the protection dogs were called upon to fulfill their age-old heritage, to protect, to engage human adversaries in simulated attack scenarios. The dogs, the good ones, came alive, and their handlers were right there behind them. The AKC establishment was appalled, biting dogs were simply not the American way, and dire predictions, by establishment icons such as Carmine Battaglia, of action by the civil authorities to suppress this German perversion were shrill and widespread, which only added to the aura of

excitement.

Throughout most of the twentieth century, Schutzhund was the predominant European working dog venue, created by the founders of the German Shepherd as a character and working evaluation for their incipient breed. Beyond these origins this program quickly evolved to become the predominant all breed police style working dog trial system, first in Germany, and then through the international popularity of the German police breeds increasingly prominent in various national venues in other European nations and the rest of the world, particularly North America. Most Americans, including the dog people, had never heard of strange things such as ring sports, bite suits or breeds with funny sounding names such as "Malinois."

Schutzhund specifically evolved as a German national sport under the VDH, that is, the German national organization comparable in scope to the AKC. In other FCI nations a similar bite sleeve style international program under FCI auspices, the IPO program (*Internationale Prüfungsordnung*). Over the years there had been substantial differences in rules, philosophy and judging expectations, but beginning at the turn of the twenty-first century the programs converged, became more and more similar. International annual championships under the IPO banner gradually became the most prestigious venues in the world.

Finally, on January 1, 2012 IPO became the universal FCI protection dog working trial and Schutzhund as a distinct entity passed into history, although the term is still widely used in the colloquial sense.

The primary purposes of Schutzhund are:

- Identification of those dogs suitable to be bred, that is, of sound temperament, willing to work and of correct structure.
- Preparation of the individual dog to serve the purpose of its breed in police or military service or civilian protection of family and property.

- Provision of sport and recreation for man and beast that brings out the best qualities of both.

The use of the separate, removable, padded arm in the protection work, rather than the full body suit, and the fact that the dogs are trained to bite the forearm exclusively, distinguishes Schutzhund from other protection dog venues. The Schutzhund trial consists of three separate phases or distinct sequences of exercises, focused on tracking, formal obedience and protection. These individual testing phases normally take place in a single day at a small or local trial, but are spread over two or more days at major regional, national or international championship events. All of the dogs are sequenced through the individual phases individually, so a particular dog will typically have an hour or more between phases in a single day trial. In a larger trial, each dog's work will normally be spread over two or more days. The local trial employs a single judge, while the larger event uses three judges so that the phases can go on concurrently, that is, while one group of dogs is out in the field tracking, another group, with a different judge, will be sequencing through their obedience routine. In any situation, all of the dogs see the same judge for any particular phase, that is, one judge does all of the tracking or protection evaluations.

Although there have been historical references which describe Schutzhund as originating as early as 1900 as a foundation on which the German Shepherd was built, this must not be taken too literally, especially in light of the fact that there is no explicit use of this term as late as 1925 in the seminal von Stephanitz book. Schutzhund is the German word for protection, and in this generic sense they were evolving a variety of tests and trials under varying rules and procedures. Thus although police trials and certifications began well before 1910, Schutzhund titles as such did not begin to become common in German Shepherd pedigrees until the 1920s, and the program as we know it today would not entirely emerge until the post WWII era.

Veterans of the sport tend to regard the transformation of Schutzhund into IPO as part of an ongoing watering down, a popularization based on political correctness in an increasingly pet oriented European canine environment. In such minds IPO is Schutzhund reduced to Schutzhund light, mere sport in the pejorative sense, stripped of much of the potential to guide breeding in the way of strong, serious police patrol level dogs.

Since the Schutzhund program is for dogs of the protective heritage, its emphasis is on those qualities necessary in such dogs, such as initiative, courage and trainability. The three phases of the program are tracking, obedience and protection:

- Tracking tests the olfactory capability, the ability to follow the path and find objects dropped by the tracklayer, as a dog would be called upon to do in police or civilian search and rescue service.
- Obedience demonstrates heeling, retrieval of objects, jumps and other exercises that demonstrate agility, compliance and handler control. The presence of another competing dog on the field during the obedience exercise verifies impartiality to such distractions.
- Protection involves a search and hold of an adversary, close in defense of the leader and a remote pursuit and engagement of an adversary.

The performance in each phase is evaluated by the judge and awarded up to 100 points according to the correctness of the exercise, with a resulting 300 points for a hypothetical perfect performance. The dog must receive a minimum of 70 points in each phase in order to achieve a new title or pass. Titled dogs which fail a trial do not revert to a lower level or give up the title as is customary in some other sports such as French Ring or KNPV.

There are three progressively more difficult levels of competition that lead to the IPO titles I through III. Many dogs go on to compete repetitively at the IPO III level in order to achieve the highest possible score and thus to qualify for participation in various regional, national or international championship events. There are also advanced tracking programs and a number of other specialized titles; it has more recently become possible to compete in a single phase such as tracking or obedience although no actual titles are awarded.

Among the factors contributing to the usefulness of the dog is the remarkably sensitive nose, which makes the sense of smell so superior to that of a human being that a dog virtually lives in another world. The olfactory sensitivity adds another dimension, a further capability, to the human-canine team. In service dogs locate lost children, detect the presence of narcotics or warn of and perhaps engage a concealed adversary, as in a criminal hiding in a commercial warehouse, store or factory.

Tracking is thus an integral facet of the program in order to verify and enhance this most useful faculty. The test is conducted in an open field where a person, the tracklayer, walks a prescribed route several hundred yards long and drops a number of articles, such as a glove, which the dog must locate. Elementary level tracks are laid by the handler himself; more advanced competition uses a different person as tracklayer. The IPO three track incorporates four ninety degree turns, three objects such as small blocks of wood to find and is an hour old. The track is sometimes laid in a plowed field rather than on grass or in a pasture, but there are no transitions in cover.

The track is aged for a period according to the title being sought (20 minutes to an hour) after which the dog is taken to the marked starting point and sent out, usually on a ten meter line attached to the collar. (The handler has the option of sending his dog off lead, but I have never seen this done in an actual IPO trial.) It is necessary for the handler to stay ten meters behind the dog, at the end of the line, except when the dog picks up a dropped article or indicates its presence by laying down or sitting. The difficulty of a particular track is dependent on the nature of the vegetation and the weather. Damp, cool, still conditions are generally the most favorable. Early in the morning is often the best time of day, and most local trials begin with tracking as early as practical. Tracking dogs goes on regardless of weather, my dog has passed tracking after an inch or two of snow or enough rain to cover the articles occurred between the laying of the track and the actual exercise. Freshly plowed or disked fields are sometimes used for tracking.

The rules, procedures and judging expectations require that the dog track footstep by footstep, that is, according to the disturbance in vegetation or soil at the surface rather than the air borne odor of the person which dissipates over a wider area. Even the slightest deviation from the track is penalized by point deductions.

During the obedience exercises the dog heels at the handler's side in a pattern with turns, changes of pace and distractions such as gunshots and a group of milling persons. The dog must be left in the down, sitting and standing positions and come when called. Objects thrown by the handler are to be retrieved on command. This is done on the flat and over a one-meter barrier and over an A frame shaped scaling wall. The dog must go out away from the handler and then down on command. The gun sure AKC obedience competitor at the CDX level will find the Schutzhund I obedience routine familiar, the only additional exercise being the go out which is introduced at the Utility level under the AKC system. There are always two dogs on the field during the obedience exercises, one doing the active routine and the other on a long down away from the handler; this demonstrates control and the willingness to tolerate the presence of a neutral dog, often important in actual working situations.

The protection exercises involve a number of simulated attack and guarding scenarios where the dog engages a human adversary wearing padded pants and a padded sleeve which the dog bites or grips. Schutzhund training, in contrast to most other systems, requires that the dog bite only the arm with the sleeve. Once on the sleeve, the decoy will strike the dog twice with a padded stick across the rib cage to establish the willingness to persist in the face of a counter attack. The dog is trained to respond to an active aggressor and that when the helper ceases active opposition and the release command is given he must remain attentive and guard but must not bite unless the decoy renews physical aggression, in which case the dog must firmly grip the sleeve. Control and discipline are recognized as essential attributes of the well-trained dog.

In the IPO III protection routine, the dog begins at the end of a long field, often a football or soccer field, and searches six blinds, often portable, triangular fabric covered frames looking like small tents, and then intensively guards and barks at the decoy standing still and silent in the last blind. After a time the judge will indicate to the handler to call the dog back to his side, and the decoy leaves the blind and takes a stationary position. The handler places the dog on a down about six yards from the decoy. The decoy runs away, and the dog pursues and bites the decoy on the arm. The decoy turns and drives the dog several yards and locks up in a stationary posture facing the dog. On handler command the dog releases and goes into the bark and guard posture. The decoy lunges and the dog bites a second time, followed by two sharp stick hits to the rib cage, and the locks up again. The handler gives the release command and steps up behind his dog calls him to his side. Finally the handler takes the stick from the decoy and the handler and dog escort him to the judge.

The final exercise is the long bite, formerly known as the courage test, which involves the handler sending the dog against a distant helper running toward the dog in a threatening manner, with the helper slowing as the dog engages for a safe grip or bite. Once the dog engages the helper drives the dog, that is, steps into him in an intense way and strikes two measured, constant stick hits. When I became involved in the late 1970s the Schutzhund III courage test began with the decoy walking to the center of the field, about 40 yards from the dog and handler at the end of the field, and then running away from the dog. When the decoy was about 50 yards out, the judge would signal the handler to send the dog. As the dog approached the decoy would suddenly turn and aggressively run at the dog, waving the stick and presenting a very threatening picture. The turn was serious psychological pressure, for the fleeing prey suddenly became the aggressive adversary. For reasons of political correctness and to reduce the pressure on the show line German Shepherds, the flee and turn aspect was eliminated and the distances, which test confidence and drive, were greatly reduced.

Advocates of other systems, usually enthusiastic novices, sometimes contend that this is an artificial restriction and renders the Schutzhund trained dog less well prepared for actual police or civilian guard service; but the fact is that for a century such dogs in Germany have been the wellspring of police service canines and provided much of the foundation for the advent of American police dog service. Other trial systems use a suit providing full body protection and provide much more latitude in bite location. (All of this is discussed in great detail in the chapter on protection training.)

In the early years of the American Schutzhund experience, in the 1980s, most of us came from an AKC obedience competition background, seeking out greater challenges and a more fulfilling experience for our dogs. For us the immediately striking difference was that the Schutzhund obedience exercises are conducted outside on a relatively large open field rather than the cramped AKC ring with its confining fence, important considerations with the larger, more robust dog. In the

earlier years there was less emphasis on precision – the handler had some latitude in the precise location of turns in the heeling pattern. The fact that the dog might be a couple of inches ahead of or behind or sit slightly crooked was not of Earth shaking consequence, for the purpose was to demonstrate control, cooperation and working willingness rather than to turn the dog into an ultra-precise heeling machine. Unfortunately in recent years Schutzhund has increasingly focused on the details of precise obedience, becoming much more obedience and style oriented in the process. This trend has been greatly exacerbated by the metamorphosis into IPO, where subservience is increasingly important relative to the aggression, initiative and robust character fundamental in real police dogs.

Although tracking, obedience and protection are the three phrases of the program, the divisions are in a certain way more apparent than real, for each facet of the training must contribute in harmony to the balanced whole, result in a fundamentally sound dog, or they mean nothing. In a properly run program there is synergism, the lessons of one phase positively reinforcing those of the others. The tracking builds confidence and initiative that carries over as an alert, positive attitude in the obedience. Obedience teaches discipline and responsiveness to the handler, which reinforces the precision necessary for high tracking scores and paves the way for the control aspects of the protection work. And the enthusiasm of most dogs for the protection work carries them through the long haul, provides the spark that makes training day the best part of their lives. The proper Schutzhund program does not train tracking, obedience and protection, it does not even consider the dog as a whole and train him, rather it trains the team, the dog and his leader together.

The club level trial generally starts with the tracking early in the morning, since that is the most favorable time for this work, and because there is a long day's work ahead if there is a full slate of ten or twelve dogs. The judge begins by assigning tracklayers and supervising the laying of the tracks. Each team in turn reports and is sent out to attempt their track.

The judge does a cursory temperament evaluation in which he will purposely pressure the dog, perhaps by walking between dog and handler, perhaps pushing him with his knee; the dog showing a fearful or inappropriately aggressive reaction can be excused.¹ It is the judge's prerogative to devise whatever tests he believes to be necessary to establish the stability of each dog as they progress through the day. It is entirely appropriate that the Schutzhund judge have sufficient latitude in conducting the trial in that his duties are by far the most difficult and serious one can take on in the entire scope of canine affairs. In the larger view, it is much more important that the best dogs, according to real life utility, be favored for breeding than who takes home the biggest tin cup that particular day, for in thirty or forty years the cup will most likely have been left on the curb for the trash man by the descendants of the handler, but the dogs selected will still be contributing through their progeny.

At the completion of the track the judge will give a brief critique of the performance and announce the scores. At the local trial, especially in newer clubs with less experienced members and competitors, a primary purpose of the critique is education; the judge will often not only point why he has taken points away, but go on to suggest improvements in training approach to correct the problems. Teaching at the club level, especially where the sport is relatively new as in America, is an important part of the judge's role, and a trial conducted by a good judge can be an

¹ Increasingly stringent screening in the preliminary BH examination, and diligence in training and selection, has severely limited the problem of inappropriate or poorly prepared dogs entering trials.

effective educational opportunity as well. There are similar critiques after the obedience and protection exercises.

The judge's critique can greatly enhance the spirit of fair play and sportsmanship, for those present may come to understand what he has seen that was not apparent from their vantage point or within the scope of their experience. They will occasionally find out that they noted a detail that he in fact missed, for no man can see everything when there are two dogs and two handlers on the field, often widely separated. Many years ago the noted judge Jean-Claude Balu made a point that bears repeating: it is the judge's responsibility to score according to what he actually sees and hears, that while he will on occasion know or suspect that something has occurred when his vision was blocked or his attention diverted he must not deduct points. It is important that those in the audience be aware of this distinction. (God forbid that in this day of instant replay anyone suggest that we interrupt the flow of the trial for a review of the judge's decision, especially one initiated by a disgruntled handler.) The necessity of giving a critique and announcing scores immediately after the exercise puts an element of pressure on a judge, as there is no such thing as having a ring steward post the scores and being long gone before anyone knows what went down.

Temperament or Character Testing

Ongoing training and testing of each generation, in which aggregate working effectiveness is enhanced as dogs found wanting are discarded from breeding, is the engine which drives the working dog world. In the police dog trainability, the willingness to cooperate, to take pleasure in working with his leader, is essential, as important as aggression, fighting drive and olfactory prowess. Initial and ongoing training is a substantial component of overall deployment cost, and the willing dog who takes joy in his training rather than rendering only sullen, passive compliance requires less training effort and time and thus less ongoing cost. More willing dogs are by their nature under better handler control and thus less inclined to inappropriate aggression, with the associated liability vulnerability.

Furthermore, the inherently willing dog, with sufficient drive, is much less likely to be discarded from a training program, with a substantial waste of time and money, than the aggressive but difficult dog which ultimately has to be dropped after extensive training. These are serious considerations for the amateur trainer, but are even more critical issues for police and military agencies where cost effectiveness is the prerequisite for long-term viability of canine deployment programs. This does not imply soft dogs for marginal handlers, but rather hard, aggressive dogs which can be effectively molded through training for reliability as well as effective work in capable hands. On the other hand, many police handler candidates will not be easily capable of dealing with extremely aggressive and difficult dogs that the exceptional experienced trainer might be able to deal with; there is a fundamental need for mainstream dogs in the sweet spot of the balance among aggression, trainability and willingness.

Training dogs, especially breeding and show stock which will never actually work, is time consuming. Training good dogs is generally pleasant and rewarding, but training mediocre, reluctant dogs soon becomes drudgery, and sometimes reveals what you do not want to know, inadequacies in the dog which should eliminate him from a breeding program. The obvious solution, and the way the system is supposed to work, is to breed stronger and more willing dogs. But conformation oriented breeders tend to keep many dogs and do not want to put forth the effort to train them, or to eliminate for character defects revealed under training dogs which otherwise have the potential to be show winners. Conformation exhibition is extremely competitive, and breeders which attempt to have balanced programs,

under slogans such as "the golden middle," are often unable to compete with breeders with large operations which simply ignore character unless it interferes with show ring performance. Even character flaws such as spookiness which would be a detriment in a simple companion home are brushed aside because most of these dogs spend a dreary life in a kennel run.

Essentially it comes down to a marketing problem: people in general buy a Doberman or Rottweiler based on the police or protection dog image, imagining that their families will become more secure and especially that they will feel, and be perceived as, more virile and manly as the proud owner of a police breed dog.

In response to these needs and desires many conformation oriented organizations, in Europe as well as America, devise and promote so called character or temperament tests intended to certify totally untrained dogs. As we shall see, there are several reasons why such tests are patently absurd, not the least of which is that trainability, in and of itself, is an important component of correct character, and trainability obviously cannot be demonstrated without actually training the dog and demonstrating the results in a credible public forum.

Almost from the beginning breeders of the police breeds, particularly the German Shepherds, began to split into those primarily focused on producing dogs actually capable of police, military and high level civilian and sport work and those interested in success as conformation show breeders, selling most of their pups, increasingly weak in character, to the indiscriminate companion market. Those focused on the commercial companion market, the pet sellers, know very well that what they are selling is the image of the robust police dog, the aura of working character, just as those seeking an automobile sometimes desire the aura of racetrack excitement even though they drive only on mundane local errands. They further know that selecting and training real police level dogs interferes with selection for the conformation win, a problem that only becomes more difficult as show fashions require increasingly grotesque physical form and gait, as witness current German Shepherd show lines in Europe as well as America.

Thus over time the show breeders found that their weaker and less trainable dogs were less and less in demand by deploying agencies and serious amateur trainers, with the result that the breeder's customer base became increasingly tilted to companion owners that could not really tell the difference and were less able to manage the more intense dogs. Training unwilling breeding stock for the trial field became more onerous and time consuming, and being competitive in the show ring increasingly required retaining dogs in the program which are inadequate for work, and pass this on in their progeny.

It is thus the natural desire of the show breeder for a simple certification process, not involving any real work or effort, and not likely to disqualify their breeding and show stock, sort of a mass production universal verification process. The SV solution has been the subversion of the trial itself through less stringent rules, more lenient judges and home field or quasi-private special trials. This was possible because the conformation elite of the SV was in real control of the Schutzhund trial, that is able to establish the rules, designate judges and condone ever increasing leniency. This was an option not as easily available in other nations or other breeds.

As an alternative the so-called character test has been extensively promoted and deployed. Such tests are based on the premise that training is actually unnecessary, and is in fact an impediment to effective breeding selection. The thesis is that by devising clever tests for the natural or untrained response we can see the true nature and potential, unhindered by human manipulation, thus gaining a more accurate insight as well as avoiding the time, cost and effort of training. In this view of the canine world, training serves to unnaturally conceal and cover over the essence of the dog. Various temperament or character tests have been proposed and

implemented for these purposes, often under the auspices of conformation oriented national breed clubs.

There is a tiny grain of truth here, for all trials are and always will be imperfect, it is possible that a combination of clever training, a cozy home trial field, a less than ruthlessly diligent judge and a simple lucky day can get a dog – sometimes a very seriously inadequate dog – through the trial, perhaps even with an impressive score. It cannot be said too many times, a title is not an absolute proof of inherent quality.

But there are larger and more pertinent truths. It is impossible to create a system for testing untrained dogs because they will not be untrained, owners will extensively prepare for the tests, know the weaknesses of their dogs and the expectations of the testers, and acclimate them. Rather than a test for untrained dogs it will become an emasculated pseudo trial, a self-defeating charade. This is precisely what the currently implemented systems have become.

At the heart of the matter, dogs are useful because they are trainable, that is, willing to respond to the needs and commands of the handler and thus bring the physical and moral aspects of the dog – his power, his quickness, his olfactory prowess – into harmonious partnership and service. The responsiveness to command and training is especially important to the police canine team, where any break down in discipline can result in injury or the loss of life to innocent civilians as well as criminals and police personnel.

Much of this cooperation and control is the consequence of environment, a sound upbringing with appropriate socialization and effective, timely training. But working willingness is in fundamental ways genetic, inherent in the dog, the consequence of generations of selective breeding. This underlying genetic predisposition to cooperation and trainability is fundamental, and can only be verified through the actual training and testing process.

The idea that it is possible to evaluate a dog for breeding or service without hands on validation of his trainability, his inherent willingness to be a partner, is an absurdity only the most naïve or disingenuous could put forth. Unfortunately, people profoundly ignorant of the real process of canine deployment and training become conformation oriented breeders, officers in canine organizations, conformation judges and in general those in control of the canine establishment.

If the canine working trials are imperfect, as they are and always will be, the solution is not to contrive superficial tests for untrained dogs, but rather to incessantly work to improve trial procedures, require more advanced titles at regional trial fields and move the selection of judges into the hands of regional officials rather than local club officers. No baseball team, after all, expects to select, hire and pay their own umpires. No football team – in the European meaning – expects to bring their own referee to issue yellow cards to irksome opponents.

Furthermore, because it imposes compulsion the training process exerts psychological pressure on the dog. Since this pressure is likely to be greater under the stress of deployment, where the consequences of a breakdown in discipline can be very serious, the resilience of the dog during training pressure is in and of itself an important factor in service worthiness. The decision to continue or discard the dog under training is an ongoing process; every trainer will dismiss candidates because of observation and contrived tests in order to make as good a selection as possible before investing further time and effort. And it is true that mistakes are made, for it is not uncommon to select a dog and yet in the future discard him when he is revealed as inadequate under the pressure of training. Indeed, for this reason, the trainer will typically give the benefit of the doubt to the questionable dog for this very reason, so as not to make a mistake and bypass a good dog. And no doubt dogs who under some trainer, some place, sometime could have evolved into excellent workers are discarded and lost; such is the nature of life.

But the fundamental fact remains that canine excellence is proven only in the crucible of training, and that projections or evaluations of untrained dogs are mere speculation. The most courageous and hard dog in the world, capable of the most impressive olfactory feats in search and tracking, agile, swift and powerful, is useless if that dog cannot be molded into an effective, obedient working partner.

The unwilling dog is a useless dog, and no dog who has not demonstrated cooperation in training is of fundamental use. Making breeding decisions on untrained dogs, to speculate that they have the potential for police style service, is akin to having untrained people picked at random on the street operate to see if they are potential surgeons.

An intrinsic problem with these character tests is that they inevitably wind up being conducted by the show-oriented breeders who control the national clubs and others under their direct influence and control. Inexorably, standards are lowered and ongoing weaknesses in the show lines are dealt with not by selection in breeding but by lowered expectations and ever more lenient evaluation criteria. The weaknesses are simply swept under the rug and ignored.

As an example, in such tests the dog is generally required to engage the helper wearing the padded bite suit as a verification of courage and defensive potential. But it is often a sham. On one occasion I was present in Belgium when the well-known Bouvier des Flandres breeder Felix Grulois presented a bitch which exhibited marked avoidance of the helper, even though he averted his gaze and showed great weakness so as to encourage a response. Finally, Grulois just picked her up, touched her to the suit and she was passed, became certified. Nobody seemed to notice, it was just more business as usual. These tests degenerate because when you strip away the pretense and propaganda they are just taking turns certifying each other's dogs. None of them have any real concern about character, they just want show ring glory and to quickly sell puppies for the best possible price.

Temperament testing has not been limited to Europe. In America Alfons Ertelt founded the *American Temperament Test Society* in 1977. Within a very few years, Ertelt was estranged from the organization, which was converted by the new officers into a closely held for profit organization of much diminished stature and reputation. As a private organization there is very little public information or transparency, no listing of officers, temperament testers with their qualifications or any other pertinent information. I was briefly involved in the early years and believe that Ertelt was an honest and sincere man who viewed temperament testing as a means to an end, the evolution of Schutzhund or other more serious, performance based tests. At any rate, the organization has long outlived its validity and usefulness and the world would be a better place if the ATTS just faded away. Unfortunately, Mr. Ertelt was killed in an industrial accident in 1983.

Schutzhund Commentaries

In the beginning, the advent of our Schutzhund enthusiasm, we had the perfectly natural tendency to idealize all things European, especially German, and even more especially the German Shepherd establishment, the SV, the legacy of von Stephanitz. In time familiarity began to breed a more realistic view of the Euro scene, one with bad people as well as good, those with the normal human failings of greed, sloth and false pride as well as inspiring breeders and trainers faithfully carrying on the heritage one dog at a time. That there are all sorts breeding working dogs for money, pet sales and dog show trinkets as well as the perpetuation and evolution of the working legacy.

All of this could be attributed to a certain natural element of naiveté, except for one thing: the realization that the Schutzhund trial itself was systematically being

compromised by the SV, that there are private trials, outside of the public purview, available only to favored people, where titles are routinely awarded to unworthy dogs, usually those destined for the conformation ring or export.

My first inkling of this surfaced in the 1980s when reliable people, primarily involved in American GSD conformation competition, were reporting supposedly Schutzhund titled Shepherds which failed to respond to a thrown dumbbell, were gun shy or otherwise obviously seriously deficient, incapable of passing an honest trial. The American show mentality has always been willing to embrace any dog which could win, regarded the soft or gun insecure German import as an opportunity to acquire a dog otherwise unavailable or much more expensive. It became apparent that there were Germans willing and able to accommodate them, but at the time it seemed likely that this was an aberration, a few people who had somehow discovered a crack in the system, that the export process could somehow be made to conceal the ruse, that in time it would be discovered and corrected. Little did we know.

Denial was for most of us the natural response, a deep seated reluctance to see the truth. But in time it could no longer be denied, there really were and are trials provided for the insiders as a means of titling weak or inadequate dogs, or simply to save the time and effort of training, and as a means of enhancing the value of dogs being exported as breeding and show stock. Americans and conformation oriented people in other nations also routinely send dogs to Germany to obtain a title, likely in many instances through these special trials. Sometimes the dog does not even need to step on the field, the paper work somehow working its way through the system without a trial actually having taken place, as if by magic. (Sometimes it is difficult to tell magic from money.)

It must be noted that deception and deceit are not unique to the Germans or the world of conformation, are melancholy but ubiquitous elements of the human condition. As examples, registration papers for "undocumented" KNPV dogs can routinely be conjured out of thin air and a tinge of favoritism sometimes touches high level working trials. What is unique about these special trials is that the corruption is systemic, that the senior SV leadership abets, condones and profits from this, and has for at least thirty years.

Although motivations are complex and obscure, the copious flow of foreign money, especially American money, has clearly played its part in all of this. The rationale is apparently that one should be free to falsify titles or records on dogs for export, that Americans are vulgar and clueless and thus undeserving, that when they are unable to tell a good dog from a bad dog it is a waste to send them a good dog, which would just disappear into the morass.

Part of the problem is structural, in that other than championship events IPO trials are generally run by a local club, even a private club, as a virtually closed affair where they can and do select their own judge and the trial takes place on the home training field with decoys selected by the club rather than assigned by a higher authority. Where else in life can one select, pay and reward his own judge? Often there have been obscure and unpublished times and locations, making these essentially private trials rather than transparent events, open to scrutiny by the community at large. DVG judges were routinely doing this in the 1980s, particularly in Florida. At the local trial, the judge is all-powerful in his small world. Particularly in the 1980s and early 90s, prior to the common use of video recording, the judge at an American trial was beyond scrutiny, could do whatever he wanted to do. It turned out that some of them wanted to do some remarkable things.

Although the social and sporting aspects of the Schutzhund program became enormously popular, a pleasant way of life for many, the fundamental rationale was always that the dogs doing the best in the trials, and thus preferred for breeding,

should be those with the highest potential as actual police or military dogs. Over time this has been seriously compromised, and more so in Schutzhund than the other European venues.

Many regard the Schutzhund style of tracking as done today to be artificial and contrived; more of an obedience exercise than a demonstration of the dog's olfactory prowess. In actual service the dog is permitted and expected to apply his aggregate search capability adaptively – using sight, sound and air scent as well as ground disturbance – according to his instincts and experience and the opportunities of the actual search. The object in reality is to find persons and objects or other evidence, and stepping off the track to inspect a possibly dropped object is part of the process rather than a defect to be penalized. But any deviation from the formal nose in each footprint track is penalized in the Schutzhund trial. In similar ways, the obedience and protection phases have evolved with less and less relevance to actual work, with emphasis on style in obedience and increasingly less real pressure in the protection.

This tension between fostering effective and adaptive application of the potential of the dog, according to his natural way of working, and the increasingly stylized and artificial requirements of sport competition is among the most serious and important issues in the working dog community today. Dogs are increasingly bred according to artificial, unnatural tracking styles and for rote obedience in exercises that less and less reflect real world working scenarios such as a police dog would face in his work. Under the pressure of the German show breeders and other elements the protection work has been watered down both in the formal rules, where the old reed stick, the attack on the handler and the original courage test are gone, and in the double standard of judging where special, less rigorous, trials for the show dogs are not only permitted but encouraged and condoned. The most slavishly obedient dog, or the most stylishly prancing dog, is not necessarily the best dog.

Although my history has been in Schutzhund for more than thirty years, and I still believe in the old style program, it must be reported that it has become incessantly less rigorous and demanding. The rules have been continually relaxed in a number of ways: the substitution of the A frame for the scaling wall, the introduction of the padded stick, the elimination of the attack on the handler and the severe shortening of the long pursuit, formerly the test of courage. Over these years, no feature to prove the mettle of better dogs and training, such as a call off in the long pursuit or variations in the order and details of the obedience routines on a trial by trial basis, have been introduced or seriously considered. Popularity and accommodations for increasingly marginal dogs always win out over innovations for more stringent breeding and service selection. Most importantly the incessantly weakening rules and especially the lenient trials for show line German Shepherds have greatly reduced the credibility of the Schutzhund title, which after all can be no greater than the weakest performance by the most docile IPO titled show dog, a very low standard indeed.

The Schutzhund program, and the vitality of many police breeds, has been in serious decline over the past twenty years, as evidenced by European and American yearly puppy registrations, which have declined by half or more. The essence of the problem is that most of these dogs are destined for civilian homes, and most of the money has come from these sales and services rather than police or military applications. The Belgian Malinois is the noteworthy exception.

Military and police procurement is increasingly going to programs and breeds outside of the historical Schutzhund world, such as Malinois from KNPV or NVBK backgrounds. Watering down Schutzhund and transforming it to the more politically correct IPO ultimately depreciates the value of these dogs in the public mind, for the whole point for many civilian owners has always been the enhancement of their personal sense of vitality and masculinity through the ownership of a "real" police

dog. You can famously fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but increasingly the public at large is coming to see the IPO breeding lines as counterfeit police dogs and taking their money elsewhere.

In the earlier years in America, when the AKC establishment became hysterical at the mere thought of biting dogs, there were reservations in many minds about protection training of dogs by private individuals. Although this has dissipated with the acceptance of Schutzhund and similar sports, and the demonstrated usefulness of police canine teams, these questions are relevant even today, for enhancing a dog's willingness and ability to perform an effective attack on a human being is very serious business. The prominent and well publicized service of our military dogs throughout the long and difficult Middle East engagements subsequent to the 9/11 atrocity, the increasing success and publicity of police patrol dogs, especially in drug and explosive detection, and a strong history of responsibility and good public relations by protection sport trainers have largely put such concerns behind us.

The Ringers

Although it was German dogs and the Schutzhund trial that became the focus of American attention in the 1970s, in the early years the Belgians were pioneers: arguably training and deploying the first police dogs and then holding the earlier Ring trials. The Dutch and French were not far behind. Well before Schutzhund titles began appearing in German pedigrees like-minded Belgians and Dutchmen were busy creating their own trial systems, including KNPV and the various national Ring Sport venues.

Their distinctive feature of these venues was the use of the full body suit, with the bite surfaces integral to the jacket and pants, as opposed to the separate forearm sleeve. But there were also significant differences in equipment, philosophy, trial procedures and training methodology. The reasons for these distinct national programs, rather than unity, was separation due to language and culture, the difficulty of travel, especially with dogs prior to the common ownership of automobiles and other modern means of transportation and communication. As regional and national cultural barriers diminished in the 1970s there was an emerging interest in international competition and a German movement to promote their programs and breeds elsewhere in Europe and overseas, which tended to create some push back and conflict, as does all change. These conflicts are ongoing, even if often below the surface.

The Dutch police trials (KNPV), which commenced in 1907, are an arduous, comprehensive daylong sequence of exercises, beginning with water retrieval and obedience in the morning and a sequence of protection exercises in the afternoon. The Dutch suit was historically relatively bulky and heavy, rendering the helper less mobile than in other programs. Newer, innovative suit materials and fabrication methods have enhanced the flexibility and utility of the Dutch suits, but this program has never emphasized decoy mobility the way the French Ring has in the modern era. The Dutch police trainers have tended to be traditional and conservative, which has done much to maintain hard-core, old style demands on dogs and trainers. Their protection exercises emphasize long-distance engagements, and hard impacts in the bites, but modest mobility or evasiveness on the part of the helper. The KNPV trial typically uses a large area, with the water work in the morning at a separate location. With three judges, the obedience and search exercises can go on concurrently, each judge handling the various separate exercises such as the coin search, guard of object and bicycle exercises.

The Belgian Ring suit is similar to the Dutch suit, that is, relatively bulky with a separate bite jacket and maintaining the original configuration. But the trial itself is significantly different from KNPV in that it is conducted on a small, compact field

using a single judge and decoy. Although the Belgians emphasize the full grip in the bite their rules and procedures allow the judge and decoy a certain amount of latitude in adjusting the details of the various exercises so that the dog and his handler will see variations on trial day. In the protection and object guard exercises, there are different distractions such as rolling barrels or thrown buckets of water to test the reaction of the dog to the unexpected in order to verify confidence and stability.

The French Ring Sport was originally more similar to the Belgian, and their suits were also relatively bulky, stiff and heavy because of available materials and the evolution of training methods. Beginning in the 1970s the French began the aggressive utilization of modern materials such as ballistic nylon to produce light, flexible suits allowing greater speed and elusiveness in the decoy. This revolutionized training and especially the trials, where the decoys employ lighter trial suits to become even more agile and elusive.

While the KNPV helper is engaged from great distance and is very aggressive with the stick, and the Belgian helper presents unexpected challenges at each trial, today the French decoy is expected to, within rigid rules, evade the dog and take away as many points as possible, again within specific limitations. Where the Schutzhund decoy is expected to make a consistent sleeve presentation to all dogs the French Ring decoy is expected to do the exact opposite, evade the dog and trick him into missing his bite. This puts the emphasis on quick, agile, confident dogs and enhances the trial as an entertainment event for the spectators. Trainers adapted to evading decoys by teaching their dogs to go exclusively to the lower body, the legs and thighs, creating a virtually new trial format.

Debate about the practical relevance of these systems is ongoing, one point of view being that real world criminals generally do not approach the dog directly and offer their arm in a stylized manner, and on the other hand a dog missing a bite but persisting is especially effective, allowing the police handler to approach casually, perhaps enjoy a cigarette while the dog and suspect dance, and simply apprehend the man when he becomes exhausted. No actual bite? Less likelihood of a court seeing inappropriate force in the apprehension.

The German Shepherd had historically, before the 1970s, been the predominant competitor in French Ring, but this new style was ideal for the smaller, quicker, more agile Belgian Malinois, which by the 1980s was becoming the predominant championship level competitor. Malinois domination is today so complete that at the Cup of France the thirty or so finalists, almost always all Malinois, are joined by a token dog of another breed, selected on a competitive basis but not competing directly with the Malinois.

Although Schutzhund and IPO have been discussed in detail here, the details of the KNPV trial and French and Belgian Ring are covered in corresponding detail in the chapters on Holland, Belgium and France.

War, Politics, Commerce and History

From the middle 1800s through WWII European history focused on the ongoing conflict between the German peoples, merging into nationhood, and the more established national cultures to the west, especially the French. The armed conflicts of this era – with technical innovations such as the repeating rifle, the machine gun, trench warfare and widespread use of poison gas – took war to new levels of devastation and brutality, decimating civilian populations as never before. Although Germany lost these wars in the formal sense – no German soil was ever actually occupied during or immediately after WWI – Belgium and northern France were

subjected to brutal occupation, with enormous devastation inflicted on all aspects of civilian and economic life.

This is relevant in a book about police dogs for several reasons. First the Belgian police canine service and breeding program, of worldwide influence prior to WWI, was decimated as part of the general destruction of the Belgian social fabric and governmental infrastructure. Decades old breeding programs evaporated; full recovery would take most of a century.

In a more general sense the police canine evolved at the epicenter of incessant European conflict. Although the two major world wars are the focus for this, most of the twentieth century, through the 1950s, was a period of intense conflict and often hardship, with enormous consequences for canine affairs. My older readers, especially the Europeans, having lived through it, are fully aware of this; but younger readers need this general context in order to understand the evolution of these police breeds, the service heritage and especially current ongoing conflicts, with deep roots in this tumultuous history.

In WWII the German occupation of France, the Netherlands and Belgium was brutal beyond any purpose of war, focused on inflicting social change by eradicating Jews and other minority groups and making the rest of Europe permanently servile to the Third Reich, establishing a new order in Europe with the Germans established as the master race.¹ Although Germany surrendered and was occupied at the end – and the Soviet Union devastated eastern areas and held them captive for two generations – combat operations on German soil took place only in the final months. Allied post war occupation in western Germany was remarkably benevolent relative to that which had been inflicted on Holland, Belgium and northern France, where brutally enforced labor in German war industries and widespread civilian starvation had gone on for five devastating years, rending the social fabric.

Long lasting and deeply entrenched antagonisms were the preordained consequence of this tragic history, and became factors in canine affairs as well as other aspects of social intercourse, such as economics, politics and commerce. Although much of the angst and anger has been swept under the carpet in the push for European economic and political unity, the smoldering anger of the victims was not so easily abated. Several of the older Bouvier pioneers I came to know carried deep, bitter resentment of all things German to their grave. Today these wounds are healing, are passing from the realm of personal experience into history; but it remains essential to grasp this wretched history in order to fully comprehend working dog evolution and ongoing realities and conflicts.

While Schutzhund was emerging as the predominant working program for the police style breeds in Germany – and increasingly on the international scene – the suit or ring sports of Belgium, France and the Netherlands gained little or no influence beyond national borders. This has been the source of some residual resentment of German domination and success, particularly in nations with historical animosity toward Germany, such as France and especially Belgium, as a consequence of the two world wars. Some of this resentment was based on the ongoing popularity of German breeds in these countries among the general population, especially in France where indigenous national breeds withered on the vine. While the German police breeds were conquering the world, the Beaucerons

¹ Any American retaining a sense of moral superiority need only to reflect on our struggles to ameliorate the ongoing consequences of slavery and the fate of the American Indians, especially the Cherokee Nation, to know that all cultures, nations and races have things meriting shame; this is the human condition.

and Picardy Shepherds were much less popular than these German breeds even in France itself.

Significant factors in this German predominance most certainly included general German economic vitality and emerging national dominance in the critical time period and most especially the effective promotional and publicity program of the GSD establishment. Max von Stephanitz was a public relations genius, an enormously effective leader and marketing strategist.

But the primary reasons that the Belgian, French and Dutch working canine communities failed to establish a presence beyond their homelands were internal, had to do with inherently more inward looking cultures. KNPV in particular maintained its Dutch identity, and attempts to create programs in other nations, especially America, were primarily driven by external enthusiasts, with only reluctant and halfhearted Dutch support. Belgian NVBK efforts were on the whole much too little and too late, and being outside of the FCI establishment much more difficult to implement.

France had always been a relatively prosperous nation, with less economic and cultural incentive for her citizens to seek emigration or foreign economic opportunity; thus there was no large American base of recent French immigrants to promote the interests of homeland canine communities. As a nation the French, more agricultural than Germany, never seemed to be especially interested in propagating their culture or commercial interests beyond their borders, and this mind set carried over into canine affairs. As mentioned, the lack of popular indigenous police oriented national breeds, such as the German or Belgian Shepherds, to promote and exploit contributed to this general lack of French enthusiasm for foreign engagement.

The emergence of IPO under FCI auspices as the predominant international working venue, diminishing the formal German dominance through the Schutzhund program, has profound implications. The pussification of the SV, with real control increasingly in the commercial hands of GSD show breeders, had in later years diminished the rigor and credibility of the Schutzhund trial as a realistic gauge of police patrol dog potential. But in spite of these negative aspects of German dominance, FCI control has not been in any sense an improvement, for it has resulted in an incessant further lessening of the physical and psychological challenge to the dog and increasing emphasis on civilian sensitivities, political correctness and fine points of obedience style irrelevant to real world police work. Control of serious working dog affairs by a pet and show establishment is never destined to end well.

Max von Stephanitz, the master of promotion and public relations, was without doubt the driving force behind the German Shepherd expansion on every front. This was primarily within Germany in the early years, prior to WWI, but became an international juggernaut after the war, continuing until his passing in the middle 1930s. Shortly thereafter the juggernaut faltered badly as the lead up to war under the Nazi regime brought German canine expansion to an abrupt halt. In America German Shepherd popularity plummeted.

The 1940s, WWII and the aftermath, were a time of general stagnation in canine affairs. Since international travel had been by ship, slow and expensive, until well into the 1960s the primary emphasis had been on exporting dogs for conformation competition and breeding. Serious efforts to promote German control in foreign lands through the introduction of their training and evaluation systems had not been a realistic option; difficulty in communications and time-consuming travel prevented serious efforts at meddling in foreign canine internal affairs. Relatively low levels of English proficiency in that era, especially among the working class men who were the typical trainers, had also impeded international intercourse.

This began to change in the 1970s. The Germans, particularly the SV, began to expand their horizons, sought to promote not only their dogs but also their

administrative structures – their political and economic power – and trial venues in other nations, especially America. The advent of ever more affordable international air travel meant that they could more easily extend their influence beyond their European neighbors, to America and other more distant regions. The primary formal mechanism for this was the evolution of the World Union (WUSV), where national German Shepherd clubs throughout the world were encouraged to look to the Germans for leadership, guidance and competitive venues. Directly or indirectly they encouraged trainers in neighboring nations to forgo their national venues, such as the ring sports, to take up the practice of Schutzhund or IPO as the preferred sport and trial system, with the intention of making it the standard throughout the world. This has to a significant extent been successful, but has also created a certain amount of push back, particularly among more senior trainers and breeders, in nations where prior German invasions had been military rather than economic and political.

This new sell was a package deal, promoting the Shepherd and German financial interests went hand in hand with promoting Schutzhund – from the 1970s forward an ever-increasing army of SV judges marched out of Germany each year to do just that. Each judge and trainer was also a salesman and missionary for the German way. As a consequence today most European and North American nations – including the Netherlands, Belgium and even France, the bastions of the suit sports – have significant communities of IPO trainers and high-level representation at the various international IPO championship events.

A decade after the advent of the American Schutzhund movement, in the 1980s, there was a serious effort to introduce the French Ring Sport to America. There was a lot of enthusiasm – and an unfortunate bit of Schutzhund bashing, mostly by those floundering in that venue. After the initial wave of enthusiasm, and the usual political bickering, French Ring settled down to about a hundred national enthusiasts, two per state on average, and perhaps ten or twenty different teams competing yearly.

The intervening years have seen the attempted introduction, successful and mostly otherwise, of Mondio Ring, Belgian Ring, KNPV and a series of American invented venues, most of which have drawn away French Ring enthusiasts looking for yet another brave and exciting new world rather than bringing in new people. Thus this has not generally been growth but rather the same small band of enthusiasts, perpetually splintering into diverging clans; after thirty years these suit venues still only involve a few dozen resilient advocates while Schutzhund is an order of magnitude or even more larger in terms of clubs, trials and participation. On a positive note, the earlier tendency of the suit sport advocates to incessantly disparage Schutzhund or sleeve style training has for the most part abated, reflecting more maturity as people tend to focus on their own training programs. Visions of involving breeds beyond the Malinois has faded, as sooner or later the vast majority of those who persist in the long term go to the right sports equipment and acquire a Malinois with a ring background, either a French import or a young dog out of import stock. (Dutch Shepherds have also had increasing popularity.)

While the Germans have relentlessly promoted their breeds and their sports, the French, with no numerically significant breeds of their own, have been ambivalent, made sporadic and only halfhearted attempts at some sort of International Ring but with no real commitment. Even in the Euro canine political arena the French have faltered, where at one time French Ring was internationally recognized and allowed ring titled dogs access to the working class at FCI conformation shows, this is no longer the case. Because of its strong ties to the Dutch police services, KNPV has never really aspired to any sort of international expansion beyond the selling of dogs. Several groups of Americans have attempted to create some sort of KNPV organization, but these have all faltered. The Belgian NVBK efforts have been halfhearted and markedly amateurish.

The only real fly in this German ointment has been the success of the Malinois, which in the 1990s began sneaking in and enjoying a nice German lunch at more and more international Schutzhund and IPO competitions. The emerging predominance of Schutzhund, being converted to IPO on the fly, has highlighted the underlying flaws. The fundamental problem with this Schutzhund surge is that it has fallen under the control of the pet and show oriented establishment, especially the hierarchy of the SV, and thus become enmeshed in their corrupt and increasingly commercialized world.

The primary marketing strategy has always been to use the police dog aura to provide dogs artificially enhancing the sense of personal vigor and manliness. The problem has been that generally these shallow, status-seeking customers tend to be inadequate to deal with the real thing, quite naturally leading to emasculated breeding lines and trial procedures. Thus the trend has been to compromise trial rules, procedures and judging to favor the weaker, more compliant dog. This has put breeding and selection increasingly under the control of show dog dilettantes with little commitment to serious police style dogs. The most egregious offender in all of this has been the SV.

The American Experience

Across northern Europe the emergence of the formal police breeds went hand in hand with the evolution of the police dog trial, which was essential for ongoing breeding selection and as a means of evolving and perfecting training doctrine and practice. The police dog role emerged in the social mainstream, and vigorous protection components to these trials were accepted as a matter of course, as generally necessary and unremarkable.

American culture – under British influence – was fundamentally hostile to actual working dogs: protection applications especially were disparaged as low class and of questionable propriety, most certainly not something the respectable person would want to become associated with. Thus even though the European police breeds such as the German Shepherd and the Malinois were created and maintained through working trials, including vigorous protection exercises, in America the AKC never allowed performance requirements for breeding or the conduct of such trials by their breed clubs, nationally or locally, either as sporting events or as the prerequisite for breeding and registration.¹ Yet, in the spirit of the forbidden fruit, police style dogs were enormously attractive to a wide and diverse segment of the American population, as illustrated in the enormous surge in popularity of the German Shepherd following WWI.

As a consequence of this dichotomy the typical American breeder, marketing his dogs on the basis of their implied robust police persona, of necessity became the consummate salesman: when questioned as to whether their Shepherds or Dobermans had the potential for protection or police work they were somehow able to calmly and with a straight face claim that of course their dogs could be fearless defenders or exemplary police dogs, it was just a matter of a little training; which, of course, they never did quite get around to actually doing. The truth is that most of them had little or no idea what the original working dogs behind their watered down lines were capable of, for breeding such dogs without selection based on performance rapidly degenerates into passive, soft dogs, particularly when they

¹ Shortly after the year 2000 the AKC began to realize that police style working trials and breeding were becoming well established, and began to relent, to seek to control and profit from what they could not prevent.

discard breeding stock a little difficult to manage or which produced pups coming back as too much to handle.

For many years there was a small cadre engaged in informal protection work and self-styled guard dog training, often with a drop off junkyard style protection dog service, and sporadic police department programs quite often dying out within a few years. But there were among us those with a sense of something missing, the desire for better understanding and a more sophisticated approach. Thus a serious interest in the training, trialing and breeding began to gain critical mass in America in the 1970's, largely because of a growing interest in the Schutzhund trial. The Germans stood ready to help, for the enormous popularity of their protective breeds provided a natural outlet for the desire of individuals and breed communities in expanding influence and sales overseas. In addition there were significant numbers of Germans and people with a German heritage from neighboring lands, such as Czechoslovakia, in America, many having emigrated in the years after WWII, with personal knowledge of European ways, European contacts and the desire to recreate elements of this working culture in America.

Gernot Riedel (1931-1991) was the self-proclaimed father of American Schutzhund, and there is little doubt that he was correct, or that he was a man of very little false modesty. Mr. Riedel was born in Karlsbad, Czechoslovakia where he began training Bavarian border police dogs in 1946 for the American military. He was an active German Shepherd breeder and trainer, emigrating to the United States in 1955, settling in San Jose, California. (Riedel, 1982) By all accounts, including his own, he was an outspoken and aggressive man who seldom bothered to look before making a leap, characteristics not especially unusual in a founder.



Gernot Riedel.

In 1958 Riedel was instrumental in the founding of the *Peninsula Police Canine Corps*, which was a group of bay area police trainers destined to become the oldest still existent American Schutzhund club. Riedel, who had family in Germany involved in German Shepherd affairs, was active in procuring European dogs and the introduction of their training methods. From the beginning the focus had been on police training, but in 1971 there was a transition as Riedel put the emphasis on Schutzhund, bringing over the first German judge. Most of the police department trainers wanted to go on in the old way, and there was a split, with the word police being dropped from the name to reflect the new reality. In a 1982 Dog Sports magazine interview, Riedel was sharply critical of the departing police trainers, characterizing them as not interested in control, reliable outs, tracking or the other aspects of

police service, but only in biting dogs. (Riedel, 1982)

In retrospect, this split in a seemingly minor training group was of enormous symbolic importance, for the separation of police canine activities from Schutzhund and other civilian training into two worlds more than anything else has retarded progress in America, predestined us to be second rate in breeding, training and especially police deployment even to this day.

Dr. Herbert Preiser in the Chicago area founded the *Northern Illinois Schutzhund Club* about 1969 and also a short-lived National Schutzhund Association. Preiser was instrumental in calling a meeting in Illinois in 1970 with the purpose of exploring

national level organizations, which bore fruit in the next year. We, my wife Kathy and I, were members at *Northern Illinois* in the early 1980s, although by that time Preiser had become estranged from the group. We have fond memories of working with people such as Betty Sagen and Mike Lichtwalt, true pioneers in the sport, before the commercialization of recent years. I suppose everybody thinks in terms of the good old days as they become older, but I wish there were still places where young people with limited financial resources could be introduced into the working sports in such a congenial environment.

In 1971 Alfons Ertelt, Kurt Marti and a few others launched the North American Schutzhund Association. Although they almost immediately changed the name to the *North American Working Dog Association*, the NASA abbreviation was maintained.¹ NASA's goal from the beginning was to differentiate themselves from the Europeans and work toward mainstream acceptance, with AKC affiliation a goal of many. The American Doberman Pincher Club was a charter NASA member and held out to become last-ditch supporters in the end. NASA was a purely American organization with no links to or affiliation with any European entity. They created their own set of rules and certified their own judges. Many felt that this was not real German Schutzhund and that no one speaking English without a German accent could possibly be a real working dog authority. (Schellenberg, 1985)

The real sticking point was of course commercial, for there was a strong desire by potential German and American dog brokers to sell European titled dogs, many of them decidedly second rate, to Americans who could thus become players and overnight Schutzhund authorities. Ultimately the appeal of being really German was hard to resist, and NASA withered and eventually disappeared in the 1980's.

In 1975 the German DVG established a relationship with a group led by Dr. Dietmar Schellenberg in the New York area known as the *Working Dogs of America* or WDA, not to be confused with the WDA founded as a subservient organization to the American German Shepherd club a few years later. After a flurry of activity, this organization also experienced difficulty and its association with the DVG authorities in Germany came to an acrimonious end in 1979, closing another transient chapter in American Schutzhund history. (Schellenberg, 1985)

In the early to middle 1970s, the *German Shepherd Dog Club of America* (GSDCA) had begun some tentative Schutzhund activity under the leadership of Gernot Riedel. Several clubs, including the above-mentioned *Peninsula Police Canine Corps*, had become active. In 1975 the American Kennel Club cracked down hard on such activities, forcing the GSDCA to abandon its fledgling Schutzhund program. This precipitated a crisis, for there was growing activity and enthusiasm but a total lack of organization or supporting infrastructure. Shortly thereafter, the people involved in this aborted effort joined together with similar minded people in some other breeds and struck out on their own.

USCA, the Early Years

As a direct consequence of AKC repudiation of Schutzhund, there were meetings in California beginning in late 1975 that led to the foundation of the *United Schutzhund Clubs of America* (USCA) as a specifically German Shepherd entity with formal links to the SV, the mother club in Germany, thus providing access to German Schutzhund judges and Schutzhund titles with international recognition.

¹ Ertelt was also the founder of the *American Temperament Test Society* in 1977. He was killed in an industrial accident in 1983, and both organizations subsequently floundered.

The fact that the words German Shepherd did not appear in the name and people with other breeds made up a substantial portion of the membership created confusion and strife that continues to this day. Although USCA conformation events and breed surveys, introduced a number of years later, are for German Shepherds only, other breeds have always participated in local training clubs, often self-styled as all breed, and Schutzhund trials. USCA quickly became the predominant working dog sport organization in America and within a few years was larger, and certainly more influential, than the AKC shackled GSDCA.

For the Germans, there was the good news and then there was the bad news. The good news was that they had become major players in American canine affairs. Though the focus in the beginning was on the Schutzhund trials, this connection was to be used as a wedge for German Shepherd conformation guidance in America, a way to bring in substantial numbers of German conformation judges to provide guidance and help, and of course to sell dogs and make money.

The bad news was that while the SV had become mother to a new organization, they already had a petulant child in the GSDCA through their world union link with that organization. This set the stage for struggle and strife that would go on well into the next century as each entity, that is, the SV, USCA and the GSDCA, played one against the other in a struggle for influence, control, power and of course money.

Overall the American Schutzhund movement has been marginally successful, but with a decline in numbers and cohesiveness beginning as we moved into the twenty-first century. USCA, which formally came into existence in November of 1979, peaked out at about 5000 members about 2003 or 4, but fell off significantly to about 3500 members by 2013. (This was not uniquely a USCA phenomenon, as organizational vigor and numbers, amateur training activity and most significantly national puppy registrations have been falling off in Europe and America since the mid-1990s.) The good years featured an elaborate magazine, upwards of 150 clubs and a very strong judges program; the magazine came out on time, in a consistent format for many years and the judging program produced excellent American judges and an ever-increasing curve of better quality work and more consistent scoring. Although USCA is a German Shepherd organization, all breeds were allowed to participate in Schutzhund trials, but not breed surveys or conformation shows. Historically about a third of the USCA membership primarily trained a breed other than the German Shepherd, but they were living on borrowed time.

Beginning about 2005 serious problems began to emerge, with increasing SV commercial interference, declining membership and the overhead of an increasingly costly and overbearing bureaucracy, mostly created by the expense of the SV mandated support of their commercial breeders. The organization was forced by the conformation oriented SV establishment to become overtly hostile to other breeds, which was entirely in line with their commercial marketing strategy. After a period of relatively benign indulgence, life as a subservient German colony was becoming increasingly onerous.

The other Schutzhund organization active in America today was a result of political strife and a split from USCA in the early 1980s, resulting in the establishment of LV/DVG America as an American affiliated geographic region (Landesverband) of the DVG in Germany. Key players in the DVG foundation were Tom Rose and Phil Hoelcher. The first DVG American championship was in the Fall of 1981. DVG America was very strong in Florida, with virtually all USCA clubs going with the new DVG organization, loyal to a group of popular trainers and leaders, notably Phil Hoelcher, experiencing severe differences with the USCA leadership. The organizational support tended to be regional, with strength in St. Louis and the Los Angeles areas in addition to Florida among other places. As of 2014 total American DVG membership was 872.

This second coming of DVG operations in America, the result of a quarrel and split among Americans, turned out in many ways to be the opportunity to be under the thumb of a heavy handed German bureaucracy with well-established priorities: the interests of commercially oriented German judges, the most conspicuous carpet baggers of the era, German breeders and their own bureaucrats.

In the early years of the Schutzhund movement in America, in the 1970s and 80s, everything was new and exciting. Most of us had our beginnings in obedience of some sort, and protection training on the part of ordinary dog owners was virtually unknown, but an enticing prospect. The biting dogs of the era were mostly those in nightly drop off services of area protection dogs for commercial operations such as car dealerships and some personal protection training by commercial operations, often run by a German. In the AKC scheme of things man aggressive dogs were unmentionable, the forbidden fruit. Police dogs were few and far between, and their association in the public eye was in many ways with the fire hoses and riots in the south splashed across the evening news on national television. People expressing interest in biting dogs were admonished, told stories of evil dogs out of control like the scare stories used to make children behave. Even the European police style breeds were suspect, the German Shepherd people to a large extent staying in their own little world of specialty shows, with their own elite group of judges and handlers, rather than the mainstream all-breed AKC shows. Within the AKC power structure care was taken to minimize evil influences, the Rottweiler was for instance denied a national club with its single delegate vote for years, even as it became one of the most popular and numerous breeds in America. When the *German Shepherd Dog Club of America* (GSDCA) began tentative, exploratory steps into the world of Schutzhund, the AKC power structure cracked down hard and formalized rules against even the most indirect link with protective dogs. In the early 1990s they became even more adamant and explicit in their opposition to any sort of protection activity.

In this environment, exploring the world of Schutzhund, even in the most tentative way, was like opening a door into the sunlight. Instead of the protective capability being the skeleton in the family closet, the original sin, it was openly an intrinsic and necessary aspect of the canine nature and strongly aggressive dogs were not only accepted but greatly admired.

Americans taking tentative steps into this training found that their obedience background provided a basis for their new sport, that there were no particularly mysterious skills to master. Those with tracking experience needed to deal with a new and controlled style of training, where details of the dog's performance rather than the simple finding of the object were scored; but that existing skill sets provided a solid foundation.

The protection work, however, was a new ball game. Security style training with the negative socialization, heavy reliance on pure defense and the pillow suit were of no use at all, and some of the military sentry style training of the era was equally inappropriate. Instead of fear based, non-discriminating aggression the Schutzhund dog was required to demonstrate control and restraint as well as aggression.

Moving on up into the new era meant adapting European ways and methods, and in that context this meant German Schutzhund style work, since the suit style work of KNPV and the various ring flavors was virtually unknown in America. Doing Schutzhund meant working with a few Germans resident in this country, spending time in Germany to learn or bringing over German judges and trainers. A few American service men took the opportunity of a tour of duty in Germany to develop some useful dog training skills.

Many Germans, and a little later Dutchmen and Belgians, were enormously helpful, supportive and sportsmanlike in the best meaning of the term. Most of us

who achieved any level of success received enormous help from new European friends. Sure, there was the occasional judge or itinerant trainer on an ego trip, a few arrogant buffoons, and a few more who were and are primarily financially motivated. But in the big picture most of these European trainers and judges have been what they seemed to be, good people motivated to share their working dog culture and training in a truly sportsmanlike way.

American Ringers

American interest in French Ring Sport began to emerge in the early 1980s, with a wave of excitement and enthusiasm. For several years there were growing pains as local groups conducted seminars, founded clubs, commenced training and gathered together to form several incipient – sometimes competing – national organizations. After several years of jockeying and maneuvering for allegiance and influence, in 1987 the various groups merged to create the *North American Ring Association* (NARA), which established a formal relationship with the French authorities, provided stable and effective administration and conducted national level affairs such as providing a magazine, maintaining a web presence and conducting annual national championships. In the early years most trials were conducted by French judges, and often featured French decoys. In the same time period small but serious Mexican and Canadian communities of French Ring enthusiasts emerged, with a generally cooperative relationship. Programs to develop certified American helpers, and a little later judges, as steps toward independence and cost containment were carried forward.

French Ring in America has always been small and fragile, critical mass in terms of widespread access to good training remaining elusive. In the early years there was a pit jump, meaning that you had to dig a large hole in the ground, making a dedicated trial and training field a necessity. Later the pit was replaced by an on the flat broad jump, meaning that any open field could serve for training or a trial. Requirements for a complete fence around the field and a high jump more elaborate, and much less portable, than the Schutzhund "A" frame meant that equipment was still an issue, but not as serious. The suits were and are expensive, and many helpers use one for much of the training and another for trial purposes, adding to the expense. The fact that the suits provide the actual bite areas rather than just protection against inadvertent bites, and the requirement for maximum mobility, highlights the necessity of good fit and tailoring to the individual. This has generally minimized the practicality of suit sharing and contributed to the expense.

In 2012 there were 23 NARA member clubs and various forming clubs, some of them perpetually in the "forming club" category somewhat overstating the actual activity. These are United States numbers; both Mexico and Canada have their own French Ring organizations. As a point of reference, in 2011 there were a total of 23 club level trials, all but one with an American NARA judge. Many of these trials were back to back on consecutive days, inflating the perceived activity level. Thus many clubs exist, sometimes for years, without actually holding a trial. There were three championship events: a Western Regional, an Eastern Regional and a National, each presided over by a French judge.

At the National Championship there were seven Ring III entries; the winner of the trial was the Dutch Shepherd Sniper vom Kelterhoff handled by Jason Davis.¹ The remaining entries, all passing, were Belgian Malinois. There were seven Ring II entries, all Malinois, and 12 Ring I entries including two German Shepherds, two

¹ By winning this event, Davis became the Cup winner; the yearly domestic champion was Richard Bonilla based on average scores in the three championship trials.

Dutch Shepherds, the remainder being Malinois. Although in the early years there was a great deal emphasis on all breed participation, as an effort to gather support and numbers, the Malinois has become the standard French Ring sports equipment. A few Dutch Shepherds, essentially a variety of the Malinois when you look at the actual pedigrees, and an occasional German Shepherd compete. Other breeds are only occasional, and seldom go beyond Ring I. Most people coming from another breed either lose enthusiasm and fall away or go the Malinois. Most of the competing dogs are French imports or first or second-generation progeny.

In 2010 a group of dissident NARA members led by Richard Rutt, Robert Solimini and Frankie Cowen – all prominent NARA names – broke off to form the *American Ringsport Federation* (ARF). This has been mostly a shell organization which has never really gotten off the ground: in 2011 there were about 15 member clubs listed on the web site, all in the eastern United States, but only one actual club trial, with no results listed. There were a total of three Ring III entries at the so-called "National Championship" in 2011.

None of this would really matter except for one thing: this dissident ARF organization was able to obtain immediate recognition from the French authorities on an equal footing with NARA, which for 23 years had proudly claimed to be "The governing body for French Ringsport in the US since 1987." The French casually throwing NARA under the bus would seem to indicate either that their NARA relationship was extremely strained or, perhaps more likely, nobody in France has any real interest in or commitment to Ring Sport in foreign nations. The fact that NARA is using homegrown judges for all trials – other than the championships – and the lack of French decoys or seminar appearances, would seem to be further indication of the estrangement.

In the early years French Ring was logistically difficult because of the small number of trials, the lack of judges and training venues and, the complex and expensive equipment, that is the open pits and high scaling walls, rendered actual trial opportunities sparse. In addition, the French Ring suits are expensive and, because of size and other considerations, generally require each helper to have his own equipment. In contrast, a Schutzhund style sleeve and a pair of pants are less expensive and can be used in the short term by several helpers.

In looking back over a quarter century of French Ring in America, there has been a lot of dogged enthusiasm by a hard core of advocates but a failure to flourish. There seem to be perhaps 50 to 100 people nationally seriously involved in training, trialing and supporting the organization, but very little real in depth enthusiasm or growth.

While the immense popularity of the German Shepherd provided a wellspring of potential Schutzhund interest, the Malinois was to a large extent unknown and much less numerous in America as a whole. Promotion of the Malinois among the general public has consequently been difficult because rather than the novel and exotic aura that drove the popularity spikes of the Doberman or Rottweiler it had the appearance of a smaller, more frail cousin of the German Shepherd, hardly the stuff of a popularity surge. Promotion of Ring Sport among those with other breeds can create interest, but also the inevitable realization that the real choice is to go to the right sports equipment, the Malinois, or being perpetually on the fringe.

This desire for something novel and exciting has fostered a number of other attempts to establish various trial systems, both European based and home grown. Thus there have been sporadic attempts to establish KNPV, Belgian Ring and Mondio Ring in North America, none gaining much real traction. Quite often these are the same suit oriented or "not Schutzhund" people playing at a flavor of the month dog sport, popping up in every new venue.

Over the years there have been a series of American based protection style competition systems, from *Pro Sports K-9 Rodeo* and *American Street Ring* to the currently popular *Protection Sports Association* (PSA), but they have mostly come and gone without ever gaining any real traction. All of these programs have used the bite suit, and dismissive, condescending remarks about Schutzhund as some sort of play sport have been common, as among some of the early French Ringers. Part of the problem is that many of the people involved have been motivated by business and personal promotion, for the founders can assume office and the aura of expertise and appoint themselves judges without any real demonstration of training and breeding credentials. Since importers and dog brokers have been prominent in these incipient programs, many of the competing dogs have been trained European imports, often KNPV. These incipient trial systems have not generally been comprehensive and balanced enough to support long term breeding selection. In particular they have not emphasized essential skills such as the olfactory capability and the distance attack that characterize complete systems devised by those with more mature and sophisticated experience focused on police level service.

These domestic systems have tended to be one dimensional, with emphasis on protection rather than a more complete program reflecting the overall requirements of a police level canine, including tests of olfactory capability such as search or tracking tests. The question thus becomes what precisely is the purpose of these trials and organizations, if they are not intended to be police dog certifications and they are not comprehensive breeding tests because of a lack of search, tracking and long attacks, exactly what is their purpose? There is a streak of pseudo machismo running through all of this, a propensity to be little more than back yard protection play trainers on a larger and more formal scale.

Currently the predominant American originated program is that of the *Protection Sports Association* (PSA), which, as indicated by the name, is protection only without any scent, tracking or search work. The focus is on two main points, the first being the introduction of randomness and novel situations for the dog rather than the rote execution of a series of fixed exercises, in some ways reminiscent of the Belgian Ring program. The second mantra is rigid control of the dog in the presence of one or more decoys, increasingly taunting the dog, which must ignore their antics under handler control. Both of these things are in and of themselves potentially good ideas, but taken to extremes that detract from the overall usefulness in terms of a character and physical evaluation of the dog and preparation for practical service.

Much of the program is focused on the multiple decoy helper harassment and tempting of the dog, which must remain under handler control, which goes way over the top. As an example, one exercise involves a decoy with the body suit standing over the dog and shouting about a distant decoy. The dog must ignore the immediate threat and on command leave to attack the distant decoy. Stepping back, I find this scenario contrived, unrealistic and counter to the principle that the dog should primarily protect the handler under the direct threat. Requiring the dog to abandon his partner in the presence of a serious threat is contrary to canine nature, common sense and practical deployment strategy. In particular, there is no getting around the fact that the suit is an inherent provocation, and to be realistic, to avoid the contrivance of an arbitrary and unrealistic scenario, it would be necessary to have the close in adversary in ordinary dress. This would have the obvious practical safety problems, but the underlying logic is in my mind compelling.

In the real world a good dog needs to respond to an immediate threat without handler intervention, in that a handler may be disabled or the attack may come so fast that there is not enough time for a decision and command. A direct, close in attack must call on the dog's immediate, instinctive reflexive action. French Ring exercises for instance demand that the dog initiate defense on his own in response to the attack on the handler, more or less the opposite of the desired PSA response.

Much of this is drawn from Belgian Ring practice, but tends to a circus atmosphere rather than the subtle testing probing for weakness in the dog or fault in the training by a deeply experienced Belgian judge. Also, beyond control under decoy distraction, a new and better sport needs to challenge the dog in more fundamental ways, as in the striking the dog before engagement in the KNPV long attack. The PSA people would do well to revisit the KNPV and NVBK programs with a more sophisticated view and incorporate a little bit more of their approach.

A serious draw back of the multi decoy scenarios is that in America the predominant obstacle to viable ongoing training is finding a good decoy to work with, and the need for at least two decoys at many or most training sessions, particularly when they charge a fee, is an enormous handicap that serves very little practical purpose. Indeed, the people most likely to have multiple decoys routinely available are those engaged in some sort of dog training business, and this is only one of several ways the PSA program is set up to either exclude the amateur or require training primarily as clients of professional trainers rather than in a more open amateur environment. This is to some extent true of Schutzhund and French Ring, but this is due to circumstances peculiar to America rather than designed into the program for the benefit of the professionals who run the organization from the ground up.

In evaluating any working or sport venue, it is essential to establish the actual purpose, the objectives of the program. As an example, KNPV is an evaluation of readiness for police service, which has two components, that is that the dog on a genetic basis is inherently sound and capable and that the training is adequate to bring out this potential. Schutzhund was originally intended as a breeding certification, proof that the dog was capable of scent work, obedience and protection and thus suitable for breeding, which by implication also means that with some additional training has the potential to be a police patrol dog. French Ring is less clear cut in that it primarily emphasizes the game between the dog and the decoy; seems to be more of a pure sport which pits the cleverness of the trainer against that of the decoy, with the dog more or less relegated to the role of sports equipment. The French have embraced technology, as in the adaption of modern materials for suits which have revolutionized their sport, and it would seem that in their hearts many enthusiasts would prefer identical cloned dogs with the sport quickly evolving into a game purely between trainer and decoy. Perhaps this spirit evolves from the fact that the French do not have a serious indigenous breed to promote and take pride in, as in the Belgian and German Shepherds in their respective nations.

The essential problem with PSA seems to be discerning the purpose of the program, and then evaluating it in terms of an evolving, viable American working dog heritage. In an era where the value of the police and military dog is increasingly in substance detection, primarily drugs and in the case of military dogs explosives, a one dimensional protection venue would seem to be out of step with the times in terms of evaluation for breeding or service selection.

My view is that America needs a comprehensive venue which can appeal to and attract the police community, which would also emphasize search and scent work. PSA does of course not claim to be comprehensive, is in this sense one-dimensional. Also, PSA is essentially owned and controlled by one man with no provision for any real control or influence by the membership as a whole, which has already contributed to one group of former PSA members, prominent and well regarded men, separating in order to provide an alternative venue. It seems unlikely that an organization without a broader base in terms of leadership and control will ever be able to appeal to a significant segment of the working community.

While the domestic working trial programs have lacked depth and sophistication, and tended to wither on the vine, this does not belie the need for American independence and self-sufficiency – just because we have yet to do it well does not mean that we need not do it at all. Schutzhund and the Ring sports of today are open to criticism on many grounds, have drifted from their original rigor. Many believe that an effective American heritage will ultimately demand the evolution of American organizations by and for Americans, free of the yoke of European control and manipulation. But in order to be successful such organizations would need the support of a broad base of existing trainers, something very difficult to bring to reality. For these reasons – because of the absolute control of one man, the multi decoy requirement, a narrow focus with no scent work and the general circus atmosphere – PSA, while bringing some interesting concepts to the table, is not the answer.

In the broader perspective, the primary limitation on independence and vigor in American police dog programs is the deeply seated separation between the police community, hamstrung by dependence on European breeding and broker domination, and the American sport and breeding communities, rendered sterile and directionless because they are afraid to break free of European domination and thus produce nothing of real long term value. We are in imminent danger of evolving into the Shakespearian tale "Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing."

Creeping Commercialism

Taking a pup and training him to the Schutzhund III level, and then perhaps competing in regional and national events, is an arduous task even where the sport is well established and there are experienced mentors and capable training helpers readily available. In America there has from the beginning been a lack of such resources – most of us struggle, learning by trial and error and working with helpers learning their skills as best they can, lacking experienced coaching and guidance. Many young dogs, even those carefully selected from strong lines, prove to be inadequate in one way or another while undergoing training, often making it necessary to start over with a new pup or young dog.

Very early in the game it became apparent that there was an alternative to training your dog, a way for the novice to become a player, an immediate competitor. In Germany and other European nations there were innumerable titled dogs, retired because they had gone as far as they were capable of going, unlikely to be successful in higher-level competition or in demand for breeding purposes. Many such dogs remain as beloved family companions or go on to police service; but European homes are often compact and having several older dogs can be a problem with young dogs on the way up. A supply on one side of the ocean and a demand on the other inevitably awakens the entrepreneurial spirit: dogs purchased in Germany for a few hundred dollars could through a simple airline shipment become a commodity, worth serious money for service in North American police departments or for a would be Schutzhund competitor looking for the short cut to the trial field. The working dog world was rapidly shrinking, and becoming much more commercial: the dog broker's day had come and many, European and American, were quick to seize the opportunity.

In a certain sense these imported competition dogs were the forbidden fruit, represented our loss of innocence. Instead of an idealized level playing field, where every sort of person, man or woman, young or old, could gather together as a community to learn through shared experience and come to know the satisfaction of adversity overcome through a first Schutzhund title, the sporting aspect was compromised by blatant commercialism. As we abandoned the Garden of Eden we came to accept that money was the legitimate substitute for personal striving and

persistent work, that at the last moment a stranger could appear and purchase the place on the podium.

Thus early in the game trainers were able to become prominent by purchasing and competing with dogs which had been trained, titled and successful at high-level competition in Europe, commercializing the sport almost before it gained traction. Relative novices were sometimes able to buy a high-level titled import one year, participating in a few trials, collecting some tin cups and conducting seminars the next year, the blind leading the blind. Others, such as Tom and Holly Rose, were successful the old-fashioned way, by purchasing German line pups in America and training them from the ground up for success at the highest levels of American Schutzhund competition.

A contributing factor to these trends is that any local club can run a trial, selecting their own judge, trial helper and field. Sometimes this has been blatant, with unannounced, essentially secret, mid-week trials. In America we have had instances of Schutzhund judges showing dogs owned by others in Schutzhund trials for payment, an obvious and blatant conflict of interest. (These were German DVG judges and trials; USCA has always had more strict nonprofessional rules for their judges and in general been much more diligent in this area.) Shopping for the lenient judge became more accepted, and judges not going along did not get along, found their engagements evaporating.

In contrast to this SV way of doing things, the Dutch police trials are region or province wide public events with three certified judges and two certified trial helpers, usually from outside of the local province. In order to certify a dog there are one or two yearly opportunities to do so; there is no option of a home trial or shopping for a lenient judge.

In the ideal the sporting aspects of Schutzhund focus on the club, the local community of trainers and competitors. Here younger people get a beginning, acquire a dog, perhaps from a relative or family friend in the sport, and within the training community learn the skills necessary for beginning titles. Older participants provide instruction and leadership, while training and competing with their own dogs, and take pride in the accomplishments of the newer members. In Europe it is still quite common to see the club name listed along with that of the owner and dog in a trial catalog and the club was a center of social and family life. As the dogs advance toward Schutzhund III some are retired to become family companions or the housedog while the new candidates lived in the kennel and others went on to compete at a regional and eventually national level championships.

In the early years we had the vision of recreating this idealized way of life for ourselves, of creating clubs where one could take a short ride in the evening for training, or perhaps even walk as some of my Dutch friends were able to do. We envisioned pleasant evenings of dog training and conversation over a beer, the club as a social as well as training center. This was to be every man's sport, open to those of modest means, for promising pups were reasonably priced in Europe, clubs were close together and the cost was moderate, as most training fields, with a small clubhouse, were on public facilities of one sort or another. European trials are inexpensive as local judges are the norm; the cost for a trial being perhaps lodging for a night, a couple of meals and a moderate fee.

In the 1980s some of this seemed to be coming to pass. Clubs were slow to evolve and widely separated making travel time and expense for training sessions the primary obstacle to success. Many of us had AKC style obedience or tracking backgrounds, most of it applicable to the new training regimen. Obedience was very similar, while tracking was a bit different in that the dog was expected to adapt a specific style of working. The protection work was the real challenge, for typically it was a matter of starting from the beginning, seeking help and knowledge wherever it

could be found. The work of the helper, the man that wears the protective pants and padded sleeve for the dog to bite, is demanding and complex, difficult to master even with good instruction. But mostly we were on our own, picking up knowledge and coaching from trial judges and occasional seminars or visits to other clubs with more experience, but also a lot of improvisation. Looking back, it is amazing that we were able to evolve as well as we did.

From the beginning access to good training was the limiting factor and a suitable place to train where biting dogs did not bring the wrong kind of attention was sometimes a difficulty. The trial generally tended to be expensive because of the necessity of bringing in a judge from a great distance, very often Europe. This could be ameliorated by neighboring clubs sharing a judge, with trials on subsequent weekends, and by revenue generating seminars in conjunction with the trial. Early on many of these judges, including many of the Germans, were extraordinarily generous in providing help and minimizing expenses. There was a general pioneering spirit, confidence that as the sport grew clubs would become more numerous and thus less expensive, thus drawing in more people. The early difficulties were seen as priming the pump, getting the process started.

Within a few years, commercialization began to creep in. While amateur pioneers, brimming with enthusiasm and the spirit of sportsmanship, were struggling to learn training and become proficient within the club structure, a few more pragmatic men had found the short cut, were purchasing increasingly expensive titled dogs in Europe, often quite good, and making a name for themselves by placing or winning at the various regional and national trials. Based on their newly purchased reputations these men sometimes created Schutzhund clubs that were adjuncts of their expanding business ventures, with clients rather than voting members. Since USCA elections were based on one vote per club these professionals became increasingly influential in national affairs. Sometimes the commercialism was overt, with behind the scenes sponsors putting up substantial sums of money. Training increasingly became a professional service, with fees, often substantial, for every training session in addition to annual or semiannual club dues, which went into the pockets of the club "owners." Protection work helpers, even in the amateur clubs, increasingly expected to be paid, became less and less willing to provide for free what was evolving as a lucrative commercial service. Extended business relationships evolved, often involving European trainers and brokers who supplied dogs to American business associates, and often were featured at training seminars which promoted both partners. Once the beginner became engaged it was often discovered that his dog was not up to his goals, and that, by fortunate coincidence, they could sell him an expensive new dog to get out there on the trial field.

This commercialism was not limited to Americans, for German Schutzhund judges, such as Gottfried Dildei and Paul Thiessen, came to America to profit on their status and German contacts by establishing commercial training operations. Serious ethical lapses such as quasi-secret mid-week trials at which judges took turns titling each other's client dogs compromised the integrity of the entire sport. Regional and especially national trials became competitions among European trained and titled dogs, sometimes owned and supported by sponsors in the background, just like racehorse owners. The expectation that the winning dogs would be owned and trained from a puppy, by hard work and diligence within an amateur club faded.

Commercialism has been endemic in the conformation world as well as the Schutzhund trial. At the beginning of a German style conformation show there is a brief protection test, an attack on the handler out of the blind and long bite, to demonstrate the character of the dog. In principle a good thing, but in practice generally so emasculated as to be essentially meaningless. At a local German Shepherd conformation show, presided over by a German SV judge, I witnessed the American helper doing the attack on the handler test in a professional, normal and

entirely fair way. After the second bitch showed marked insecurity there were exhibitor complaints, resulting in a quick conference with the judge and then an admonition to the helper to go easy on the dogs, that these were show dogs that needed to pass. This is not an aberration or an unusual occurrence but rather just business as usual. We never saw the helper again.

There were in Germany in the eighties well documented cases of breakfast table trials, where all of the paper work was made out and sent in, producing Schutzhund titles for dogs never stepping foot on the field. Much of this was for exported dogs as well as the conformation breeders, the Americans being seen as too ignorant to know the difference, which was only partially true in that some knew but just did not care.

In the early 1980s I witnessed a German SV Schutzhund judge pass two dogs bred by his host, the German born owner of an American kennel, who was also the trial helper, which did not receive stick hits. One perhaps could have given the benefit of the doubt on the first dog, perhaps the helper really did forget and the judge did not notice, but on the second dog bred by the helper given a pass by the judge and all of the others were tested it became quite obvious. At the time I was new and naive enough to be astonished by all of this.

On another occasion I witnessed another well-known big name German dog importer beat a bitch unmercifully in full view of an American judge and then walk the thirty feet that separated them to report for the obedience exercises. The judge pretended that he just did not see, for the man's place in the Schutzhund world was such that he was afraid to challenge him. The Schutzhund "club" run by this German as a commercial adjunct of a business enterprise was relatively unusual in that era but has become unfortunately the norm today.

Although expense had always been an issue, the decade after the turn of the twenty-first century was particularly difficult. The fundamental problem of Schutzhund in America had always been the failure to attain critical mass, clubs close enough together to provide convenient, economical access. As petroleum prices increased every aspect of the sport became increasingly expensive. Trainers tend to have larger vehicles such as trucks or SUVs which, while convenient for dogs and equipment, consume increasingly expensive fuel. Airline travel became more expensive, affecting the cost of travel for trial judges, competition and transporting dogs. The overall incomes of Middle Americans were stagnating and young people especially found good jobs very difficult to obtain and keep. As Schutzhund became more elite and expensive enthusiastic newcomers, especially young people with family obligations, increasingly found that they simply could not afford to participate. Administrative costs, such as USCA dues, saw dramatic increases as entrenched officers sought to solidify their privileged status. Over the years club members became noticeably older because of the disproportionate burden of a poor economy on the younger generation. But athletic young men, increasingly in short supply, have always been the primary protection training helpers.

Amateur police style dog training programs grew up in Europe along with the breeds and service cultures as a low cost activity that combined camaraderie, family social centers and sport beginning in an era before television, electronic games and the internet. Many clubs are centered on property acquired fifty or a hundred years ago which would be difficult to purchase today. Americans in the same era evolved their own after work social and sport activities such as softball and bowling, and to a lesser extent canine obedience training. Most of the Schutzhund pioneers in America were focused on recreating this training infrastructure and social tradition here, but tradition building has turned out to be a very difficult task. In most areas of Germany, the Netherlands or Belgium, the potential trainer has grown up with the sport all around him, seen active training fields his entire life, as or more common than ball diamonds in America. He likely has a family member or acquaintance that

can make an introduction, or he can just show up and show an interest. These resources are there because they grew up with the working breeds, acquired a little bit of land for a field and clubhouse and gained membership before television let alone cars, video games and the internet provided competition. In Holland it is quite common for municipalities or other agencies to provide parkland for training fields and clubhouses just like little league baseball fields are a standard feature of every American town. These recreational activities usually commence early in life, and society, through park districts and schools, provide facilities and services that make them attractive and affordable. Very few things in life have a comprehensive, one line explanation, but the failure of Schutzhund, and the Ring Sports, to prosper in America is largely due to the fact that they have become increasingly expensive and difficult for young people to get started in.

A Dog of Your Own

When acquiring an automobile or higher end camera there is an enormous amount of information available on which to base a selection. Life teaches most of us a number of lessons which carry over into dogs, such as that dealing with an established business is a hedge against problems down the road and what seems too good to be true may not be true – there is usually no free lunch.

Nikon cameras and Volkswagen automobiles are well-established brands with strong corporate track records, you can generally purchase from an established dealer with confidence that if things go wrong they will be made good, if not by the dealer then by the manufacturer. But if you buy your Nikon from an unknown internet source with an unusually low price you are likely to find out that it is not really new, that not all of the normal and necessary accessories are included and most importantly that if something goes wrong you are in real trouble: not only will Nikon not fix it under warranty, they may not even supply parts or repair it because you bought from an unauthorized source. In making your purchase you are not just buying a camera; you are committing to a system and establishing a business relationship in that future accessories, such as lenses and flash units, must be compatible.

Think of a dog in the same terms. When looking for a pup you are making a decision as to breed, a particular breeding line and establishing a business and personal relationship with a breeder. Although all of these common sense principles apply to dogs, the situation is much more complex because reliable sources of information are more difficult to identify and dogs are living beings; no matter how careful you are you can reduce but not eliminate risk. Ultimately buying a puppy is always a gamble: one cannot be certain of success, but can stack the odds in his favor.

In general the best approach when seeking a dog for serious purposes is to seek a mentor, a personal relationship with an established breeder, preferably one actively training and titling his own dogs. The closer to home the better, because an in person visit can often help resolve a problem or provide guidance and no breeder wants dissatisfied customers in his back yard. Such a person will have been through the unforeseen consequences of training decisions and have real appreciation for the subtleties of breeding selection.

The European import is seen as desirable and sophisticated, but generally this is not practical for the novice because of the difficulty of evaluating breeders in a distant nation speaking a different language. Some American "breeders" focus on European imports for resale and as breeding stock, and although their advertising is often elaborate, slick and extensive their real knowledge too often is superficial if it has not been established and verified through real long term hands on experience. Such people are better described as brokers rather than breeders, and although they

can sometimes provide the right dog at a fair price to a knowledgeable customer one must always keep in mind that the broker is primarily a businessman motivated by money rather than a deep personal commitment to the heritage or a breed. Multi breed importers merit especial suspicion and scrutiny, for here there is little doubt of the overweening profit motivation.

Many of us eventually go to Europe with the idea of acquiring a dog, and find the process daunting in that language and culture can be an impediment and there are many people – who cannot easily be sorted out as to reputation and quality – anxious to sell to the bumbling American. Buying a dog is not the right reason for a first European visit, is putting the cart before the horse. Go to Europe to learn, to come to understand the heritage, the Euro lines and over time to build an experience and knowledge base on which to sort out the people. Focus on establishing relationships with those likely to help you learn and mature rather than just shopping for a dog, when the relationships become established the right dog is much more likely to be found. I do not mean this in a phony or calculating way, that you should make friends just to save money or get a dog, but rather that in order to become successful in any endeavor one must be able to fit in and establish personal relationships with compatible people currently successful and respected in the field.

Even when you are interested in something from a stranger your European friend can be enormously helpful. Generally the price of a pup to an American is much more than to a resident of the country. I recall years ago looking at litters of Bouviers in Holland with Ria Klep, a very successful trainer and working breeder. My instructions were to be absolutely silent, as one word of English would automatically double the price; apparently my dress and appearance did not shout American. In this instance Ria just went ahead and bought the pup and explained later that if I did not want it she did, which of course only increased my enthusiasm.

People tend to think of the breed as the starting place in the dog acquisition, and for those with a deep emotional attachment to a particular breed this is of course perfectly valid. But breed selection has serious implications that can make an emotional decision irrational and likely to lead to disappointment. If you live for French Ring and love Rottweilers you have a serious problem, and if the problem is not obvious to you then you have an especially serious problem. Breeds come with history, purpose and an established community, and a good Rottweiler is a massive, headstrong, powerful dog but not a quick dog, agile dog or easily trainable dog. French Ring is an elaborate, sophisticated sport that favors the prey driven, agile, trainable dog; everything that the Rottie is not. If you buy a Rottweiler for Schutzhund after serious research you will in the process have identified people that can provide the emotional and informational support that are so important in training; when problems arise, and they will, there will be people to go to who have been through it. But if you buy a Rottweiler for ring training you will pretty much be on your own; people will think you are crazy, even those polite enough not say it to your face. The Malinois out of ring lines is the right sports equipment for that venue, and going with anything else is like taking your baseball catcher's mitt to the basketball try out.

The first step in the dog acquisition should be to recognize these general categories, so as to base the selection on a realistic set of expectations:

Companion dog owner: One with no particular interest in training beyond practical obedience to make the dog safe and pleasant to live with and perhaps an introductory level of watchdog training. Breed selection is purely a matter of personal preference and practical considerations. Depending on breed, the individual dog needs to be moderate or less in intensity or aggression; the intense young Malinois out of KNPV lines is probably going to be unhappy living with you, and in turn make you unhappy and frustrated. You need to go to a local breeder who selects for

generally moderate and stable character and diversity in his lines, which translates into a serious breeder minimally involved in conformation. The show breeder is often a poor choice, not only because of a lack of performance potential but because the close breeding for champions becomes associated with health problems and dull, stupid dogs. There is generally nothing wrong with a carefully selected mixed breed, and going through one of the all-breed or breed specific rescue organizations can be a viable option. In selecting an older dog one must of course realize that it is one someone does not want and carefully evaluate temperament, and have a complete veterinary evaluation before a final commitment. But in the broad scheme of things many good dogs are acquired in this way. In general it is best to avoid the show-oriented breeder as paying their exorbitant prices is basically just rewarding stupidity.

Casual trainer: You enjoy dog training and the social aspects of a dog club, but titles are of secondary importance. The breed should be generally appropriate, that is if you are drawn to Schutzhund big enough for the jumps and historically aggressive enough to be interested in engaging the helper; even if you do not aspire to trophies a dog who likes the work is a lot more fun and you will fit in much better. You need to start your search with local working line breeder, perhaps a member of the club you are interested in, and select a middle of the road pup.

Serious trainer: You really do want titles and trophies, and tend to be impatient with the casual trainers and pet owners. Your dog should be from a breed historically successful in your preferred sport and specifically from strong working lines within that breed. Good dogs from the alternate breeds, that is other than the Malinois or German Shepherd, are difficult but not entirely impossible to find.

Competition trainer: The reality here is that today only the Malinois and German Shepherd are consistently successful in the top levels of IPO or Schutzhund and that the Malinois predominates in all of the suit sports, that is, ring and KNPV. Going with another breed is in the big picture irrational, inevitably leading to frustration. Sorry, I wish this were not true, but it is.

Once requirements and goals are established, an appropriate breed and sound working lines are the right starting point, but success requires diligence and a generous portion of luck. Many once promising pups fall by the wayside even in the hands of experienced trainers, who sometimes wind up placing a prospect because he did not seem to be fulfilling his promise as he matured. Sometimes this is a mismatch between the man and the dog; a dog that could perhaps have achieved excellence in other hands. This is why many trainers are willing to pay a premium price for a promising young dog which has passed relevant health, stamina and character tests.

The novice with hopes for serious training in a sport or professional arenas, but not diligent and persistently skeptical enough in his search, is likely to wind up with a poor or marginal prospect out of ignorance and gullibility. By definition such a person makes a selection not sufficiently aware of the reputation of the various working lines and the various people and thus becomes a prime candidate for a dog with a questionable background or concealed flaws of temperament, character, structure or health. Like the empty place in the game of musical chairs, someone always winds up with the marginal pups.

Assuming an established breed preference, the initial phase should be attaining familiarity with the relevant people by reputation and through personal contact and attending trials and seminars. If there are breed specific organizations it is good to become a member or subscribe to the magazine, and study the web site. If the preference is the German Shepherd then there may be a number of local options, generally preferable to out of town sources. The advantage of the local breeder,

especially one in your preferred club, is the enhanced chance of an appropriate dog, a good match, and local support. Every breeder wants to have people training his dogs in his club, and will generally do everything possible to support his customers.

If you, as a novice, go on the internet or pick a breeder out of a magazine (I know I am dating myself here) you put yourself at risk of winding up with the lesser dog because preference is going to go to those with an established relationship and those with a serious competitive record. Experience teaches that most such queries are from people who are not going to turn out to be serious, and most of the dogs are going to ship and never be heard of again. The novice has a much better chance to sell himself as serious to the local or regional breeder and obtain a high expectation candidate and the support to back it up.

Those interested in a breed other than the German Shepherd will likely find it necessary to go out of the local area to obtain a suitable dog, as most of the local offerings are likely going to be discards from a conformation oriented kennel. Show breeders are similar to used car salesmen in not letting ignorance of the facts interfere with their sales pitch. Even though profoundly ignorant of working breeding, selection and training they will go on and on with all sorts of blatant lies about the working potential of their dogs, and how with a little training they are just as good as those actually working and achieving titles.

The problem is that beyond the Malinois and the German Shepherd all of the traditional alternative breeds are in decline, a spiral to oblivion, in terms of numbers and overall quality. As a result finding a viable candidate becomes more and more difficult, and many self-styled working kennels are really half-baked back yard breeding businesses selling mediocre and less pups to the gullible.

Thus in summary those looking for a high potential pup or a good young dog must first do their research and get to know the bloodlines and most especially the people. You get good dogs from good people, breeders and trainers who have paid their dues, built a real reputation based on accomplishment. So go to the trials and seminars, for that is where you meet the real trainers and breeders rather than the posers and salesmen. When the opportunity presents itself, visit their kennel and seek their knowledge. The novice, especially one without a mentor, should usually buy a dog in America, based on this knowledge, because the closer you are to the breeder the more help and guidance you can expect, and the more interest he will have in your success as a reflection of his breeding.

Early on I was fortunate enough to spend a lot of time in Europe, under the guidance and support of an experienced Dutchman, Erik Houttuin, in my breed residing in America. The internet as a basis of initial research and more affordable flights to Europe have made it much easier go and see for yourself. But do not go with the idea of buying the wonder dog on your first trip, go to extend your first-hand knowledge of trials and kennels, the history and culture. Wherever you go, focus on identifying and getting to know the serious and helpful people, in time the right dog will be the natural consequence of your diligence and patience.

Eventually most of us at some point wind up importing a dog or pup, often because of a need for a specific breeding line. When done with foresight and caution the shipping process is generally safe and reliable, if sometimes expensive. Although we imported many dogs and pups over the years, and shipped many others, we never had any real problem. A primary consideration is a direct flight without a stopover, which is much less stressful. When airline personnel directly interact with the dog there is always the potential for an escape, and a dog on his own in an airport, which does happen, sometimes with tragic consequences. Taking the dog directly to the airport immediately prior to the flight and having him picked up immediately on arrival avoids many potential problems. When the dog arrives it is preferable to resist the temptation to let him out of the crate (unless he is in obvious

distress); just load up the vehicle, head for home, put the crate in a run or other confined area and let the dog out cautiously where he can be approached on his own terms. Adult dogs shipped to an unknown person are under significant stress and may become aggressive or bolt and run; you do not want your expensive new dog loose in an airport or beside a highway.

In conclusion, let me say it again, because it cannot be emphasized enough: in finding a good dog, particularly for sport training, the first and most important step is to identify a breeder or mentor willing to help you, not only in finding a dog but in seeking out training resources and knowledge that will enable you some day in turn mentor others and thus repay your obligation to the heritage.

Only in America

In America we have a robust hunting dog culture, families breeding and training such dogs into a third or fourth generation are not especially unusual, and there is no need to go to Europe or anywhere else for dogs or guidance. So it would seem that Americans are not inherently dog stupid, that there is nothing in the culture or water to require it.

But police and protection dogs somehow are different; after forty and more years of playing at the game we remain insecure, dependent on Europe for dogs, guidance and validation. Although our military is, commendably, breeding a portion of their own Malinois at Lackland, most police dogs today still come out of Europe, either directly as imports, largely through brokers, or indirectly, through commercial operations in America which breed for police service, but which rely on Europeans for breeding stock, guidance and reflected credibility, are little more than offshore extensions of European enterprise. They cannot be more, are not breeders and trainers in the deeper, longer term sense of ongoing generations of their own lines because they lack the European resources and culture, the synergy of an ongoing tradition of cooperation with civilian breeders, trainers and sport competitors, as best exemplified by the Dutch KNPV program.

In the kingdom of the blind the one eyed man is king, and as a consequence of our European dependence all sorts of one eyed experts with a thin veneer of credibility pose as canine authorities in much of America, including police canine circles. The proliferation of police programs, driven largely by our war on drugs, and our ongoing dependence on European dogs has created a lucrative opportunity to provide for profit civilian brokerage and training services. Where the police administration is savvy, experienced and honest the free enterprise system tends to work, to drive out the dishonest and incompetent suppliers to the ultimate benefit of police canine units, tax payers and the civilian working dog community alike. But rapid expansion and ongoing creation of incipient canine programs, lacking a foundation of experience and knowledge, provides an opportunity for the pretender, an entire new world of blind men for the one eyed opportunists to exploit. Successful, ongoing businesses are routinely based on this sort of thing.

American police canine operations exist in profound isolation from our civilian training and sport culture, such as it is, so separate that there is virtually no communication, not even enough awareness for animosity or competitiveness. The consequence is the aggregate emasculation of the American police dog establishment, rendering both service and sport more costly and less robust than they could and should be, in a perpetual juvenile state, unable to step into adulthood and independence. Canine political and commercial interests in Europe, like grasping parents unable to let go, enable, encourage and abet this dependence. Our police agencies look to Europe for dogs, directly or indirectly, because these European sport and certification programs provide the guidance and validation that are the foundation of long-term police dog breeding, training and deployment. In America

we seem unable to break this circle: are so much less cost effective and robust than our inherent potential because we are so insecure and dependent, but at the same time we are unable to grow up and stand on our own because of these divisions and insecurities. This network of commercial operations – brokers, breeders and consultants – which have evolved to provide these services tend to discourage and impede initiative and independence for the obvious reasons, the preservation of their own status, security and income. Even if it is not widely perceived in the world at large, they know well that real progress in America can only diminish their status, influence and profit.

The fundamental problem is that real decision making authority in the civilian working dog establishment is much too often in the hands of canine politicians and bureaucrats, too often in Germany, motivated to promote themselves, their commercial interests or their breed, as measured by increasing puppy registrations and broad popularity or perception of vigor and quality by the public at large. This tends to foster ongoing slackening of performance requirements and the propensity of conformation oriented bureaucrats to allow or encourage working judges and trial decoys to be more and more lenient in order to promote participation or, more maliciously, to enable weak dogs to pass and thus gain in commercial value or win in the conformation ring.

Although all trial venues are vulnerable to dishonesty and corruption there are systemic differences that render some inherently more credible than others. As discussed previously, Schutzhund or IPO titles are especially vulnerable because there is a single judge selected by the local club, the people actually trialing their dogs, and because some trials are run for conformation line German Shepherds featuring extremely lenient judging and decoy work, essentially giving away IPO titles.

The KNPV certificate, if the dog to be acquired is actually the one awarded the certificate, is somewhat more reliable. KNPV trials are not conducted on the local club level but rather offered by one of the provincial governing bodies at specific dates and places, with three judges and two certified helpers, usually from other provinces. These are very public affairs with large, knowledgeable audiences; trickery and favoritism are of course possible, but much more difficult to conceal and thus less common. Furthermore, KNPV leadership for more than a century has been focused solely on police dog service. While there is the need to be ever vigilant against individual acts of dishonesty, over the years the integrity of the system, the commitment to the validity of the trial, has remained intact. Although the KNPV imports and the example provided by their program in the Netherlands have had profound influence on American police canine evolution, there has never been any evident interest in meddling in internal American working dog affairs.

German control of Schutzhund and German Shepherd affairs in America has always been the overweening priority of the SV and other German entities. The DVG in America was from the beginning under tight German control, by and for the benefit of Germans, with the American officers subservient and functioning as administrative assistants to carry out German executive policy and decisions, and of course collect the money to send to Germany.

USCA was through the Maloy years, roughly through the mid to late 1990s, a strong and substantially independent organization, still then working dog oriented, charting their own course and conducting internal affairs according to working dog principles and priorities. Roughly coinciding with the turn of the twenty-first century there has been a concerted SV effort to evolve USCA into a subservient German Shepherd breed club, essentially *SV Distribution America GmbH*, primarily serving German show dog interests, that is SV breeders, conformation judges and other insiders in exploiting the lucrative American market. Under the Lyle Roetemeyer

tenure as USCA president the situation deteriorated as the SV increasingly dictated policy and restructured the organization to support the interests of their conformation breeders.

At the end of the day, the question remains: Why can a people capable of shaking of the British Empire as it approached its zenith not break free of grasping German dog politicians?

What are Obedience Trials Really?

In the normal course of events things tend to evolve, to have original good reasons and then gradually accumulate some real reasons as baggage. The obedience trial, and the obedience aspects or phases of the more comprehensive trials such as Schutzhund and Ring, were originally conceived as serving two purposes, that is, as a demonstration of the necessary character attributes for breeding eligibility and for practical service as a patrol dog or companion dog. But as these practical trials evolved into sport venues competition and especially scoring had an inexorable tendency to evolve according to conventions of style and procedure more and more remote from practical life and service. The role of judge, referee or umpire is critical. In sports such as gymnastics and figure skating, the judge's numerical opinion of the style of presentation is the determining factor in who stands on the podium and who goes home empty handed. The football referee may make a bad call and in the extreme affect the outcome of a close game, but he does not have the opportunity to announce that a particular touchdown will only be allocated 4 rather than 6 points because he personally did not like the style of the quarterback. As refinement and competition increased the dog sports tended to devolve to opinion judging, as in gymnastics, rather than objective performance evaluation relatable to real life service expectations.

Part of obedience is the ability and willingness of the dog to heel, that is, stay at your left side as you walk or run, change direction when you do and go to a sit position when you come to a stop. In the spirit of the original purposes the more advanced dog would be expected to maintain discipline in the presence of real world, practical distractions such as walking on the street, the presence of other dogs, bicycles and so forth. And, indeed, these kinds of things are to some degree incorporated into programs such as the Dutch Police and Schutzhund trials.

But in some systems, and all systems to some degree, flash and style for points tended to emerge and predominate. Rather than staying alertly at your side, for the big points the dog must prance and twist his body into a big U so he can stare in your eyes and slap his rear end down as you do the contrived and unnatural stop required. The problem with this is that increasingly drifts from the original purposes and favors the subservient, hyper dog rather than the confident, obedient dog. There are significant differences here, with the KNPV dog expected to just do real world heeling and the AKC and Schutzhund folks gradually evolving obedience heeling into dancing with the dogs. This is in general not a good thing, as it makes tends to emphasize subservience over confidence and aggressiveness.

As another example, consider the guard of object. The premise is quite simple, the police officer will often need for his dog to remain in place and take care of an object such as a bicycle while the officer goes out of sight, perhaps into a building on a police matter. In the Dutch Police trial this is pretty much how it is played out, the handler puts down his jacket or a bike and leaves the dog to take care of it. The helper appears and calmly walks toward the dog, who is expected to respond with aggression when he comes within perhaps ten feet and to break off the engagement when the helper retreats. Takes thirty seconds or so and is a practical exercise.

But the French Ring people have expanded this into an esoteric several minute exercise, requiring a great deal of time in training and interesting to watch, but with questionable relevance to the real world. French Ring has gradually evolved into a sport with less and less practical relevance and more and more contrived exercises. This is of course a tendency to be guarded against in all situations, but it seems to be human nature to tend to the elaborate ritual over the practical. The consequence is that French Ring has evolved as a competitive sport only for their specific line of Malinois. There is a certain irony in the fact that the French have driven all of their native breeds such as the Beauceron, Briard and Picardy Shepherd out of their national sport in favor of one developed in the Flemish or Dutch region of Belgium. For all of their historic animosity to the Germans, the Malinois they promote is in reality the product of the German culture and heritage rather than their own.

Schutzhund and IPO have no guard of object, food refusal or call off in the attack exercises, which from a practical point of view are very serious deficiencies. On the other hand, this is to an extent understandable in that Schutzhund evolved as a breeding eligibility test rather than a full test to certify a dog ready for police patrol service as in KNPV.

Social and Political Context

The training of dogs, especially large, powerful biting dogs, does not take place in isolation but rather in a broad social and political context. Legislators and administrative authorities come under pressure, often intense, to intervene in canine affairs, as in the banning of specific breeds or styles of dog, as in the banning or discouragement of specific activities such as dog fighting or civilian participation in protection training. Even the equipment comes under scrutiny as in the prohibition of prong or electric collars or the use of the stick in the protection exercises.

In general these issues are at the moment much more intense in Europe than America, with incessant pressure for bans on ear cropping and tail docking, eradication of fighting breeds and the elimination of prong and electric collars. America in general has a much stronger heritage of individual freedom, less intrusion on personal rights, as exemplified by the widespread ownership and use of diverse firearms. But the alcohol prohibition fiasco of the 1920s serves as a reminder that pressure groups always have the potential to prevail and change a way of life, even in America.

Every society must of course establish legal boundaries and enforcement processes in order to maintain social order, community security and individual civil rights and self-determination, the pursuit of happiness; and this need for regulation and order quite properly extends to canine affairs. Bear and bull baiting, dog fighting and other grotesque amusement venues – long accepted and practiced by those of every social stratum – have today become illegal in most civilized nations. English and American culture historically has been averse to civilian protection training, which has been largely overcome or at least suppressed in recent decades, largely due to the diligence of the Schutzhund community in maintaining standards of responsibility. This is exemplified by increasing emphasis on the BH examination as a prerequisite to the Schutzhund trial, requiring a demonstration of control and stability before protection competition.

The underlying problem is that the vast majority of legislators, and the pressure groups with adverse agendas, are profoundly ignorant of serious police level dogs and training. Many, such as PETA (People for Ethical Treatment of Animals), are now more than the ever present lunatic fringe, opposed to companion animal ownership in principle, while others seek to limit breeding or training involving protection applications. While few openly oppose actual police deployment, there is an

undercurrent of opposition to civilian involvement, largely ignoring the issue of where police dogs would come from with no civilian participation in breeding and selection.

While no reasonable person can doubt that society must set boundaries and limit specific behavior and practice, such as dog fighting, many of these elements will not be satisfied short of the emasculation of all dogs and an end to breeding or training of overtly aggressive dogs. Much of this is akin to bullying, the attraction being the sense of power, of controlling and subjugating others; and success does not bring satisfaction but only generates the desire for more.

These trends are reminiscent of our ongoing national gun conflict: while most will agree that there must be limits, that civilians should not be able to wander into a store and buy machine guns or military style recoilless rifles, gun control advocates will never be satisfied short of comprehensive firearm confiscation, as has played out in Australia for instance.

Many of us tend to ignore politics in our daily lives, canine or otherwise, and focus on our personal training and breeding, simply want to engage in a private avocation as a diversion from the cares and responsibilities of life. We are largely content to live in our own private world, wanting little more than to go to the club a couple of times a week, train our dog, enjoy the camaraderie and a couple of beers after the protection equipment is stored and eventually trial the dog. To a large extent we live in blissful avoidance, oblivious to potential legal and social hazards looming on the horizon. This is naive, for politicians – governmental and canine – can be pressured to enact widespread, ill-considered measures just as the prohibition of alcohol consumption was inflicted on an unwary nation.

In addition to regulation and legal restrictions on canine affairs by governmental agencies on the national, state and local level, various national administrative and registration bodies, such as the AKC and the national FCI entities in most European nations, have enormous power over every aspect of canine affairs, especially breeding and sport. These registration bodies do not generally directly dictate or limit behavior but do wield enormous economic and practical power through the potential denial of registration, which is generally crucial in order to sell or export puppies and older dogs. Many European nations have national kennel clubs with government recognition and thus some legal standing, but in America these are independent entities; the AKC has no special legal standing and in fact there are several other, competing, registration organizations. Over most of its existence the AKC was profoundly opposed to any association with canine protection activity, only recently softening this stance under the pressure of falling revenue from plummeting registrations.

Although falling registrations, and thus revenue, has trimmed their sails in recent years, the AKC has historically focused on clever and generally successful promotional schemes, routinely obtaining fawning press and television coverage for their events and social agendas. A great deal of effort goes into congressional lobbying and influence peddling at state and local levels, much of it to good ends, but generally prioritizing the interests of show and pet breeders over the interests of canine working functionality. Some of the European national organizations, for instance, played a role in the banning of cropping and docking. In general the AKC and the FCI, and their affiliated national and breed entities, do not represent the interests of the police or other working dogs. They will routinely betray us as a matter of expediency whenever under any sort of social pressure, as in the banning of prong and electric collars and other training practices and equipment usage in Europe. One may choose to ignore canine politics, but no one can escape living with the consequences.

The working canine community needs to become more engaged politically and socially, employ good public relations principles and discipline ourselves, apply peer

pressure to encourage ethical, legal and moral behavior. When videos of in uniform police handlers appear on the internet or television kicking a Malinois hung up by his collar without mercy in the name of training and discipline we are all diminished, and at risk. When our sport systems become subverted to the gods of profit and money, when Schutzhund becomes a pastime for older, more financially able people because the young cannot afford thirty thousand dollar dogs, long distances to training and several hundred dollars monthly for professional helper work we will remain marginalized.

This American estrangement of the police canine community and the civilian protection sport movement seriously impairs all of us, renders sport essentially meaningless and service dependent on foreign sources and commercial vendors, and thus more expensive and less effective. In this context we become especially susceptible to intrusive interference from government bureaucrats, political pressure groups with adverse agendas and the show and pet oriented registry bodies.

Cooperation between civilian and police breeders and trainers would have many and diverse benefits for both, would foster understanding and enhance the aura of legitimacy and responsibility of civilian participation in protection training. In America today our working organizations, such as USCA (*United Schutzhund Clubs of America*) or the ring clubs, contribute essentially nothing to society in terms of supporting police and military canine deployment; the police dogs are generally imports or commercially bred from imported stock rather than coming from sport participants. The fact that USCA is dominated by and run for the benefit of Germany and Germans rather than America and Americans is the essence of this problem, a primary reason for the feeble state of our dog sport community, why we continue to wallow in mediocrity and contribute so little to the public good.

7

The Belgian Heritage



Although the modern Belgian state came into existence only recently, in 1830, generations of students were introduced to the ancient indigenous people, the Belgae, in the *Commentaries* of Julius Caesar:

"All Gaul is divided into three parts, one of which the Belgae inhabit, the Aquitani another, those who in their own language are called Celts, in ours Gauls, the third."

Caesar goes on to note that these Belgae were the bravest because "merchants least

frequently resort to them, and import those things which tend to effeminate the mind," certainly politically incorrect by the standards of today, where effeminization of the mind underlies many agendas, particularly in Europe.

The central thread in the history of these peoples has been the conflicting Latin and Germanic cultures, often descending into warfare involving powerful neighboring adversaries, from the campaigns of Caesar to twentieth century atrocities. Even today this cultural conflict severs Belgium in two, with the Flemish, whose Germanic roots go back to the ancient Belgae to the north and west and the culturally and ethnically Latin Walloons to the south and east, spiritual descendants of Caesar himself. Twice in the twentieth century Belgium was at the epicenter of a new kind of war, driven by the technology of the Industrial Revolution, unprecedented in terms of overt military violence, collateral civilian damage and long term rending of the social fabric. The evocative poetry of the era cast the soldier's graves on Flanders fields into the common memory of mankind, foreshadowing the horrors to commence in 1939. The emergence of the Belgian police dog heritage took place under the oppression of these conflagrations, subverting worldwide Belgian influence for two generations.

Belgium is central to police dog evolution and history in that modern police service evolved in the Flemish homeland, important breeds and varieties of police dog are Flemish in origin and because even today Belgium is a vital and important center of service orientated sport and police dog breeding and training.

*In Flanders fields the poppies grow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.*

*We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.*

*Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.*

John McCrae

The Belgian Enigma

In discussing things Belgian eventually one must confront the underlying enigma: there is not now, never has been and never will in any fundamental and realistic sense be a nation of Belgium or a person who is a Belgian. Rather there are two separate regions and peoples locked in an unholy union differing in ethnic background, culture, language and world view with deep historical animosities. This absurd construct, this bad marriage, was conjured up in 1830 by Machiavellian politicians for the perverse agendas of the major powers and consummated at the end of a shotgun for their own ends, with little concern for the wishes or welfare of the people involved. The only unifying factor and justification was that the regions making up Belgium were at the creation predominantly Roman Catholic in an era when common religious affinity meant much more to the social fabric than it does in the more secular Europe of today.

To the casual tourist these differences are not overt; communication for one fluent in neither national language is by its nature labored and subtleties are obscure. Outward appearances are normal: everybody drives on the right in an assortment of foreign made vehicles, there are no burned out cars on the streets or routine photos and reports of violence in the press, as has been so prevalent in Northern Ireland. It would seem that the lack of overt religious strife has rendered the conflicts nonviolent. But these are profound differences and conflicts nevertheless, even if just below the surface.

It is perhaps something of an inconvenience to impose this little historical detour in a book about police dogs, but there is simply no alternative; until one grasps these historical circumstances the Belgian canine world makes little sense. But it is well worth the trouble, for Belgium is the homeland of some of the best working lines, breeding and training in the world. No French or Dutch breed is of comparable stature to the Belgian Malinois, which is the foundation of today's KNPV lines in the Netherlands and the French Ring Sport in addition to Belgian national venues.

The people of Flanders, the more northern and western portion of the nation, are the Flemings, of Teutonic or German cultural origin and speaking Flemish, which is today virtually the same as Dutch. Wallonia in the more southern and eastern region, home of the Walloons, is French in language, culture and ethnic makeup. In addition, there is a small German speaking community in the east, in the vicinity of the city of Liege, annexed after WWI.

Individual persons living in the country known to the outside world as Belgium are thus either a Fleming or a Walloon, and there is no more anything in between than there are creatures part dog and part cat. There are no national political parties, no national newspapers, no real national culture – everything in Belgium centers in the one sphere or the other.

Subsequent to the 1830 creation of Belgium the official language for government and commerce – even in the Flemish region – was French, which was to a certain extent adopted by the Flemish higher classes and the upwardly mobile mercantile class, especially in the region of Brussels. In that era French was the language of diplomacy, commerce and culture worldwide; French use was ubiquitous as the hallmark of sophistication and culture. Belgian periodicals and magazines, such as canine journals, were in French, which was by default the language of science, culture and higher education. Today the vicinity of Brussels is the only region with a national character, has emerged as cosmopolitan and multilingual; the remainder of the people tend to think of themselves as essentially Flemish or French in terms of culture and personal identity.

The fact that the French language was imposed by outside political and military authority as the language of state, commerce and government from the beginning created an undercurrent of Flemish resentment, just as the Irish have residual



Note Mechelen, Tervuren, Groenendaal and Laken in the vicinity of Brussels, which were the regions associated with the currently recognized varieties are associated.

The cities of Roulers and Courtrai further to the west are associated with the evolution of the Bouvier de Roulers, later the Bouvier des Flandres.

animosity for the British even to this day. As Flanders became more modern, prosperous and democratic the imposition of a foreign language became increasingly onerous, and Dutch was gradually adapted as a second official language, a slow process in that there was no official Dutch version of the national constitution until 1967. Flemish resentment has been a driving force in the ongoing desire for separation, which is intense for a minority but seems unlikely to come to fruition; the Belgians are perhaps just too prosperous and comfortable for real revolution.

Relationships between the Flemings and the Walloons have always been tense, as in any troubled marriage, and in recent years the regions have become increasingly separate in term of government. In 1993 Belgium became a federal state with three regions – Flanders, Wallonia, and Brussels – virtually independent in everything other than military and foreign affairs. As mentioned above, there is a fringe element favoring outright separation, with the Walloon region perhaps becoming part of France; some say that this would be the case today if the problem of where Brussels



Sketch of early Belgian Shepherds in conjunction with initial standard.

Artist: Alexandre Clarys (Belgian, 1857-1920)

Duc, with long, dark gray brindle hair, Born about 1890 Owner: Arthur Meule, of Saint-Gilles-Bruxelles.

Charlot, with short smooth hair, fawn coloured, charcoaled on the back and the head, white breast. Born about 1890 Owner: Jean Verbruggen, of Cureghem.

Dick, with gray wire hair. Owner Aug. Dagnelie, of Brussels.

itself would fit in could be resolved. On the day by day basis the Belgian population is on the whole pragmatic, peaceful and prosperous, with the physical separation of Flemings and Walloons, and increasing separation of governmental functions along regional, ethnic and cultural lines, facilitating peaceful coexistence; separate but equal does in these circumstances seem to be a viable, pragmatic social structure. If Belgium is a bad marriage, it seems to be one where separate bedrooms provide the basis for ongoing stability if not contentment.

The current Belgian population is a little over ten million people, approximately sixty percent of whom are Flemish. Belgium was at the forefront of the Industrial Revolution and today 97 percent of the people are urban. This does much to explain why there are virtually no actual herding dogs serving in Belgium; and why the Belgian Ring Sport has no large area tracking tests. I know of a Belgian Ring club in Antwerp entirely contained on a small city lot, including a clubhouse.

In everyday life the Flemish and Walloons have always lived in their own lands, conversing in their own language, reading their own newspapers. In a general way the Flemish have much more intercourse with their Dutch neighbors to the north, the primary difference being that the Flemish remain predominantly Catholic and the Dutch much more Protestant, and the Walloons in a similar way relate to their French neighbors to the south. Indeed, the internal divide between Wallonia and Flanders marks more real cultural difference – and even animosity – than the national borders with France or the Netherlands. In the national government the Belgians must come together, make laws and conduct business, but even here they are segregated, there have never been national political parties in parliament, but only expedient alliances to form fragile coalition governments. In recent times, there have been long periods – years – where it was impossible to form a government in parliament.

The problem with all of this is that internationally the Belgians somehow have to send one Olympic team, one United Nations delegation and one unified team to international events such as the FCI IPO championships, since the rest of the world insists on dealing with them as one nation. This makes national level canine organizations complex and unwieldy. Since there can only be one FCI member, *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* in this instance, all of the St. Hubert national breed clubs encompass both regions. Apparently the Belgians have as much difficulty designating an IPO team for the FCI or WUSV international IPO championships as do the conflicting American organizations.

These ongoing conflicts of culture and language played a ubiquitous role in the evolution of Belgian breeds, service and influence. In earlier years most written material –books, magazines and pamphlets – was in French, but the incipient working breeds or varieties – most especially the Malinois – emerged primarily in the Flemish regions of Flanders and Brabant. It must be remembered that the four Belgian Shepherd varieties recognized today, after a century of strife and infighting, physically differ in coat color and texture but also in character and history. The long coated Groenendael, so prominent in working trials in the early years, emerged largely in the Walloon region south of Brussels while the short coated Malinois emerged in regions north of Brussels, deep in the Flemish provinces of Brabant and Antwerp. The demise of the Groenendael and the emergence of the Malinois in working and sport prominence correspond in time as well as place with the increasing prosperity and self-determination of the Flemish people.

Concerning an illustrated brochure about the Belgian Shepherd Dog published by the *Club of Malines* in 1898 Louis Huyghebaert, godfather of the Malinois, wrote "It was also the first time that something official was written about this Flemish breed in the Flemish language." These founders of the Malinois, the working dog of the Belgian Shepherd varieties, in the city of Malines, deep in the Flemish countryside

and closer in spirit and geography to the Netherlands than Wallonia, nurtured an underlying resentment of French domination destined to fester, under the surface if not overtly.

From an American perspective, the Belgian police breeds were in the German shadow through most of the twentieth century. While the Malinois became the predominant police dog in the Netherlands and Belgium, in America it was exotic and not widely recognized, with most of us thinking of the Malinois as funny looking German Shepherds, if we were aware of them at all. As Malinois began to become more common in police service television and radio announcers tended to have a difficult time pronouncing the name. In the twenty-first century, and especially since the taking out of Bin Laden, this aura of strangeness has to some extent abated. Even in Belgium, the Netherlands and France the German Shepherd is today numerically much more popular with the general public than any of the other police style breeds.

National Canine Organizations

In a nation with such deep ethnic, lingual and cultural divisions it cannot come as a surprise that Belgian canine organizations have a history of strife, competition and shifting allegiance. There have historically been three major national clubs with separate studbooks and conducting Ring trials, two of which are ongoing and one of which, *Kennel Club Belge*, is today for practical purposes irrelevant but historically significant. These are:

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|------|
| • Societe Royale Saint-Hubert (SRSH) | 1882 |
| • Kennel Club Belge (KCB) | 1908 |
| • Nationaal Verbond der Belgische Kynologen (NVBK) | 1963 |

Among other things these divisions make the work of the canine student and historian, and those looking for information for breeding or selection purposes, much more difficult as many dogs have been registered with multiple organizations, sometimes with differing names.¹ Another complication is that much the literature is written as if the FCI affiliated *Societe Royale Saint-Hubertus* is the only worthy organization, being perceived as "official." This is particularly important in a police dog book, where historically many dogs come from outside of establishment lines and where formal registration is increasingly irrelevant. Thus much of what has been written has been according to personal ideas of what is important, valid and legitimate, often downplaying or ignoring crucial elements of this history.

But for working oriented breeders and trainers especially this focus on establishment FCI affiliated organizations is increasingly irrelevant, for the FCI historically and increasingly denigrates working character and promotes show line interests and advantage. Several decades ago the Schutzhund title was often taken at face value, indicative of police service readiness, and this was broadly valid if common sense and appropriate testing was factored into the selection process. But in recent years, IPO, Schutzhund rebranded, is increasingly out of the mainstream of police dog acquisition, which has gone hand in with increasing Malinois predominance over the German Shepherd.

Today most of the best of Malinois breeding in Belgium is under the auspices of the working oriented alternative organization, NVBK, which makes exporting to other nations for breeding and sport purposes problematic and creates the temptation to

¹ Tjop, a famous stud dog, had four registrations: LOSH 6132, LOF 10538, NHSB 2740 and FCSB 116. FCSB was a short lived registry discussed in the history sections.

falsify documents and other maneuvers to work around the system. But in exporting dogs for police service or breeding for direct police sale in America this is less and less a factor as registration becomes less and less important. A consequence of these complexities is that many more Dutch Malinois out of KNPV lines are exported than come from Belgium.

Historically this ongoing internal strife was a major factor in the slow emergence of the Malinois as an important international working dog beyond the Low Countries and France, holding these dogs, among the finest in the world, in relative obscurity for most of the twentieth century. This also contributes to the fact that most prominent and influential Malinois lines, from the perspective of the world at large, particularly America, are those of France, the Netherlands or even Germany rather than the Flemish homeland.

Societe Royale Saint-Hubert

The Belgian national all breed canine organization, *Societe Saint-Hubert* was founded on Feb. 18, 1882. King Leopold II gave his blessing in 1886 making it officially the *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert (SRSH)*.¹ In practice the organization is often colloquially referred to as *St. Hubert*, and often with the abbreviation SRSH. SRSH in that era, as with most national formal organizations such as the Kennel Club in Britain, after which it was modeled, was principally concerned with the dogs of the upper middle and elite classes and emerging conformation hobbyists, an organization by and for hunters and their hunting dogs, especially their hounds. The working and farming class Flemish people with their herding and guardian dogs, later to evolve into the Malinois and the Laeken, and a generation after that the Bouvier, would have tended to regard SRSH as haughty, upper class and entirely too French.

The weekly magazine *Chasse et Pêche (Hunting and Fishing)*, founded in Brussels November 5, 1882, persisting until 1970, was the official publication of *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert*. Louis Vander Snickt was the long time editor and in this role, and as a judge and general commentator, wielded significant influence over canine affairs, playing a role in the evolution of the Belgian Shepherds and Schipperkes.

Interestingly enough, St. Hubert is the patron saint of the hunter rather than the herdsman or dog owner. Perhaps more appropriate for the herding dogs would have been the patron of the shepherds: Saint Druon, often shown with a staff, his sheep and his dog. But of course common working dogs and men counted for little in the upscale, show dog oriented canine establishments of the era.

With the establishment of the *International Cynological Federation (FCI)* in 1911 the member national organizations gained enormous prestige and power, since only their registration papers, judges and breed standards were recognized by other nations. SRSH was a charter member of FCI, thus gaining an enormous upper hand in canine power politics.

¹ In Flemish or Dutch this becomes Koninklijke Maatschappij Sint-Hubertus.



My old friend Jean Du Mont with Flack de l'Assa
1958. Photo C.Greving

Kennel Club Belge

In general a predominant national canine authority or kennel club emerges in each nation, as in the American AKC, the British Kennel Club and the national FCI affiliated club in most of continental Europe and much of the rest of the world. Thus although there are often alternate or dissenting entities, often with specific interests, in most nations a single national kennel club, usually the first one established, becomes predominant. In America there is in addition to the AKC a large and prospering United Kennel Club (UKC) mostly focusing on registration of functioning hunting dogs, as opposed to the ornamental and companion versions in the AKC ring. Another example is the KNPV in Holland, with focus strictly on police trials

and training. In such situations, with is relatively little overlap in interest and breeding lines, there is relatively little conflict.

Belgium is an exception to this. The separate cultures and languages, Flemish resentment of French domination in government, the press and civic intuitions and the fact that Belgium was created relatively recently with little realistic expectation of national spirit or cohesion has meant that truly national institutions of any sort have been difficult or impossible to establish and maintain. Because of this history, it is quite natural that *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* would be elite and French dominated, in this instance initially primarily run by and for hunting dog enthusiasts. Gaining acceptance and recognition, and especially formal registration privileges, for the herding and working dogs of the farmers, herdsman and tradesmen, was a long and arduous process involving much conflict.

As will be outlined in detail in the historical sections, *Kennel Club Belge* (KCB) emerged from these conflicts in 1908, overtly as a consequence of ongoing strife over the coat color and texture in the varieties of the Belgian shepherd, but more fundamentally in response to the broader issues of who should control Belgian canine affairs, and involving issues such as whether the emerging breeds, especially the Belgian Shepherds, should be functional as serious police level working dogs or ornamental as in the English Kennel Club style.

Although *Kennel Club Belge* was to be a major factor in the Belgian canine world for many decades, and from the working dog advocate's perspective one of the more supportive, the creation of the FCI in 1911 with *St. Hubert* as a charter member, lending the aura of international respectability and presence, made prospects for long term viability problematic. Reviewing early pedigrees, many of the most significant Belgian Shepherds of the era were dual registered, often with Dutch or French registration in addition. In a time of trouble, the man in the street was hedging his bets.

In the early years KCB was supportive of working dog training and competition, holding their first Belgian national Ring Sport championship in 1913, thirteen years prior to SRSH. It seems likely that *St. Hubert* insiders, in common with the British

Kennel Club which they admired and emulated, regarded working trials, especially those involving dogs biting men, and performance oriented breeding as obsolete in the new era, expecting it to naturally fade away as it did in England. But when it became evident that the interest was deep seated and persistent, and when *Kennel Club Belge* emerged as serious competition, they belatedly created their own working programs in order to regain control.

Through 1932 there had been no publication of the *Kennel Club Belge* breeding records, that is, the *Livre des Origines Belges* (LOB). The preface to the records for that year provides insight into the spirit and purpose of the organization:

"This is the list of registrations made during 1933 in the L.O.B. being the Studbook (*Livre d'Origines*) of the *Belgian Kennel Club*.

"One might ask why this studbook was not published in previous years and why, after twenty-six years of activity, our highest registration number is only 18,785.

"The late M.G. Oortmeyer, our dear chairman and founder of the *Belgian Kennel Club*, was not an enthusiast about the publishing of our studbook. He kept his L.O.B. carefully and held it at the disposal of serious fanciers, but at that moment there were so many false pedigree makers, that M. Oortmeyer wished to avoid putting in their hands a booklet which would give them the material for their falsifications. Besides, we never cared much for having a high number of registrations. During twenty years there did not exist any registration fee at the *Belgian Kennel Club* and we asked our friends only to apply for the registration of mature and worthy dogs. Up to June 1933 we did not even register litters. We thought it superfluous to register thousands of puppies from which a third never became mature dogs, and from which another third is lost for dogdom, as they come in hands of people who are not interested in pedigree dogs.

"But years elapsed and minds changed. There are still false pedigree makers but they know their business and need no studbook to have the necessary material. The Registration of litters has its good and bad side and, furthermore, we were compelled to give satisfaction to our members asking for a publication of our studbook. In June 1933 we started registering litters."

Publication of breeding records was to be short lived, persisting only from 1933 through 1937. Thus KCB was in fundamental ways different from registries as we think of them today; rather than an effort to record every pup and every litter, they regarded such things as secondary and in general only encouraged registration of dogs actually involved in breeding or working trials.

Kennel Club Belge was perhaps in a sense more comparable to the KNPV or NVBK, organizations with emphasis on maintaining and enhancing police and military functional potential, through demanding performance tests for breeding qualification, rather than conformation competition based on artificial style and fashion, creating breeding lines popular with diverse companion homes but of increasingly diminished service utility. This performance orientation is clearly evidenced by leadership roles of men such as Joseph Couplet, famous as trainers and advocates of police canine service.

KCB has been in decline for many years, and today is on the brink of irrelevance. There are a number of reasons for this, the primary one being the inability to compete and maintain relevance sans FCI affiliation. They are not recognized internationally, by FCI nations or nations with an FCI understanding, such as the United States, and thus no one affiliated can easily sell pups or compete in national or international working trials. Also, KCB was primarily in the French or Walloon

region, which has had difficult times economically, especially in comparison to the Flemish region, in recent decades. The web site in 2007 showed about 23 clubs, almost all in the southern or French speaking region, and a schedule of about 25 total ring trials. There were at this time seven *Kennel Club Belge* Ring judges. But more recent internet inquiries fail to bring up more than a front page of a site, with empty Flemish and French versions, shown last updated 2003. Like a derelict ship at sea, drifting off into nothingness.

Although now in decline, *Kennel Club Belge* played an important role in keeping the working dog flame alive in the hard years after WWI, certainly a noble service. Perhaps there is reincarnation for canine organizations pure in spirit, perhaps the NVBK, introduced directly below, is the spiritual heir of *Kennel Club Belge* and men such as Couplet who began this struggle so many decades before. In a certain place in my heart I would like to believe.

Breaking Out, the NVBK

The founding of the *Nationaal Verbond der Belgische Kynologen* was an act of revolution and a declaration of independence on the part of the Belgian Ring Sport community and the advocates of the Malinois. This new organization arose because serious trainers and Malinois breeders chafed under the restrictions, control and manipulation of the conformation orientated, FCI affiliated SRSB organization. Not only did NVBK take control of their Ring trials, they began their own registration book, making independence complete.

NVBK was founded in the province of Antwerp 1963 and began competition in 1964. It is today the most important and significant of Belgian Ring national organizations, both in terms of numbers and support, but most importantly it is a working dog entity conducted by working dog people for working dog people. Approximately 100 dogs receive level III certification each year, compared, for instance, to 800 to 1000 yearly KNPV titles. While numerically relatively small this is enough for a viable, ongoing breeding and training community. There are approximately 50 NVBK ring judges, in contrast to the half dozen, mostly older, listed for Societe Royale Saint-Hubert. St. Hubert continues to conduct annual Category I Ring championships with an entry of twelve or fifteen, but aggregate activity and participation is small compared to the NVBK.

Today, all dogs participating in NVBK ring trials are Malinois. Other breeds are theoretically permitted but do not participate. Malinois from other registries must obtain NVBK papers in order to enter an NVBK trial, which is relatively easy to do. NVBK puppy registrations were 359 in 2006, 430 in 2007 and 454 in 2008.

Historically NVBK is primarily a Flemish organization, which in Belgium, deeply divided between the Flemish and culturally French regions, is a deeply significant fact. Currently the administrative districts are: Antwerp, Brabant, Limburg, East-Flanders and West-Flanders, all in the Flemish region to the north and west. As of 2007 there were more than 100 NVBK clubs in Belgium and more than 1600 members. By 2013 membership had risen to 2600 Belgian members. Current reality is that the practical demise of St. Hubert and Club Belge Ring Sport activity and credibility has compelled serious Ring enthusiasts to gravitate to the NVBK.

More recently the NVBK seems to have become interested in building bridges to the French speaking Belgians, is gradually including use of the French language version of the name: *Fédération Nationale des Cynophiles Belges* (FNCB)



Foto) Oefeningen met politiehonden (Schouten op het terrein Zorgvliet. — Onze foto brengt in beeld den hoogsten sprong (3 M. 10 c.M.), door den Belgischen politiehond Bobby Dog.

The father of Belgian Ring Sport Edmond Moucheron, who also bred Groenendaels under the kennel name "Chenil Dax" after his most famous dog

Work and Sport

The emergence of the Belgian Shepherd as a formal breed created an ongoing need of an outlet for the energy and working drive of these newly urbanized herding dogs, just as there was a need of a social and sport outlet for the people in the more prosperous and leisure oriented world created by the Industrial Revolution. In America these needs were often met by after work softball, bowling and similar social activities. In Belgium and other northern European countries a burgeoning interest in amateur dog training and trial competition emerged. Eventually this would lead to the Belgian Ring Sport as we know it today, but in these early days as clubs and breeds were evolving there was significant opposition to the emphasis on overt aggression, especially amateur participation in programs involving dogs biting people. This concern is thus not specifically American or recent, but rather has been present from the beginning.

In the 1880's men such as Edmond Moucheron began giving police dog demonstrations in France, Belgium and Holland. These would

normally take place in a fenced off area, that is a ring of sorts, and included obedience, agility as in dogs jumping over bicycles and dramatic protection scenarios. This was very much entertainment in popular venues for the common man, comparable to our American county or state fairs, and intended to excite and entertain. The scaling wall, at ten feet or more, was a highlight of these dramatic performances and the subject of numerous photos of the era. These police style demonstrations caught the imagination of much of the public, became the forerunner to the Ring Sport. Moucheron is regarded by many as the father of Ring Sport, and if not the father he was certainly the precursor, in the mold of John the Baptist.

Those involved in formalizing the breed, Dr. Reul and his associates, were thinking in a different direction; were emulating the evolution of the English Collie through conformation shows and sheep dog trials. Thus the motivation was emerging from the top down, that is, was promoted by club founders who were not especially hands on dog men interested in a sport for themselves, but rather motivated by promotional and social agendas. Emulation of the Brits turned out to be a shaky foundation on which to build sport herding, for continental circumstances varied in fundamental ways. Scotland and England were different because of climate, terrain and commercial context; in large regions there was still viable ongoing sheep raising, and thus herdsman interested in competing with their dogs. Such things did not prevail in the Low Countries, although in the more eastern areas of Germany a viable herding community, and sheepdog trials, would exist well into the twentieth century.

The first sheep herding trial for the Belgian dogs took place on the 1st and 2nd of May 1892 in Brussels, sponsored by the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* (to be discussed later) in conjunction with the Belgian Collie club, in emulation of similar British trials for their Collie dogs. Although Reul and others were supportive, apparently preferring this to the enthusiasm for the emerging police applications as more acceptable to the better social classes, the trials turned out to be expensive and unpopular and thus fell out of favor.

The failure of herding trials to thrive is not in retrospect the least bit surprising, as the plain fact is that sheep were disappearing from Belgium. The survey in 1836 counted 969,000 which by 1880 had fallen to 365,000 and continued to drop in a precipitous way. Rapidly expanding sheep production in Argentina, Australia and other places was gutting the Belgian market. The advent of the steam powered ocean going vessel played an important role in this, bringing forth the age of international trade in bulk commodities in addition to high value luxury goods such as tea and spices.

In 1897 Louis Huyghebaert, living in Mechelen (Malines) north of Brussels, deep in Flemish country, took notice of the fact that sheep and shepherd's work was disappearing and advocated that different sorts of trials be created to "bring forward the three fundamental characteristics that a shepherd dog should possess: intelligence, obedience and loyalty." Huyghebaert would evolve as a very important man on the Belgian canine scene, active as a breeder, writer and in canine politics, in the better sense, for another half century.

But for the moment what is telling is what he did not mention, promote or approve of in the place of herding, that is, protection or police training and amateur competition involving biting dogs. In reality this was seriously out of step with the times, as a worldwide police dog movement was about to emerge in the city of Ghent further west in Belgian Flandres; and civilians across north central Europe – the Low Countries, Germany and much of France – were evolving enormous interest in hands on participation in police canine affairs. Nevertheless, Huyghebaert at this time believed that amateur protection training was the wrong trend to encourage, and was an advocate of tracking, writing a book on the subject and encouraging sport activity. He was also an advocate of dressage (obedience) trials, with individual exercises testing a dog's ability to leap over high and long obstacles and swimming exercises.

It is said that to praise or blame a man it is necessary to walk a mile in his shoes, and this reluctance to encourage civilian protection sport played out well over a century ago in a social context remote from today's world. It is entirely possible, even likely, that civilians, perhaps enthusiastic young men in back yards, were emulating the stunts of Moucheron and creating dangerous dogs that posed an ongoing threat to the credibility of the breed. God knows that sort of thing goes on even today. Ernest van Wesemael, founder of Belgian police service (to be discussed in the Police Dog chapter), also expressed opposition to civilian involvement in such training.

Thus a common thread among those seeking to promote the breed as a fashionable dog for the better classes was discomfort with the protection work, perceiving it as appealing to the wrong sort of people rather than the upward social mobility they saw as desirable for an incipient breed. Those opposed to such training thus expressed plausible concerns; and there was without doubt the need to evolve safe as well as effective training methods and trial procedures that demanded the demonstration of control and responsibility rather than raw aggression. Both Huyghebaert and van Wesemael seem to have believed that the demonstrations of Moucheron, with their emphasis on dramatic attack scenarios, like a carnival side shows, which to an extent they were, projected a low class image unlikely to appeal

to the more upwardly mobile and urban enthusiasts they envisioned as the future fanciers, with visions of gentile dog show popularity. It is not clear if the opposition was to any sort of amateur training involving biting dogs or simply a reaction to the overly dramatic aspects of the demonstrations.

Perhaps van Wesemael felt that the dogs were by nature aggressive enough, and long-term acquisition was simply a matter of selection and training for manageable dogs, in which case he was mistaken. This was perhaps possible, as he does not seem to have been an especially astute, hands on dog man.

In time Huyghebaert relented, reluctantly or not, as he played an active role for another half century while the Belgian Ring flourished. Real history is never simple and neat; men respond to complex emotions and motivations which evolve over time. But neither of these men is plausible as "Father to the Belgian Ring," for they were akin to reluctant, upwardly mobile, protective fathers of delicate daughters, aspiring to gentile class status, fending off aggressive young men of questionable repute, with the well-known propensities of all young men.

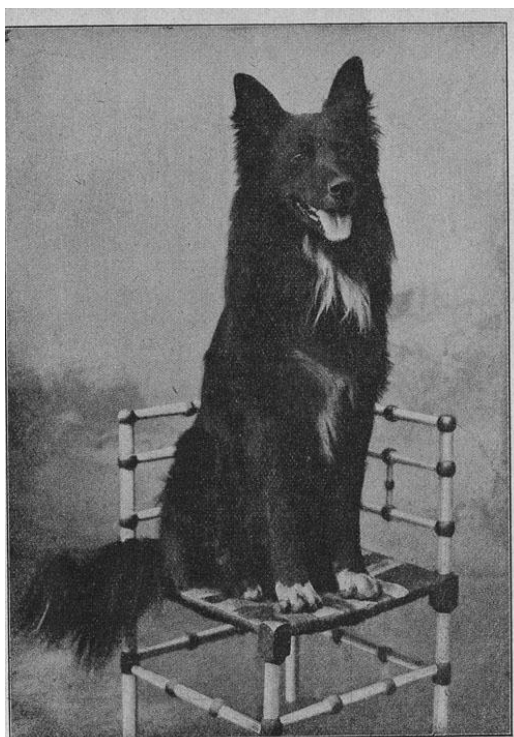
But at the end of the day the era of police dog and amateur police style training was imminent, and it was not a matter of allowing it or not allowing it but one of developing programs that demanded reliability and control. In this era the common man, the men working in the fields and emerging industry, increasingly had a mind of their own, and their collective mind was increasingly focusing on police style training as an amateur activity, which would expand enormously with the turn of the twentieth century, in Belgium, in Germany and then in much of the rest of the world.

Belgian Ring Sport

Although somewhat informal in the beginning, Ring style demonstrations were being held as early as 1903 in Malines (Dutch: Mechelen). By 1908 more formal trials with better established rules were underway. These early trials included water exercises similar to the KNPV water exercises of today. The prototype trial took place in June of 1903, won by a bitch called Cora, who would play a prominent role in early breeding lines, indeed would become a foundation of the breed. This trial is best thought of as a demonstration, an experiment, in that there was a minimum of formality and rules, the dogs more or less doing what they had been trained for rather than a pre-determined program.

Until well into the 1960s, when Belgians and Dutchmen began to become involved in the German style of sleeve oriented sport, the suit sports, Ring in Belgium and France, KNPV in the Netherlands, drove the evolution of the Belgian working breeds, in particular the Malinois and somewhat later the Bouviers. Protection work featured a decoy or helper in the protective body suit, in principle allowing the dog great latitude in where and how to bite, favored as more natural and realistic than the separate bite sleeve then emerging in Germany. While French Ring has been widely publicized in America for several decades, the Belgian variety has had much less notice here

Although French and Belgian Ring are superficially similar and share common roots, in that the decoy wears the full body bite suit rather than the padded arm of Schutzhund, today the differences in philosophy, practice, and even breeding selection are significant if sometimes subtle. Although the French Ring varies the order of some of the exercises, the Belgian Ring judge has a great deal more latitude to alter the exercises, so that the handler is never certain what he and his dog will face on a particular day. At one trial near Liege, in the middle 1980s, the object presented for the retrieve was a large sponge in a bucket of water. The handler was required to take it out, toss it without wringing it out, and send this dog to bring it back. In the protection exercise that day, the decoy had a rope attached to the lower of two stacked plastic barrels. As the dog came in to engage the decoy he tugged on the line so that the dog was distracted by the two barrels bouncing behind him.



Chien de berger belge à poil long noir, dit de Groenendael, ayant obtenu : le premier prix aux concours internationaux de dressage pour chiens dits de défense et de police, à Saint-Tropez, Boussu, Binche, Frameries, Valenciennes, Tourcoing, Monscron et Paris en 1908, de même qu'à Bruxelles, trois fois, Monceau, Tubize, Roubaix, Lille (championnat international), Monscron et Paris en 1909, 1910, 1911 et 1912. Proclamé quatre fois champion du monde du dressage, à Paris en 1908, 1909, 1910 et 1912 et trois fois vainqueur de la coupe internationale « Marquet » en 1910, 1911 et 1912.

Jules du Moulin (Couplet, 1931)

Although Belgian Ring is a lesser-known European sport, it is, from the more sophisticated spectator's point of view, one of the more interesting. The trial fields tend to be small and intimate, and the judge's discretion in arranging the details of the exercises adds to the general interest.

The Groenendael Jules du Moulin (LOB 2884), owned and trained by Charles Tedesco, proprietor at the kennel du Moulin at the village of Auderghem, just south east of Brussels, became a very prominent working dog. In 1908 Jules and Tedesco won the first World Champion title at the defense dog Championships in Paris. The detailed nature of this Paris competition is not clear; perhaps it was of French origin and a precursor for the French Ring sport, or perhaps Paris was just so strong as the center of the French speaking world that it seemed natural for the culturally French Belgians to go there for major events. Jules went on to win many other championship competitions through 1914. An interesting sidelight is that Jules was out of a female of undocumented origins, not the least bit unusual in that era.¹ As noted above, championships prior to 1913 were in Paris under the auspices of *Club National des Chiens de Defense et de Police*.

The inaugural *Kennel Club Belge* Ring Championship was in Brussels on June 21 & 22 1913. Jules du Moulin and Charles Tedesco were in first place, followed by Top de la Joliette, Groenendael; Karl de la Mare, Tervueren; and Tom des Crosnes, Malinois. Jules was also the winner in 1914, on the eve of the deluge.

It is characteristic of the era that Groenendael activity centered on *Kennel Club Belge* and in the predominantly French regions. There was an early surge of working Groenendael enthusiasm, but as activity resumed following the war the Malinois was in the spotlight, the Groenendael to fade into oblivion as a serious working dog. Following WWI forward the winners were Malinois with exceptions in 1927 Torry de l'Ombrelle LOB 11172 - rough-haired and 1960/1961 John (LOB 76361) - rough-haired. The best result for another breed was the second place of the Bouvier Sicky der Begijntjes (LOB 56425) in 1950.

Although *Kennel Club Belge* provided the primary arena in the early years of Ring competition, in accordance with the usual Belgian way there have always been multiple, conflicting organizations. The primary organizations with Ring programs, with year of first championship:

¹ I am coming to prefer the term undocumented over the customary unknown, because in many if not most instances the people involved knew the background, often for several generations, perfectly well. Not being written down does not mean that knowledge does not exist, dogs were bred on oral tradition and community knowledge for centuries before formal registries came into existence.

- Kennel Club Belge (KCB) 1913
- Societe Royale Saint-Hubert (SRSH) 1926
- Nationaal Verbond der Belgische Kynologen (NVBK) 1964

This is slightly misleading in that although there were very successful *Club Belge* championships in 1913 and 1914, with 21 and 22 participants respectively, the late summer and fall of 1914 brought Belgium under the heel of the German Army. Although there are references to an event in 1916, likely very small scale in the time of war, it would be ten years before recovery was sufficient to make a full scale championship possible.

The first post war *Club Belge* Ring Championship was in Brussels in September of 1924. There were 33 participants, mostly male Malinois, but with four Bouviers des Flandres and six females. Interestingly enough, the first three places went to a bitch, with first place going to Ledy du Plateau with S. Van de Bossche of Brussels. There were seven Groenendaels, with the female Diane du Fonds des Eaux with V. Menier in third place.

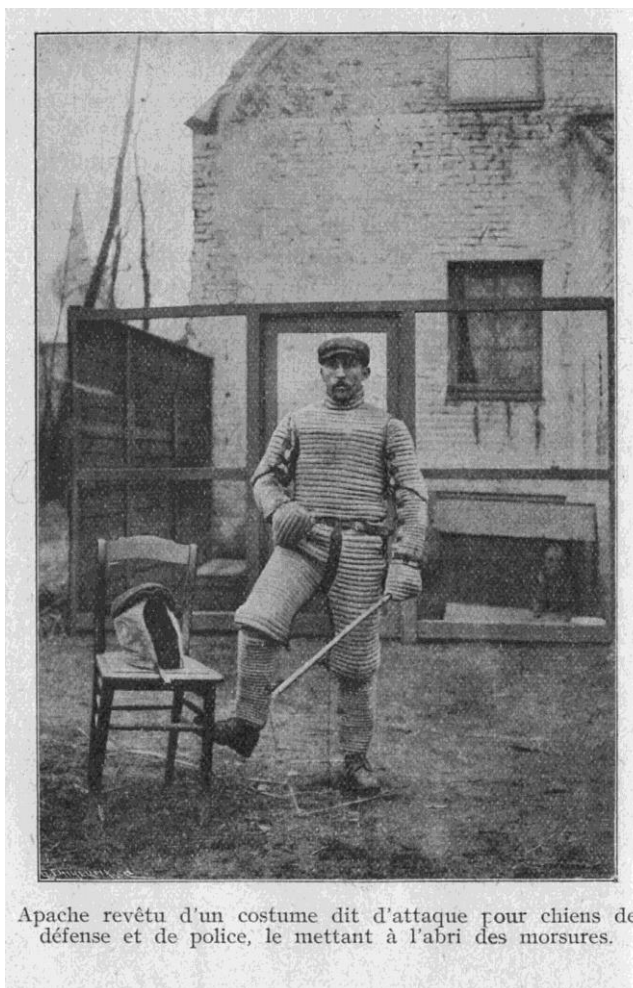
The inaugural *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* Ring Sport National Championship took place on October 3, 1926. The entry was relatively small: there were nine competitors: 5 Mechelaar, 2 Groenendael and 2 Bouviers de Flandres.

The lack of Belgian national unity and strife among trial sanctioning entities have been factors limiting Belgian Ring sport visibility in the world at large. Perhaps this is not all bad, as there is something to be said for having a dog sport somewhere in the world that really is about local men training their own dogs, devoid of overweening commercialism. If you visit Europe, it is well worth the trouble to seek out a local trial and spend the afternoon drinking beer and leaning on the fence that usually surrounds the field. It will be like stepping backwards in time to an older, slower paced, simpler world.

My initial experience with the Belgian way of work was at a club near the ancient city of Liege in far eastern Belgium, in the middle 1980s. Like it was yesterday I can recall standing by the ring watching a marvelous Malinois perform in perhaps the most fascinating ritual of the working dog world, the Belgian Ring trial. Schutzhund is precise, demanding and dramatic. KNPV is practical, down to earth and powerful. French Ring is spectacular, athletic and impressive. But Belgian Ring is akin to a chess game between the handler and the dog on one side and the judge and decoy on the other. The rules and traditions are subtle and elusive, and perhaps to the novice it would seem that not all that much is going on. But for those with even a little bit of insight it is an intricate drama, almost a trial field morality play.

The dog on the field, called Clip, with his handler Alfons Bastiaens of Westerlo, was the reigning *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* champion, and five times winner between 1981 and 1986, so we had the privilege of observing the sport at the very highest level. Later I was to learn from Malinois friends that this Clip is quite famous, having been St. Hubert Belgian champion several years. Perhaps there was a tiny edge of envy in their voice, but for me he was an excellent dog enjoying his work on a warm, sunny afternoon on the tiny Belgian trial field. (If only we could go back after all of these years and live again such memories with the hard earned knowledge of experience and research, and with a modern camera!)

But what I carried forward from that day was a few words exchanged with a little old man standing with us by the ring. I do not remember all of the details, I suppose one of my friends, perhaps Alfons Verheyen, translated a few words, but what he said was that he remembered when there were Bouviers in Belgium, remembered Edmund Moreaux and Francoeur de Liege. This would have been half a century in the past, but it seemed like we were talking about the previous week. And of course, in this context, for this man, if a dog was not in the ring, did not work, it did not exist. I



Decoy equipment of the early era. (Couplet, 1931)

am sure that old man, if he is somehow still alive after all of these years, has no recollection of a strange American, but for me it is one of those moments locked in time, like the days when Kennedy or King were assassinated. The Bouvier des Flandres of this culture is, sadly, almost gone but the Belgian Ring carries on.

On reflection after all of these years one of the attractions of the Belgian Ring is that it is – or seems to be for an American who wants to believe – a truly amateur world where the advancement of the breed, sportsmanship and camaraderie are still fundamental. Schutzhund and KNPV today are today largely driven by money and greed, to the detriment of sportsmanship, the breeds and too often the welfare of individual dogs. Schutzhund has become almost wholly commercial, and the burgeoning export market has wrought change on KNPV fields, brought forth commercialism and greed.

Although generalizations can be treacherous, my perception is that Belgian Ring dogs tend to be larger and more robust while French Ring

dogs tend to be quicker and more agile. The Belgians emphasize the full grip in the bite while the French emphasis is on precision in the face of a quicker and more agile adversary. The Belgian Ring trial area is in general much smaller than that used in the French Ring. (I have visited a Belgian Ring training club on a small city lot in Antwerp, perhaps 35 or 40 meters by 90 meters.)

The Belgians believe that their emphasis on the full bite is a fundamental verification of the dog, while the French would contend that the dog's effort to overcome the evasive efforts of the decoy are more important, and that a less full grip is of secondary importance. The Belgian Ring helpers can be less mobile than the French, and use bulkier equipment. The French Ring helper evades the dog while the Belgian Ring helper utilizes variations in the trial procedures and unexpected obstacles and distractions to test the dog. This is not to judge one or the other superior, but merely to point out differences produced by rules and tradition.

Belgian Ring dogs compete at three levels or categories: ¹

Category III: Young dogs competing for the first year.

¹ Note that this is the opposite of Schutzhund or IPO, where the IPO III is the most advanced title.

- Category II: Dogs who had in their first competition year sufficient points to advance to this class. (5 times 300 points)
- Category I: Elite dogs which have sufficient Cat II success to advance (3 times 340 points)

During week end competitions from March through August trials are held where dogs seek to qualify for the championships in September. What this means is that each weekend there are trials for the three categories in different cities. Sometimes there are only one or two trials, but over the season there are about 20 trials for each category. On three subsequent September Sundays, beginning with the Category III dogs, the 20 dogs with the best qualifying scores compete to become champion.

Historically the Belgian trainers in general have been the least commercial, the least interested in Americans as customers or promoting their national breeds as working dogs or their own trial systems. On my first visit to a Belgian Ring trial in the mid-eighties, Americans present and speaking English attracted no particular attention, at a time when a few words of English at a KNPV trial would draw people out of the woodwork looking for the opportunity to sell dogs.

In addition to the Ring, there has been a great deal of high level IPO activity in Belgium, perhaps those Belgians with international interests and commercial ambitions have tended to go in this direction. Many Belgian IPO trainers have become world class competitors, and Belgian training has been innovative and influential far beyond national borders.

The Belgian Shepherd



Belgian Shepherd, Malinois variety

The Belgian Shepherd is a canine breed derived from the indigenous sheep herding dogs of Belgium, built for quickness, agility and endurance rather than the fleetness of the sight hounds or the mass and power of the Mastiff style guardians. In the Belgian homeland, and all FCI countries, the Belgian Shepherd, or Berger Belge, is a single breed with four varieties according to coat texture and color.¹ Non-FCI nations, such as Britain and the United States, have their own arrangements, recognizing some varieties as separate breeds and not recognizing others at all. In appearance these dogs have erect ears and full tails, are somewhat similar to the German Shepherd, generally being a bit lighter, a bit quicker and in the Malinois and Laeken perhaps a bit sharper.

In Belgium the Shepherd varieties today are as follows:

| Dutch | French | Coat | Color |
|--------------|---------------|-------------|------------------------------------|
| Mechelaar | Malinois | Short | red-brown with dark mask |
| Groenendael | Groenendael | Long | black |
| Tervuerse | Tervueren | Long | mahogany with dark mask & overlay |
| Lackense | Laeken | Rough | mahogany or fawn in varying shades |

Mahogany is more or less interchangeable with red-brown as a color description. Fawn as used in describing coat color denotes a light yellowish brown, with a slight reddish tint, sometimes likened to the color of a young lion. The modern Belgian standard also provides for Other Colored long coated dogs, which includes the sables (sand colored), beiges and grays. These are classified with the Tervuerens.

There is some variation in the terminology, for instance with the Malinois we have:

| | |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|
| Belgian studbook: | Belgische Herdershonden (Mechelse) |
| Dutch studbook: | Belgische Mechelse Herder |
| Dutch informal: | Mechelaar |

With the exception of the Laeken each of the varieties is associated with a Flemish town clustered in the vicinity of Brussels. The Laeken name is derived from a prominent royal park now within the city limits of Brussels, where the founding family of this variety were shepherds.

The emergence of the Belgian Shepherds is a complex and convoluted history, and an organized presentation is difficult. Since men such as Reul and the

¹ The word berger is simply the French for shepherd, just as bouvier translates as cowherd or cattleman, which is one who takes care of the cattle. There are Flemish equivalents, for instance Vlaamse Koehond is the Flemish or Dutch for the Bouvier des Flandres and Belgische Herdershonden would be the Dutch for Belgian Herding Dog. The word chien is French for dog, and the American spelling for Tervueren is Tervuren.

Huyghebaert brothers played such important roles, and are referred to constantly, it seemed best to begin with a brief biography, the reader being encouraged to go back for a deeper understanding as he proceeds through subsequent material.

Adolphe Reul

The most prominent figure in the formalization of the Berger Belge was Professor Adolphe Reul (1849–1907) of the Cureghem Veterinary Medical School in Brussels. Dr. Reul was a prolific and influential author (on draught dogs and horses as well as the Belgian Shepherd), prominent conformation judge and tireless promoter and founder of Belgian canine and equine breeds. Reul was born at Braives in Wallonian Belgium June 7, 1849 and deceased in Brussels on January 10, 1907 at only 57 years, after an extended period of illness.

In addition to innumerable articles in professional journals and the general canine magazines, he produced these books:

- *Les Races de Chiens* (The Breeds of Dog) 1893
- *Le Chien de trait Belge* (The Belgian Draught Dog) 1899
- *Precis du Cours d'Exterieur du Cheval* (on the Brabantine horse) 1902.

Les Races de Chiens, at over 400 pages, was comprehensive and influential in the establishment of the Belgian Shepherd. Although Dr. Reul is rightly regarded as a founder of the breed he was not at all hands on, not a breeder and likely never actually owned such a dog.¹ As can be seen from his books, he was a very busy man, also involved in Belgian Mastiff affairs and the preservation of the Belgian draft horse, being instrumental in the creation of the national stud book for this equine breed.



Dr. Adolphe Reul

In stark contrast to von Stephanitz, who ten years later was to be the driving force behind the German Shepherd dog, and was profoundly concerned with practical working application of his incipient breed, Reul and his associates were primarily focused on the appearance, especially coat texture and color, that is the conformation. In this they were emulating the emerging British show dog fancy, especially the English Collie, and the rapidly rising popularity of conformation exhibition in middle and upper class Europe.

Reul was a man of his times, and must be understood in this context; more rigid class structures prevailed, and it was quite normal that such men took little note of the aspirations of the Flemish speaking farmers, herdsmen and working class, among which these incipient Belgian Shepherd's dogs had been nurtured in the pastures and fields for a millennium.

¹There was a minor breeder by the name of Auguste Reul active shortly after the passing of Dr. Reul, which can cause confusion.



Louis Vander Snickt circa 1906

Louis Vander Snickt

Louis Vander Snickt, born in Geraardsbergen on February 24, 1837 and passing in 1911, was a prominent man on the Belgian canine scene: he wrote extensively on diverse agricultural subjects as well as canine affairs, was long time chief editor of *Chasse et Pêche*, an influential conformation judge and prominent in Schipperke affairs. In addition to his magazine work, he produced the book *L' Aquiculture and Belgique* in 1894. Vander Snickt was an accomplished illustrator, providing many exceptional drawings and sketches in *Chasse et Pêche*. Earlier he had served as the manager of the zoological gardens of Ghent and Dusseldorf. His written commentary and personal involvement contributed to the emergence and evolution of our Belgian Shepherds and other Belgian breeds.

As editor of *Chasse et Pêche*, the official organ of *St. Hubert*, Vander Snickt was certainly privy to internal information, but being Flemish it is unclear how much of an actual insider he was in terms of influence and power.

The Huyghebaert Brothers

Louis Huyghebaert (1868 – 1952) was prominent among the founders of the Malinois, a well-known canine authority and for many years a prolific contributor to the canine publications *Chasse et Pêche*, *L'Aboi* and others. Located in the city Mechelen (Malines) in the province of Antwerp, he was proprietor of the kennel *Ter Heide*, founded in 1894 and eventually sold in 1911.

Frans Huyghebaert, brother of Louis, was also prominent among Malinois founders in the 1890's and later, even more active as a breeder and trial competitor. He also was a



Louis Huyghebaert

judge.

Although Louis Huyghebaert was a very prominent and influential conformation judge and a promoter of dressage (obedience) and tracking, he was, at least in the early years, markedly unenthusiastic about amateur protection training and thus not a promoter of Ring sport, putting him out of step with the rising tide of Ring training. In addition to his contributions to the various magazines, he also produced a well-known book promoting tracking.

Huyghebaert had diverse canine interests; much of what we know of the history of the Bouvier des Flandres and earlier related contending bouvier varieties comes from his work, most especially a long article making up the entire content of the magazine *L'Aboi* in March of 1948. Although Huyghebaert never uses the term Laeken in his famous Bouvier article, he does comment that the Bouvier des

Ardennes, also with naturally upright ears and long tails, was not sufficiently distinct from the rough coated shepherd's dogs to form the basis of a separate breed.



Joseph Couplet

Joseph Couplet was a very important man in the early Belgian police or ring dog movement, perhaps best known today for his book *Chien de Garde, de Défense et de Police*, with many editions beginning in July of 1908. Well known as a trainer and breeder of the Groenendael, such as Sultan de la Loggia, he was also a prominent judge.

In addition to his better known police dog book, Couplet also wrote *Le Chien Ambulancier ou Sanitaire, Son utilite et son dressage* (Dog of Ambulance or Health, His usage and training) Brussels, 1911.

Couplet was the chairman of the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* from 1911 and chairman of the *Kennel Club Belge* from January 1929 to his death in 1937.

Unfortunately, the small photo of Couplet shown here is the only one I have been able to find; he was a much bigger man deserving of a more prominent photo.



Justin Chastel, prominent Belgian Bouvier Breeder, on the left and Felix Verbanck on the right. Photo 1967.

Felix Verbanck

Felix Verbanck (1885 – 1973) was an enormously influential figure on the Belgian canine scene after the First World War through the 1960s. His *de l'Ecaillon* Malinois line placed him among the elite breeders of the pre WWII era. From 1909 through 1934 he resided in northern France for professional or business reasons, in the village of Thiant, near the larger city of Valenciennes. Although for many years he was justly famous as a Malinois breeder, in a certain way perhaps carrying on the work of Dr. Reul, he also served as secretary of the parent club and served as a senior figure and a mentor to many breeders of Groenendaels and the Bouvier des Flandres as well as the Malinois.

Verbanck was also a key figure in the history of the Bouvier des

Flandres, serving as the president of the Belgian club for many years and serving as an advisor and mentor. Although never a Bouvier breeder, his brother and nephew bred important Bouviers under his influence. I have in my possession letters in his own hand, or from his typewriter, from the archives of Edmee Bowles, founding Bouvier breeder in the United States. Mr. Verbanck was truly a remarkable and well-loved man.

Throughout this era the Belgian Shepherd and Bouvier des Flandres were strongly intertwined communities, with men such as Felix Verbanck and Louis Huyghebaert playing major roles in both breeds. In research for my Bouvier book yielded stories of deprivation during the two wars, a prized dog traded for a sack of wheat so that the family could eat. A Dutchman of my acquaintance mentioned that sometimes a family pet became a meal in WWII Holland.

Foundations

From antiquity through the Middle Ages and into the modern era in the region that is now Belgium wolves and other predators posed a serious threat to the sheep, to the extent that guarding was the essential function of the Shepherd's dog. Thus in this era the dogs were usually larger and more aggressive, often equipped with collars studded with metal spikes, in order to repel the wolves and other predators. These dogs tended to be more the heavier mastiff type, the style or type which persists even today as the guardian dogs, often white in color, in the Pyrenees, Italy, Turkey and even on to the Himalayas. To some extent the threat from the wolf and other predators carried over into relatively recent times; the last wolf known in Belgium was killed in the Ardennes in 1847. Even after this era stray or feral dogs continued to be a potential threat. Many of these livestock guarding dogs were cropped and docked because the shepherds noticed that the wolves could otherwise get hold of tails or ears and thus gain an advantage.

Beginning with the French Revolution, about 1792, larger estates were gradually dispersed and crop cultivation increased, that is, more and more land came into the possession of the common man. The concurrent demise of the wolf and the need to keep the sheep out of neighboring fields, and convey them along roads, seeking greener pastures, necessitated the evolution of the tending style shepherd dog of more recent history. Barbed wire did not yet exist, and it was the shepherd's dogs which allowed him to control and move his flocks in the ongoing quest for suitable forage. Ear cropping and tail docking gradually went out of practice, although these customs persist for the cattleman's dog, that is, the Bouviers.

So many years later it is difficult to see through the eyes of the founders, men such as Reul and Huyghebaert, but it would seem evident that the primary motivation in breed creation was national and cultural pride; in their view the British had the winning game, were making great strides in creating and promoting their breeds, their Collies, pointers, hounds and retrievers. It would be almost another decade before the Germans would bring forth their Dobermans, Rottweilers and above all the ubiquitous German Shepherd, and, in the aftermath of the oncoming war, in the 1920s, sweep the attention of the world. These Belgian founders felt compelled to preserve and protect their native dogs, enshrine them in books of origins, form them into world recognized national breeds; and English style conformation competition seemed to be the way of the future.

In a certain way some of these men never quite seemed to engage with the actual flesh and blood dogs, which served as props or pawns on the chessboard of elite posturing, created and propagated in the cause of national, cultural and class pride and personal importance. If so then the show breeder of today is their natural heir, the ultimate recipient of their patrimony. The problem with this is of course that it was and is the world of ornamental dogs, with ever changing, ever more grotesque style and structure, driven by never satisfied fashion rather than functional utility, of real value to mankind.

The first international open dog show in Belgium took place in Brussels in July of 1880. The sheep and cattle herding dogs were not formed into breeds at that time, and only seven such dogs were entered in a general continental class, including dogs from places outside of Belgium, including Germany and France. For perspective one

must remember that dog shows were by and for the upper classes, primarily with their hunting dogs; the Industrial Revolution was just beginning to break down these historical societal barriers. Of the 965 entries most were hounds, with 10 British shepherd dogs, Collies and Bobtails, in addition to the seven continental shepherds mentioned above. Thus the herding dogs as we know them today were an obscure sideshow on the edge of this glittering canine world, not yet formed into formal breeds with names and numbers inscribed in a book of records.

The formal advent of the Belgian Shepherd breed commenced with the foundation of the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* on September 29, 1891, in Brussels. Two weeks later, on November 15, 1891 in Cureghem, on the outskirts of Brussels, Professor Reul organized a gathering of 117 dogs, which allowed a panel of judges, including Reul and Vander Snickt, to carry out a survey or evaluation and select the most typical specimens as the ideal for this incipient breed. In organizing this pivotal event Reul had sent circulars to the veterinary community seeking cooperation, information and publicity in gathering together the 117 above mentioned candidates. The veterinarians, which would have been the among the more sophisticated, literate and influential elements of the rural communities, played a major role in breed creation; recall that von Stephanitz in Germany had been primarily educated in the veterinary and biological sciences, quite the normal situation in a military culture with large cavalry elements and relying on the horse as a primary mode of transportation.

Some four months later, on April 2, 1892, again under the direction of Professor Reul, and modeled after England's Collie standard, the first Belgian Shepherd standard, in the French language, was issued by the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge*. The standard first appeared in Flemish six years later, in 1898. In this era, if you did not speak French you were not important among the people that mattered. This breed standard recognized three varieties: the long coated, the short coated and the rough coated, without regard to color, exactly as the English Collies were classified. These divisions were to persist until March of 1898.

Going forward they proceeded according to selection for uniform structure and coat texture through inbreeding on a few carefully selected dogs, the traditional process of breed creation. Working character did not seem to be an important part of the process, as effective working trials were a number of years in the future. Attempts to secure *St. Huber* registration for individual dogs had been brushed aside; apparently these Belgian shepherd's dogs, emanating from among farmers and herdsman, were not nearly uniform enough in appearance or noble enough in form and bearing to merit recognition and registration. There was validity in these objections, and throughout the 1890's primary focus was on establishing the uniformity of appearance, structure and type so as to secure a place in the book of records.

But there was a terrible price paid for this policy, particularly among the Groenendaal. The breeding records of the era demonstrate the exclusion from fashionable show breeding in the performance spot light because of perceived physical faults and also because of disdain for working dogs and the working class men who were their primary advocates. A prime example was Jules du Moulin, whose white chest patch was considered a fault, apparently overriding his working success, and the dogs of men such as Edmond Moucheron. As we see in the history of the German Shepherd, the split between working and show lines came very early in the breed creation process. The Malinois working oriented breeders were able to prevail over this tendency and establish the variety as a worldwide standard for police level breeding.

Belgian Shepherd Time Line

| | |
|---------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1880, July | First Belgian international conformation show in Brussels |
| 1882, Feb 18 | <i>Societe Royale Saint-Hubert</i> founded. |
| 1882, Nov 5 | <i>Chasse et Pêche</i> magazine founded. |
| 1888, Mar 10 | Belgian Schipperke Club founded. |
| 1891, Sep 29 | <i>Club du Chien de Berger Belge</i> founded in Brussels |
| 1891, Nov 15 | Dr. Reul and associates evaluate 117 dogs in Cureghem |
| 1892, April 2 | Initial standard issued, in French. |
| 1898 | Standard translated to Flemish |
| 1898 | Dr. Reul is exclusive Belgian conformation judge for a term of 2 years. (Later extended through 1900) |
| 1898 | <i>Section of Malines</i> founded by Dr. G. Geudens and Louis Huyghebaert |
| 1898, July 18 | <i>Berger Belge Club</i> foundation in Laeken |
| 1898, Aug 14 | Letter published from V. Du Pre, general secretary of <i>St. Hubert</i> , "suggesting" a standard with specific, mandatory colors for each variety. |
| 1901 | First Belgian Shepherd, Vos, number 5847, registered with <i>St. Hubert</i> . |
| 1903 | Louis Huyghebaert resigns from <i>Club du Chien de Berger Belge</i> |
| 1905, June 18 | <i>Federation des Societes Canines de Belgique</i> founded, with <i>Club du Chien de Berger Belge</i> among founding members. |
| 1905, Nov 11 | <i>Section of Malines</i> resigns from <i>Club du Chien de Berger Belge</i> in order to maintain affiliation with <i>Societe Royale Saint-Hubert</i> . Dr. Reul, resigning from <i>Club du Chien de Berger</i> becomes Chairman of Honor of <i>Section of Malines</i> , renamed as <i>Societe du Chien de Berger Belge</i> . |
| 1906 | <i>Berger Belge Club</i> affiliates with <i>Societe Royale Saint-Hubert</i> |
| 1907, Jan | Death of Dr. Reul |
| 1908, Jan 8 | <i>Federation des Societes Canines de Belgique</i> agrees to integrate back into <i>Societe Royale Saint-Hubert</i> |
| 1908, May 27 | <i>Federation des Societes Canines de Belgique</i> dissolved |
| 1908, June 14 | <i>Kennel Club Belge</i> created by factions unwilling to reunite with <i>St. Hubert</i> . <i>Club du Chien de Berger Belge</i> remains aloof as a standalone entity. |
| 1910, Mar 11 | <i>Groenendael Club</i> founded, affiliated with <i>St. Hubert</i> . |
| 1913 | Inaugural <i>Kennel Club Belge</i> Ring Championship |
| 1914 – 1919 | War. |
| 1926 | Inaugural <i>Societe Royale Saint-Hubert</i> Ring Championship |

Much more detail and explanation can be found in the Vanbutsele book, which all serious students of the breed should be familiar with. (Vanbutsele, 1988)

But the split in the Belgian Shepherd world was more complex than work and show. There was a profound difference in the world view prevailing in Germany with the creation of the German Shepherd dog, with primary emphasis on establishing modern working roles as the basis and reason for the breed, and the English Kennel Club model of the ornamental dog, where artificial, uniform style was to be the predominant measure of quality. While Reul and his associates were emulating the British fashion of creating ornamental breeds and preoccupied with the ongoing strife over coat color and texture, those who saw the future in terms of new work rather than retirement to ornamental status also had differences among themselves, with initial top down encouragement of herding and obedience trials in an era when the man in the street was increasingly inspired by the exciting ring demonstrations of men such as Edmond Moucheron. Pretense of the preservation of herding functionality quickly withered under the reality that there was essentially nothing to herd, and obedience without a protection aspect proved uninteresting to the people at large.

The journals of the era, such as *Chasse et Pêche*, were in French and thus largely unavailable to the Malinois community, primarily Flemish speaking, in particular and working oriented people in general. Thus what has come down to us, the stuff of history, is focused on these dog show results rather than the activities of the working trainers, much less formal in this era. Since there was no registration process in place before 1901, and little pressure to register working dogs thereafter, those focused on the work of their dogs had little motivation to be involved with these formalities, and thus leave little in the journals of the era. But they were there, were the real foundation of the breed.

In the mid-1890s ongoing confusion and strife evolved among conformation participants because judges were selecting different, contradictory types. A perceived need evolved, or was encouraged from on high, to establish a consistent, clearly defined structure and appearance in the core breeding stock.

As a consequence, Dr. Reul was designated as the exclusive judge of the Berger Belge, serving in this role from 1898 through 1900. This focus of authority was similar to that of the German Shepherd evolution, where von Stephanitz played a corresponding role; a dominant personality seems to be quite common, perhaps in a way even necessary, in the foundation of a breed. But the differences are as compelling as the similarities; Reul was much more the one dimensional figure, focused on style and appearance, and his influence was less long lasting; he apparently was of diminishing influence, ongoing for several years, likely exacerbated by illness, by the time of his death, in 1907 at only 57 years.

In 1898 Dr. G. Geudens and Louis Huyghebaert founded a competing club in Malines, with a focus on the working character of the breed and Flemish interests. Although founded, at least in part, in response to dissatisfaction with the original club, this new club, *Section of Malines*, was technically a branch of the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* in Brussels. As mentioned below, another dissident club, focused on the Laeken but destined for much wider influence, was also created in 1898.

In these tumultuous years the overriding reality was to be ongoing strife concerning coat color, texture and length, with coat colors in each variety acceptable in the show ring changing at a bewildering rate; and the losers becoming resentful and sometimes going off to create their own clubs.

Early in 1898 a voice was heard from on high when a letter from V. Du Pre, general secretary of *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert*, was read in a meeting of the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* advocating specific colors for each of the three varieties. (Vanbutsele, 1988) In the words of Verbanck:

There was a selection based primarily on color, recommended by L. Vander Snick¹ and inflicted upon the breeders by Dr. Veterinary van Hertsen, the then president of the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge*, under the slogan, "Each variety has only one coat of only one color." (Verbanck, 1972)

Since the beginning of Reul's term as exclusive judge and this pronouncement concerning coat color came at virtually the same time, early 1898, there is the obvious question: What was the role of Dr. Reul in all of this? Was he the convinced advocate of rigid single color varieties, encouraging *St. Hubert* behind the scenes to provide the muscle to push the new standard through and enforce it in the show ring? Was he in his heart favorable to a more inclusive policy, one which would accommodate the reddish brown rough coats of Jan-Baptist Jansen, the reddish brown long coats to be known as the Tervueren and other variations, yielding to *St. Hubert* pressure as the price of a place in the sacred book? Or was he simply without the power at this point in time to directly control events? It is very difficult to know, and like all men his motivations and actions, private and public, were no doubt complex and evolving over time under pressure to bring his personal Belgian Shepherd saga to fruition. At any rate, in retrospect 1898 would prove to be the pivotal year in the evolution of the Belgian Shepherd.

Although the dogs had been shown according to coat texture – the long, the short and the rough – from 1892 without regard to color, these dictates from *St. Hubert* could hardly be ignored, for the simple reason that since the founding the Belgian Shepherds had been denied entry into the registration book on the grounds of lack of uniformity. Thus beginning in March of 1898 the long coated variety was shown with one class for the blacks, referred to as Groenendaels, and a class for the other colors.² Shortly thereafter it was decided by *Club du Chien de Berger Belge*, under *St. Hubert* pressure, that each coat type was to be of a single color. The revised standard dictated:

- Black for the smooth long coated.
- Reddish brown with overlay and mask of black for the short coated.
- Gray for the rough coated.

This created immediate strife and controversy. Excluded by *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* were the reddish brown long coated (later to be called Tervueren), the short coated blacks and especially the reddish brown rough coated dogs, to become the Laekens, which had been very prominent. The breeders of the now to be excluded colors, who had been written off with a flick of the pen, the dogs which they had struggled to breed and consolidate as to type and character casually discarded by the French speaking elite in their committee meetings, had great resentment.

Particularly egregious was the rejection of the reddish brown, rough coated lines of the Flemish shepherd Jan-Baptist Jansen, who spoke no French and thus was at a disadvantage in the world of canine political manipulation. Instead the rough coated dogs were henceforth to be grey only, an arbitrary decision in favor of the well-connected insider Ad Claessens, proprietor of the Brussels cafe *Le messenger de Louvain*. His dogs Bassoef and Mira were in reality the only greys prominent at the time, disparaged as weak in character. The prominent son of this pair, Boer-Sus,

¹ Whether Vander Snick acted from personal conviction or in deference to *St. Hubert* is an interesting but difficult to answer question.

² It was about a decade later, in 1909, that the terms Laeken and Malinois came into general use.

whelped in 1901, sired a few notable grey rough coats, but these lines quickly expired.

Regardless of motivation, the *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* leadership and *St. Hubert* bureaucrats were apparently convinced that the power to set the standard and determine the direction of the breed was in their grasp, that the wishes of the people in the fields and villages, actually breeding, training and promoting the dogs, did not matter. In retrospect, this was to be a turning point, for they had overplayed their hand, creating significant backlash, particularly within the Flemish community.

In response to these onerous color restrictions, a new, competing Belgian Shepherd club was founded on July 18, 1898 in Laeken. *Berger Belge Club*, as it came to be called, would in the long term predominate, and later became affiliated with *St. Hubert*, in the place of the original club, CCBB, which in time faded into obscurity. The rough-haired reddish brown Belgian Shepherds, for which the club had been formed to support, would become known as the Laeken. Joseph Demulder was founding president and would serve until 1931.

These festering dissatisfactions came to a head in 1905 when *Club du Chien de Berger Belge*, *Club du Chien Pratique* (for training working dogs) and others joined together in Brussels on June 18, 1905 to found *Federation des Societes Canines de Belgique*, directly in competition with *St. Hubert*. Even today, a few dogs in the published data base records show FSCB registration numbers from the brief tenure of this organization. An important consequence of this split was that *Chasse et Pêche* would no longer serve as the official organ of the separated clubs.

In 1906 *Berger Belge Club* became affiliated with *St. Hubert* in place of *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* but under the condition that the rough and long reddish brown coats be included, thus abating the onerous color restrictions that had been the cause of so much of this conflict.

This new national organization was fragile and short lived. In 1907 there were discussions between the two organizations, resulting in an agreement formalized on January 8, 1908 to fold *Federation des Societes Canines de Belgique* back into *St. Hubert*. There was a meeting on May 27, 1908 for the dissolution of *Federation des Societes canines de Belgique*, but important elements of the dissident organization remained unwilling to be affiliated with *St. Hubert*.

These elements held a dog show in Brussels June 13 through 15 of 1908, with 377 dogs participating. This became the occasion for the creation of *Kennel Club Belge*, on the part of those unwilling to rejoin *St. Hubert*.

Club du Chien de Berger Belge was thus left in limbo, separated from *St. Hubert*, which had a new affiliate club in *Berger Belge Club*, yet not choosing to affiliate with *Kennel Club Belge*, a decision formalized on December 27, 1909. *Club du Chien de Berger Belge*, the original founding club, was thus isolated. It became increasingly irrelevant but persisted beyond WWII before finally fading away.

A separate, standalone *Groenendael Club*, affiliated with *St. Hubert*, came into existence on March 11, 1910 under the leadership of Vital Tenret, declared "Royal" in 1935, thus becoming the *Royal Groenendael Club*.¹ The primary reason for this was to enforce breeding the black longhairs as an entirely separate gene pool, without crossbreeding, to solidify purity of type and color. This club created a tightly controlled stud book of their own to insure genetic purity, and especially the pure black coat. A consequence of this was the exclusion from breeding of working dogs such as Jules du Moulin, at this moment winning fame in Paris working trials, with white patches on his chest and light forepaws, for the sake of the Holy Grail, the

¹ The *Berger Belge Club* became "Royal" 25 years after it was founded.

pure black coat. This marked the beginning of the end of the Groenendael as a serious working dog.

Thus from this time forward there were two *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* clubs for the Belgian Shepherd, the *Royal Berger Belge Club* and the *Royal Groenendael Club*. These two clubs eventually merged in the 1990s. Thus on the eve of the war, advocates of the Belgian Shepherd were estranged, standing in four groups:

- Groenendael Club, affiliated with St. Hubert
- Berger Belge Club, affiliated with St. Hubert
- Kennel Club Belge
- Club du Chien de Berger Belge

In order to understand how fragile this incipient breed was, consider that the total LOSH registrations from 1901 through 1914 were only 306. Of these, 117 were short hair fawn, 31 rough coated and 127 long coated of various colors. This is not quite as sparse as it might seem at a glance, as registration was not mandatory in this era, and total populations were likely somewhat larger. Although many dogs were dual registered with *Kennel Club Belge* an unknown number were likely only registered with this organization. Regardless of the details, in the big picture these numbers are a drop in the bucket compared to the 100,000 German Shepherds registered in Germany in this same time period.

In order to understand the emergence of these Belgian Shepherds and Bouviers, it is essential to perceive that there were two ongoing, interrelated revolutions, the Industrial Revolution moving much of the population to the cities for commerce and industry and a social revolution bringing real political power to these resultant emerging middle and working class people. Just as the AKC was a last bastion of elite white, Anglo Saxon, protestant power in America, the advantaged Belgian classes resisted, and canine affairs was an arena where they retained substantial control. For these reasons, as we have seen, although the process began in the 1880s, it was a relatively long time, not until 1901, before the first Belgian Shepherds were registered with the *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* Studbook (LOSH).

It is important to notice that when the Germans, led by von Stephanitz, established their shepherd breed and club they founded their own stud book without seeking the acceptance or permission of another organization with differing values, thus avoiding a decade of bureaucratic bickering and staking out their own turf on the canine playing field. Perhaps well connected military men, from prominent families, were simply better equipped for breed founding in that era.

This long delay before registration seems to have been deeply resented by many of the Belgians struggling to establish this incipient breed. There was a long standing attitude among the elite that mere working dogs were not nearly noble enough to be taken notice of by a royal society, that familiarity would breed contempt. The concern was that registration of working dogs would lead to an association with working class men, something that the elite was not especially ready to accept. This ongoing strife, on the surface concerning coat texture and color but also reflecting underlying social stress – the estrangement between the Flemish and Wallonians – has greatly limited the national and international acceptance and popularity of these dogs of the Belgian shepherds and cattlemen. Popularity and prominence has primarily come through enlistment in police and military programs and on the sport fields of the Low Countries, especially Holland, expanding into France in the 1950s and 60s and America and Germany tentatively commencing in the 1980s.

Americans in general are unaware of how all pervasive the European class structure was, with enormous social privilege for the upper classes, and what a struggle it was for the working, mercantile and entrepreneurial classes to gain social and political leverage along with expanding financial prosperity. The American

Revolution eliminated inherited titles of nobility, and served as a precursor for the French revolution. The French became a bit more stringent; it quickly evolved into a matter of guillotining sufficient numbers of the nobility, including the king and queen, for the attitude of the remainder to become sufficiently egalitarian.

On the eve of the First World War the organizational structure, the estranged clubs and breed standards that would persist for most of the century, were more or less in place. Even coat color requirements were stabilizing. At this moment the Groenendael was at his zenith as a police or working dog, with the dogs of Edmond Moucheron often in the spotlight and Jules du Moulin becoming champion year after year in major venues such as Paris and Brussels. But the end was near, for although a few Groenendaels placed in Ring championships immediately after the war, under the selection policies of the new *Groenendael Club* the lights flickered out, the Groenendael disappeared from trial fields and police service across Europe and around the world. The Malinois was waiting in the wings, to emerge as the only variety with serious working service and credentials as the twentieth century unfolded after the war.

The War Years

Although the allies would prevail over Germany, the German homeland was not occupied and in the aftermath, in the 1920s, the German working breeds, the Dobermans and especially the German Shepherds, would prosper worldwide, leaving these noble Belgian dogs in obscurity. The First World War was a time of enormous deprivation and struggle, for Belgium was at the epicenter of this tragedy and suffered in every aspect of life. Formal canine activity, such as registration, went into abeyance and the keeping and feeding the dogs became the primary struggle for many. The FCI essentially went out of existence, to be reconstructed in the 1920s.

By November of 1914 the German Army had in a few late summer and autumn weeks overrun most of Belgium, establishing a line across the southern portion of the country which for the duration would be the scene of trench warfare the like of which would be cruel and brutal beyond precedent and comprehension. Historically, great wars had been settled by great battles, often bloody, cruel and brutal, but decided within a few hours, days or months. This war to end all wars, like the American Civil War, would because of modern technology such as repeating rifles, machine guns, effective artillery and aerial reconnaissance go on for four long years. Unfortunately, the epicenter was the cradle of these incipient Flemish breeds, these Malinois, Bouviers and Laekens, striking a blow which would take the rest of the century to recover from. That this is not an exaggeration we know from the words of von Stephanitz himself, a German Calvary officer as well as founder of the German Shepherd:

"In 1915 I saw no dogs in Belgium with the stock, for which the War was probably responsible." Later on the same page: "This experience I had nearly every day in West Flandres with the service dog of my regiment who accompanied me all over my area. Among the Walloons, South of the Mass, where the terrible closing stages of the War led me, the dogs had already been appropriated throughout the district for training in the Intelligence Service." (von Stephanitz, 1925)p186.

The Germans were well prepared to employ war dogs, sending some 6000 immediately into service. This was the fruition of a strong, formal ongoing working arrangement for war preparation between military authorities and the SV, the national German Shepherd club. Von Stephanitz, SV leader, was a retired German Calvary officer who would quite naturally have retained his military associations and viewed preparation for war and promotion of the German Shepherd as entirely compatible, desirable and natural ends, serving the expansionist German national cause. (Richardson, *British War Dogs, Their Training and Psychology*, 1920)p151

The Germans routinely sought out and confiscated all suitable dogs as they rolled over the Belgian countryside. In particular, the famous police training facility in Ghent, to be discussed in detail in the police dog chapter, was taken by the Germans for their own benefit, including existing dogs. Ghent would not resume police canine patrols until 1979, and went through a period of using German Shepherds and then dogs from animal shelters before the reappearance of Belgian Shepherds. It is not without irony that the typical Belgian Police dog through at least the 1980s was a German Shepherd, just as in the rest of the world. (I have a photo of an in uniform Ghent police dog handler in 1985 with his German Shepherd, and this was apparently quite normal for the times.)

In contrast to these strong links with police and military authorities in the Netherlands and Germany, what emerges is the general perception that the Belgian Shepherd working community was from the beginning an isolated world onto itself, with little contact with police or military agencies or the public at large. Generalities, extending isolated instances to general conclusion, are of course treacherous, but the contrast of Belgian isolation with the close police involvement through the KNPV in Holland and ongoing cooperation with the military in Germany is compelling. Much of this may have to do with the fact that the civil administration was conducted primarily in the French language while most of the trainers and breeders were Flemish, it can be little wonder that they did not communicate well since they literally in many circumstances did not speak the same language.

WWII was a second German atrocity in a generation, and another severe struggle for survival for the Belgian canine community. In the spring of 1941 the Nazi blitzkrieg smashed through the Ardennes and swept through the Netherlands and France as well as Belgium, bringing terrorism and oppression on an unprecedented scale in the name of Arian supremacy. Whereas WWI had in some sense been a "normal" European conflict with a newly united German nation seeking territory they perceived as a rightful share of European colonial expansion, and with some Belgians and dogs able to seek shelter in neutral Holland or French regions behind the lines, Hitler at his peak held most of Europe in his grasp, with the exception of the Iberian peninsula.

Much of the of the actual fighting had again taken place in Belgium, first with the invasion of 1940 and then especially in the fall and winter of 1944 during the Battle of the Bulge and other action as Hitler made a final, desperate attempt to avoid occupation of the homeland. Widespread allied air strikes had been concentrated here, focusing on German held military infrastructure such as air fields. But even advancing allied armies did not end the destruction, for Belgium was targeted for massive German V1 and V2 rocket attacks, beginning in October of 1944 after the Normandy Invasion.

Post War Years

The post WWII years were difficult throughout most of Europe, but especially in Belgium. Through much of the 1950s, when the rest of Europe was recovering, Belgium was still experiencing very difficult economic times. Canine registrations were in many instances much lower in the 1950s than during the late 1940s. (A table of annual Bouvier des Flandres registrations for Belgium and the Netherlands in the appendices graphically illustrates these general trends.)

| Belgian St. Hubert yearly registrations | | | | |
|------------------------------------------------|------|------|------|------|
| | 1939 | 1949 | 1959 | 1965 |
| Malinois | 460 | 800 | 420 | 415 |
| Groenendael | 175 | 374 | 138 | 238 |
| Tervuern | 30 | 84 | 20 | 79 |

Note that Kennel Club Belge and NHSB numbers, often substantial, are not included.

Although a certain amount of care is necessary in interpretation, the table quantifies twentieth century registration trends. In 1959, for instance, there were also 6 short coated non Malinois (3 blacks and 3 blacks with red-brown) and 9 Laeken registrations. Three of the Tervueren were long

coats born in Malinois litters. (More complete statistics are included in the appendices.)

The 2009 Malinois numbers need to be understood in the context of the times, that is, the emergence of the Malinois as a major factor in national and international Schutzhund and later IPO competition. In order to participate, registration with an FCI national organization is necessary, which for the first time made registration an issue for many elements of the working community. Over this time period there was extensive registration of working line Malinois, in the Netherlands as well as Belgium,

2010 Belgian (SRSH) Registrations

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| German Shepherd | 1608 |
| Berger Belge Malinois | 1108 |
| Border Collie | 943 |
| Golden Retriever | 854 |
| Berner Sennenhund | 708 |
| Labrador Retriever | 656 |
| Bulldog | 487 |
| French Bulldog | 486 |
| Rottweiler | 455 |
| Great Dane | 415 |
| American Staf Terrier | 332 |
| Bouvier des Flandres | 296 |
| Chihuahua largo | 292 |
| Berger Belge Tervueren | 291 |
| Chihuahua corto | 264 |
| Whippet | 261 |
| NS Duck Tolling Ret | 249 |
| Cav King Char Spaniel | 249 |
| Australian She Dog | 243 |
| Boxer | 237 |
| Dachshund | 230 |
| Beauceron | 223 |
| Newfoundland | 210 |
| Leonberger | 202 |
| Shar Pei | 201 |
| Berger Blanc Suisse | 195 |
| Dobermann | 186 |
| Berger de Brie | 179 |

in order to be able to compete and to sell dogs for export, with "creative" methods of producing the proper documentation, typically using registered dogs already in the records in the place of the actual parents of desirable working litters.

Although the Malinois predominates in working circles, for the Belgians at large, that is the companion owning population, the popularity of the various breeds is similar to the rest of the world, that is, volatile, driven by fashion and often preferring the exotic foreign breed. This can be seen in the table to the left, where ten of the eleven most popular breeds are foreign. These are of course the numbers that the world sees, but there are many working line Malinois registered in the independent ring organizations NVBK and perhaps *Kennel Club Belge* and some perhaps not registered at all. Although NVBK annual registrations are not currently published, in 2008 there were 454, which would mean that there are similar numbers of German and Belgian Shepherds.

Through the 1960s sport competition in Belgium, and the Netherlands and France as well, was Ring Sport or KNPV. As Schutzhund/IPO training emerged and became more international in character, many Belgian participants gravitated to the German Shepherd, primarily to become involved in international canine affairs. Over the past thirty years or slightly longer, there has been an active community of Belgian GSD trainers and breeders,

often quite successful in international competition.

Looking back over the post WWI twentieth century there was an enormous wave of German police style dogs and influence across the world. Actually, there were three waves, the German Shepherds in the 1920s, the Doberman a few years later and then the Rottweiler in the 1980s. Throughout this era, enormous sums of money were paid by enthusiastic if slightly gullible Americans, a pattern broken by WWII but continued after this war until today, when hundreds of thousands of dollars are routinely paid for major German show winners. The Belgian Shepherds, who had a spark of international notoriety after the emergence of the Flemish police dogs in Ghent in 1899 through the beginning of WWI, faded back into obscurity.

To lend a bit of perspective to the Belgian numbers, in Germany there were 40,000 German Shepherd registrations in 1948 including East Germany, probably including a buildup of unregistered dogs during the war. This became 17,000 puppy registrations in 1961 and then 23,000 in 1965. These numbers have been fairly typical over the entire twentieth century, with fluctuations due to war, difficult economic times and political circumstance.

Much of the success of the German Shepherd is due to the size, prosperity and aggressiveness of the German nation in that era. In addition, there was from the beginning one club, one standard and for almost 40 years one predominant leader, who was as relentless in publicity and promotion as in defining the type and character of his breed. In contrast, the Belgian shepherd people were a small, divided, incessantly quarrelling community much more focused on canine politics and differences in coat color structure and appropriate working venues.

Historically the Belgian Shepherd varieties could be interbred, but in a broad general view the Malinois and Laekens had common roots, but the Groenendael was largely separate from the beginning, and held rigidly separate after the formation of the Groenendael club in 1910. Early Tervuren lines died out; modern breeding being reestablished after each of the two wars. Formal restrictions imposed by the breed clubs and *St. Hubert* were gradually tightened. Today breeding the different varieties of the Belgian Shepherd together is unusual and only possible with permission from breed club authorities. Inter variety breeding today is extensive between the long hairs in France and Italy, permissible in Australia and Canada.

For our purposes, the fundamental fact is that the Malinois and Laeken are Flemish or Dutch in origin rather than French, which is also true of the Bouvier des Flandres. (There were several French Bouvier varieties in the 1920s, but in Belgium they were never numerous in the studbooks and died out, with a few stragglers being incorporated into the Flemish lines.) Although the village of Groenendael lies in Flemish Brabant, the variety became more predominant in the French regions south of Brussels. The Tervueren of today is a post WWI recreation, with no direct lines to purported foundation stock. Cross breeding among the Belgian Shepherd varieties was allowed until 1973 and even afterwards in exceptional circumstances with the permission of the breed council in Belgium.

So the crux of this is that these Belgian herders emerged in a very small region, about six million in today's population, less at the time, which suffered grievous deprivations under two German atrocities during the crucial forming years. German working dog prominence was promoted, aided and abetted by the Wehrmacht, occupying and devastating the homelands of the potential competition, often confiscating or killing the dogs.

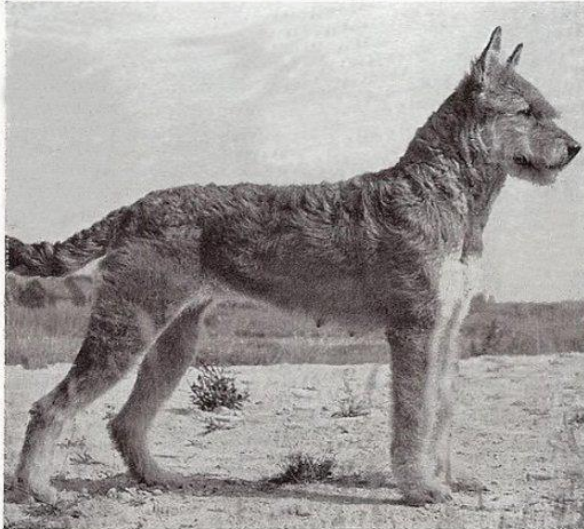
Personally I tend more and more to the opinion that it would have been much better to have created two entirely separate breeds, the Laekens and Malinois on the one hand and the long coats on the other, perhaps emerging as the Flemish Shepherd and the Wallonian Shepherd. Enormous amounts of strife and distraction could have been avoided, enabling much more effective promotion, especially

internationally. Life as the distressed child of a bad marriage, with parents alternatively negligent or seeking to mold the offspring according to separate cultures, has been difficult.

The Malinois is the premier working dog in the Netherlands, Belgium and France. Yet a relatively small number, a few hundred in the Netherlands and Belgium per year, are actually registered. There are also a number of secondary registries, the best known historically being *Kennel Club Belge*, which has a history going back to 1908 but has for all practical purposes died out today. NVBK, however, is a viable, flourishing alternative registry for the Belgian Ring Malinois. In addition there are large numbers of Dutch dogs without papers, whose working trial oriented owners are unconcerned in that they know enough about the background to satisfy themselves, their peers and potential customers for their puppies. (This is very similar to the attitude of the Border Collie people, if it works, and especially if it produces good working pups, then it is a Border Collie regardless of the Kennel Club paper empire.)

The Laeken

Historically there is a great deal of commonality in the cultural and genetic roots of the Laeken, the rough-coated variety of the Belgian Shepherd, and the short coated Malinois in that both emerged from indigenous herding stock in the vicinity of Antwerp and Boom on the broad Flemish plain north of Brussels. The Laeken, virtually unknown in America and uncommon in most of Europe, is similar in appearance to the other varieties, the distinguishing feature being the rough or wiry



*Afb. M. Ruwharige Belgische herder (Laekense) Delta v. h. Hoogedijkje.
Eig. dhr. R. C. Ph. Hablé.*

coat. Because of this coat texture and color there is a superficial resemblance to the Bouvier des Flandres, although the ears are naturally upright rather than being cropped, and the overall body type is much more that of the sheepdog rather than the bouvier. If you go back far enough there are no doubt common ancestors, for all of these lines and breeds were drawn from the indigenous working dogs of the farms and fields of the broad Flemish plain. The Laeken and Malinois origins centered in the area north of Brussels toward Antwerp, while the Bouvier des Flandres origins had focus further to the west, on the flat plain of the Rivers Lys and Schelde in the region of the cities Ghent, Roulers and Courtrai.

The name most associated with the foundation of the Laeken is that of the shepherd Jan-Baptist Jansen, whose sheep grazed in the royal park of Laeken, site of the royal palace, residence of the king and queen, from which the name of the variety is derived. Jansen was born February 26, 1859 in Moll (Mol in Flemish) and deceased in Brussels January 16, 1927. His father Adrian Jansen, also a shepherd, participated in these origins, and is mentioned as participating in the herding trial of 1892 in Cureghem with Vos. In general Jansen's best dogs were rough-haired fawns, and these became the basis of the Laeken variety as well as providing a Malinois foundation.



Jan-Baptist Jansen

In about 1888 Jansen purchased a dog from a cattle dealer out of a line of shepherd dogs used to guard the Belgian flax fields in the vicinity of the village of Boom, well north of Brussels in Flemish Brabant. This dog was Vos (fox in Dutch), rough-haired fawn or yellow in color, born in 1885, destined to become prominent in the foundations of both the Malinois and the Laeken. Vos is also referred to as Vos I to distinguish him from a later, significant ancestral dog of the same name. This dog Vos placed in the first (1892) herding trial, held in Cureghem, Belgium.

Also in the possession of Jansen was the shorthaired brown/grey/brindle female, of

undocumented origins, Lise de Laeken, sometimes known as Lieske. Bred to Vos Lieske produced Diane, the dam of Tomy, another very important founding resource and other dogs prominent in the originating lines. (The sire of Tomy was Samlo, also a dog of unknown origins.) Vos and Lieske also produced Tom de Vilvorde, one of the most famous rough-haired grey dogs. (Pedigrees in the next section.) As can be seen in the listing of the progeny, Vos produced diverse coat texture and colors, which would be characteristic of the breed and the source of never ending conflict throughout the years.

Progeny of Vos I:

Dam: Lieske (Lise de Laeken)

| | |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Spits (Jansen) | F rough hair |
| Diane (E Joubert) | F short hair |
| Tom (de Vilvorde) | M grey rough |
| Mouche (Duchenoy) | F short hair |

Dam: Moor (Jan Baptist Jansen)

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Dick(Dagnelie) | M |
| Poets(Pouts) | F |

Dam: Spits (Jan Baptist Jansen)

| | |
|---------------|---|
| Moor (Jansen) | F |
|---------------|---|

The Laeken was from the beginning the most problematic of the varieties, and has flirted with extinction, for there have been time periods when no Laekens were registered with SRSB. Today the Laeken is making slow but steady progress with Belgian breeders. A few more kennels have started up, and although there are still less than a dozen, that's more than at any time in their history in Belgium. The Laeken was for many years the most popular variety in the Netherlands and this has always been the stronghold. There is the speculation – or accusation, depending on where you stand – that in the Netherlands

some early Bouvier lines were blended in.

Since there were to be almost thirty more years before the formal establishment of the Bouvier des Flandres, which for practical purposes took place in the 1920s, I am not aware of documented common ancestry. In the early years, there were many diverse styles and types promoted as bouviers in this generic sense, just as there was diversity in physical type among the sheep herders prior to breed establishment and selection for uniform type and coat.

There is a great deal of similarity and overlap in history among the rough coated dogs, in the Netherlands as well as Belgium. In the early years the term "bouvier" simply meant cattle dog and there was enormous diversity. It could be very difficult to tell from an unidentified photo, or even standing in the presence of the dog if we could go back in time, if a particular dog should be identified as a Laeken, a rough coated Dutch shepherd or one of the various bouvier styles, such as the Bouvier des

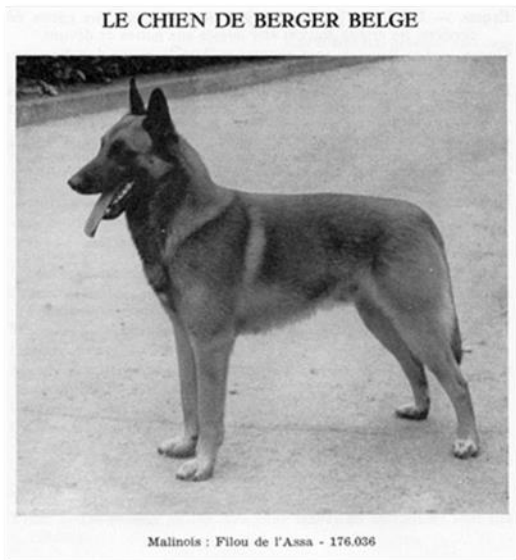
Roulers, the Bouvier des Flandres or the Bouvier des Ardennes. Or even perhaps a Picardie Shepherd. (In a similar way, groupings of early Dutch and German shepherds and Malinois would be difficult to sort out.)

Controversy and strife over coat color, perhaps really between Flemish advocates, supporters of Jansen with his reddish brown rough coats, against the French oriented establishment favoring greys for political reasons, would greatly diminish the prospects for this variety, and the Laeken has had a very minor role in Belgian Shepherd history even on to this day. In general, the Laeken tends to be a very sharp dog, not always easily adapted to casual homes.



Laeken (Photo Jean-Michel Vedrenne)

The Malinois



The Malinois, the short coated variety of the Belgian Shepherd, is similar in appearance to a less angulated, lighter boned and more square German Shepherd. Photos from the early years show much more similarity among these German, Dutch and Belgian Shepherds, particularly the Malinois variety, than exists today. This is the natural order of things, for specialist varieties of dogs did not evolve according to lines on a map but rather by the nature of their work, their weather and climate and the people and agricultural traditions among which they arose. The age old shepherds of this region of Europe tended their flocks and spoke dialects which would evolve into modern German or Dutch in an era long before the states of the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany came into existence.

This Malinois is a Flemish dog, for the primitive foundation stock was found generally in the modern Flemish province of Antwerp and extending north into the Dutch province of Noord-Brabant. Mechelen (Malines in French), the city from which the variety derives its name, lies twenty kilometers north of Brussels in the direction of Antwerp. In this region national boundaries are an artificial construct; for even today in driving the rural roads it is difficult to know which side of the twisting border you are on. Indeed, the ancient region of Brabant spans the border. So if the Malinois is an international dog, he is a Belgian-Dutch dog, not a Belgian-French dog. In the words of Louis Huyghebaert:

"Since the bicycle has made traveling easier, I have amused myself by researching the most beautiful types of shepherd dogs in the areas around Malines and the north of the province of Antwerp. During the operations of the new cadastral¹ revisions, I had to visit every farm of many parishes in the province, and each time I came to the same conclusion. Everywhere, I have found the type of shepherd dog described by Reul in the following way:

"It is in the Antwerp Campine, towards the Dutch border and beyond it, in Noord-Brabant (Netherlands), that the short-haired type has maintained its uniformity. Big was our astonishment to meet last year (7th of September 1892), while visiting an agricultural exhibition in Oosterhout, not far from the Antwerp border, a dozen of well-built shepherd dogs of the Belgian type with short hair, owned by the local farmers. These dogs have the size of a fox or a wolf, they have short hair, with a red-brown brindle coat; their ears are remarkably fine and well-pricked, open at the front.

"Other characteristics: triangular and long muzzle, pitch-black nose; the tail in the shape of a spike, well-carried and slightly bent backwards at the end. The first prize was awarded to a dog with rare intelligence and such a good nose to discover underneath a basket the handkerchief that its master had given it to smell and that it did not see hidden." (Vanbutsele, 1988)

¹ A public record, survey, or map of the value, extent, and ownership of land as a basis of taxation.



Although use of the term Malinois would not come into widespread usage for another two decades, the formalization of the variety began in the region of the Flemish city of Malines, south of Antwerp, about 1890. Here a group of dedicated breeders, trainers and enthusiasts – centering on the Huyghebaert brothers – began to gather the primitive breeding stock and promote the Malinois.

In 1898 this more or less informal movement led to the founding of a formal club in Malines, with a focus on working character and Flemish interests, under the leadership of Dr. G.

Geudens and Louis Huyghebaert. Although it would in many ways act independently in the years to come, this new club, known as the *Section of Malines*, was technically a branch of *Club du Chien de Berger Belge* in Brussels. They became active in producing literature and holding informal working gatherings in promotion of the variety.

In these years, prior to 1901, none of the Belgian Shepherds were eligible for enrolment in the records of *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert*, which makes historical

research more reliant on the various written commentaries and publications which have come down to us.



„Tjop“.
owned by Mr. F. HUYGHEBAERT, Malines. (Reproduced from *Chasse et Pêche*.)

The first Belgian Shepherd inscribed in the records was the male Vos des Polders, a short hair of unknown origin, born in 1897 and given the number LOSH 5847.¹ The records indicate that this dog was bred and owned by J van Haesendonck and was also registered with *Kennel Club Belge*. (Not to be confused with the famous Vos I or Vos de Laeken.) Vos des Polders, bred to a daughter of Vos de Laeken, produced Dewet, who is regarded a cornerstone of the Malinois,

and about ten others prominent in the breeding records:

¹ These registration numbers were assigned in the all-breed order of entry rather than sequentially according to breed.

Vos des Polders LOSH.5847, 1897 (van Haesendonck)

Dewet (Duchenoy, 1901)

Vos I (Jansen, 1885)

Mouche (Duchenoy)

Lise de Laeken (Lieske)

Both Dewet and Tjop, shown below, were relentlessly inbred to establish type and thus emerged as a large part of the genetic foundation of both the Malinois and the Laeken. Notice that both dogs feature Jansen's Vos prominently in their background.¹

Samlo (Beernaert, 1892)

Tomy (Joubert, 1895)

Vos I (Jansen, 1885)

Diane (Joubert)

Lise de Laeken (Lieske)

Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899)

Cora (Opdebeeck, 1897)

Salmo, in the above pedigree, was a shorthaired, brown/brindle Belgian Shepherd, born in 1892 of undocumented parents, among the most prominent of the early Malinois. He was particularly well known for his outstanding color and build. He was described as an excellent worker as well as a winner at the dog shows, and was the first shorthaired shepherd with a charcoal fawn coat and a black mask, which would become characteristic of the modern lines.

Louis Opdebeeck bred his bitch Cora² (LOSH 6134), a shorthaired brindle with a mask, of undocumented origins, to Tomy to produce Tjop, a shorthaired fawn without a mask. (LOSH 6132, born November 1, 1899) Opdebeeck was a very good dog trainer, and Cora later became the winner of the first informal Ring Sport trial held in 1903.

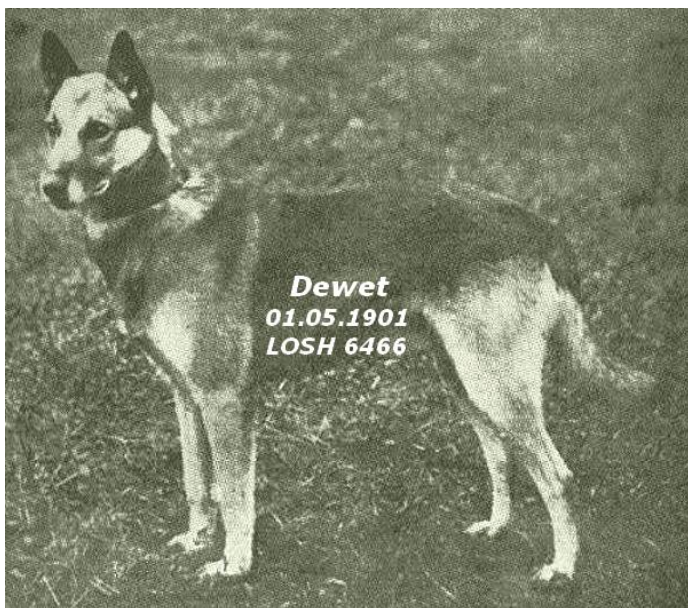
The first owner of Tjop was Frantz Huyghebaert, brother of Louis and an active breeder, a circumstance that would encourage wide use as a stud dog. Tjop would emerge as the first Belgian Malinois Champion and the most influential Malinois sire in the early twentieth century, truly a pillar of the breed.

¹ In these pedigrees, dogs with no ancestors shown are of undocumented origin, that is Samlo, Vos I, Lieske, Cora and Vos des Polders. The name in parenthesis is generally the name of the breeder or owner, and the number is the year of birth.

² Sometimes known as Cora van Optwel

Notice the intense inbreeding (in red) on Tjop and Dewet :

Unknown
 Samlo (Beernaert, 1892)
 Unknown
 Tomy (Joubert, 1895) LOB.138
 Vos (Jansen, 1885)
 Diane (Joubert)
 Lise de Laeken (Lieske)
Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899)
 Unknown
 Cora (Opdebeeck) '97
 Unknown
 Sips Ter Heide 1906
 Samlo (Beernaert, 1892)
 Tomy (Joubert, 1895) LOB.138
 Diane (Joubert)
Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899)
 Unknown
 Cora (Opdebeeck) '97
 Unknown
 Zet 1903 LOSH.8210
 Tomy (Joubert, 1895) LOB.138
Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899) NHSB.2740
 Cora (Opdebeeck) '97
 Pretty 1901 LOSH.6474
 Max (Huske) '94
 Lady '99 LOSH.6135
 Lise (Buelens)
 Margot de Jolimont 1917
 Unknown
 Vos des Polders LOSH.5847
 Unknown
Dewet (Duchenoy, 1901) LOSH.6466
 Vos (Jansen, 1885)
 Mouche (Duchenoy)
 Lise de Laeken (Lieske)
 Ducassor (Hanappe)
Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899)
 Wip du Trianon '04 LOB.117
 Mirza
 Tititte (Dupuis)
Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899)
 Beth (Dupuis) '04
 Tjip '02
 Margot I de Jolimont
 Vos des Polders
Dewet (Duchenoy, 1901)
 Mouche (Duchenoy)
 Titi des Templiers 1907
Dewet (Duchenoy, 1901)
 Martha des Templiers '06
 Diana des Templiers '05
 Dhora du Trianon LOB.1145
Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899)
 Wip du Trianon '04 LOB.117
 Mirza
 Mouche du Trianon LOB.118
Tjop (Opdebeeck, 1899)
 Beth (Dupuis) '04
 Tjip '02



Tjop and Dewet, although very different in type, thus became Malinois pillars. Dewet, a powerful and coarse dog, had light fawn coloring with an overlay of black patches.

From the beginnings in the nineteenth century the Malinois was especially prominent as a working dog. With the precipitous decline of the Groenendael in work and sport competition in the years after WWI, the Malinois became the only true working variety, the others, sadly, descending into ornamental and show dog status.

At the turn of the twenty-first century, there was an ongoing, worldwide surge in Malinois

prominence and success in police service, military service and working sport competition at the highest levels.

The Malinois predominates numerically and competitively in the Dutch Police Trials and the Belgian Ring. In the French Ring the Malinois has predominated since the 1980s, typically representing as much as ninety percent or even more of the entries, with the German Shepherds a distant second in prominence.

In Schutzhund and IPO international competition, especially in Europe, the Malinois has become more and more dominant. Even when Germany wins the FCI team completion, she is represented primarily by the Malinois rather than the German Shepherd. The Malinois is increasingly prominent in military service; today the breeding program of the American military at Lackland Air Force base is exclusively Malinois.

The Groenendael

The Groenendael¹ variety, the long haired blacks, trace back to two long-haired blacks, Picard D'Uccle and Petite, owned by Nicholas Rose, proprietor of the restaurant Chateau Groenendael about 5 km south east of Brussels.



Amitie vom Ludwigsbrunnen 1973

In contrast to the other varieties, the Groenendael has significant roots in the Walloon (French) sections of Belgium. Picard d'Uccle was born outside Nivelles and Petite came from the Forêt Soignes south of the Chateau Groenendael. Picard was given to Rose by a man named Prosper Beernaert from Uccle. Many of the Groenendael kennels through the 1950s were located in the Walloon region.

Picard and Petite were exhibited several times and at the first show for Belgian Shepherd Dogs, Petite won first prize in the longhair class. The first known litter of Picard and Petite, whelped May 1, 1893 and this litter produced, among others, Duc de Groenendael. Duc was bred to the longhaired Fawn Miss in 1896 and sired Milsart, the first Tervueren Champion of the breed. The Groenendael appeared on the sport field and in police service in the early years, but sadly today has been relegated to the show ring.



Duc de Groenendael

Nicholas Rose was actually only one of a number of founding breeders involved in the creation of the long haired black variety, whether the attachment of the name of his restaurant to the variety was due to the unique quality of his particular stock or his skill and luck at promotion is hard to know today so many years later.

In the early years, the Groenendael was very prominent as a working dog; Jules du Moulin and his trainer, Charles Tedesco, demonstrated this versatility by earning his World Championship at the defense trials at Paris in 1908, repeating this victory in 1909, 1910, and 1912. In 1913 and 1914 they won the inaugural

Belgian Ring championships under the auspices of *Kennel Club Belge*. A Groenendael club was formed in 1910 which existed until about 1990, at which time it merged with the existing Belgian Shepherd club under Societe Royale Saint-Hubert. Vital Tenret was founding president.

¹ Groenendael is green valley in Dutch.

The Tervuren

Unlike other genetically determined attributes, such as size or other structural features, and particularly working character, which are complex and difficult or impossible to predict consequences of many genetic factors, coat color, texture and length are the consequence of a small number of genes with the probable distribution of results predictable by Mendelian principles. As an example, the black coat is dominant over other colors, which means that when a homozygotic black, that is one in which both copies of the specific gene are for black, is bred to a homozygotic reddish dog, all of the progeny will be black. Statistically, some of these first generation black dogs will carry the recessive gene for the other color, and such breedings will produce 25 percent reddish brown dogs. The problem is that it is impossible to know if a black dog has the potential to produce the other color without actually doing the breedings.

For these reasons, the Groenendael, among which there are some with a recessive potential to produce a reddish pup, has played an important role in the creation of the original Tervuerens and in reestablishing the variety after the two world wars. For similar genetic reasons, the short coated Malinois have a part of the population with a long coat recessive, and thus on occasion a breeding will produce a long coat with the Malinois color patterns. (There is a similar long coat recessive in German Shepherd lines.)

There is a lot more detail and subtlety to coat genetics, and there are people continually writing articles and exploring details, devoting a big part of their lives to it. But this is a book about police dogs, and in this realm a dog is what he does on the field or street, and if he is excellent in his work there is no such thing as incorrect coat length, color or texture.

The original long coated reddish browns, to become known as Tervuerens, emerged in the village of that name, an outlying eastern suburb of Brussels, where M.F. Corbeel, owner of the Corbeel Brewery, was an early enthusiast and breeder. Corbeel bred the fawn colored Tom and Poes, regarded as the foundation couple, to produce Miss, also a fawn. Tom was owned by the brother of Corbeel, but was not bred by him. Miss, who may have been bred by Corbeel, was bred in turn to Duc de Groenendael, a black, to produce the famous fawn Milsart in 1897, which ten years later, in 1907, after the variety was finally recognized, became the first Tervuren Belgian champion.

The Tervueren virtually disappeared during both world wars and each time was reconstructed by breeding and selecting from the other varieties. For these reasons the Tervueren of today can be traced back in the records to Malinois and Groenendaels such as Vos, Liske or Picard d'Uccle but not the dogs Tom, Poes and Milsart mentioned above. In the reconstructions, the few which did survive were bred with reddish colored long hairs, the result of recessive genes for the long coat or reddish color in these lines, born in Malinois and Groenendael litters to reconstitute this variety.

On occasion a successful Tervueren appears on the sport field, a reddish long coat born in a Malinois litter. Although such dogs are Tervueren according to their coat, their working excellence derives from the long term breeding of the Malinois for working character. Tervueren show people sometimes like to take credit for such dogs, pretend that it demonstrates inherent Tervueren working character, but this is just shallow propaganda, only influencing the thinking of the most gullible.



Ivan Balabanov with Ebor of Vitosha.
The most influential Malinois breeder, trainer
and teacher in America.

America

There were a few Malinois, or unregistered dogs with a distinct Malinois appearance, imported from Flandres by American Police agencies in the first decade of the twentieth century in conjunction with the tentative beginnings of American police dog service. A hand full of American pioneers had gone to see the inaugural Ghent police program, and returned with dogs.¹ But these tentative beginnings evaporated with the WWI invasion of the German Army, resulting in the collapse of the Belgian social structure and the subsequent post war worldwide wave of German Shepherd popularity.

When the *Belgian Sheepdog Club of America*, BSCA, was incorporated in 1949 all or most of the dogs in this country were Groenendaels. In the 1950s a few Tervuren and Malinois imports made an appearance and the desire for AKC recognition emerged. Since there were very few Malinois at the time, a group of Tervuren enthusiasts successfully petitioned the AKC for recognition, promising a

functional club and conformation participation in order to be recognized as the breed Belgian Tervuren.

With the creation of the AKC Tervuren club in 1958, and an AKC Malinois club in 1992, instead of one breed with four varieties, as in Belgium and other FCI nations, we have a Belgian Sheepdog club for black long hair dogs, known as Groenendaels in Europe, and separate Tervuren and Malinois clubs for these newly coined "breeds." There is no recognition of the Laeken in the AKC scheme of things.

As a fine point of the nomenclature, the word Sheepdog appears only in the name of the American club for the variety that the rest of the world knows as the Groenendael. Elsewhere, as in the name of the breed in Belgium, it is Belgian Shepherd rather than Belgian Sheepdog.² Although at the turn of the twenty-first century the Malinois emerged as a significant factor in sport and police service, none of the varieties have been especially popular in the civilian population. In 1995 for instance there were 631 Malinois registrations, 617 for the Groenendael and 527 for the Tervueren. 2006 numbers are Malinois 716, Tervuren 434 Belgian Sheepdogs 266. As a comparison, 1996 AKC registrations for German Shepherds were 79,076 and for Rottweilers 89,867.

A little caution in interpreting these numbers is in order, since worldwide registrations are trending severely down and it is not clear to what extent this represents actual decline or whether alternatively people are simply breeding and selling dogs without the expense of registration. Malinois imported for police service

¹ Details in the police dog chapter.

² As a note on nomenclature, the American spelling for Tervueren is Tervuren.

are often not registered, and sometimes not registrable because of the lack of European papers.

From 1959 until about 1980 the Tervuren, because of the small numbers, was exempt from the requirement that imported dogs must show a three generation pedigree of the same variety in order to be AKC registered. At that time it was decided there were sufficient Tervuren registered that the dispensation from the rule was no longer appropriate, and the exemption was thus rescinded. This was a significant limitation, for a long coated, reddish dog which occurs in European Malinois or Groenendael litters can be registered as a Tervueren.

Lee Jiles (Personal communication) comments:

"It has historically not been so much inter-variety breeding, but rather the use of Tervuren, that is pups with a long and reddish coat, that appear in Groenendael and Malinois litters that has had a major impact. Today in Europe with a few minor exceptions very little inter variety breeding is done."

In Europe elbow dysplasia and shrinking size in Laekens led to a more permissive policy for breeding with the Malinois, but there were only a handful of such combinations. The FCI policy of registering the Belgian Shepherds by the variety they are, not the variety of their parents (as has been the AKC policy since 1959) has made the difference in Europe and proved beneficial to the breed.

On June 13 of 1995 the AKC rescinded the three generation same variety rule. Now any Belgian import (or any other breed) need only have a legitimate three-generation pedigree from any AKC recognized foreign kennel club, which includes all FCI nations, in order to be registered.¹

From a police dog perspective, this American history is more or less irrelevant, as with minuscule exceptions only the Malinois serve, and these are almost entirely imports or pups out of recently imported breeding stock, often sans registration.

¹ Much of the information in this section is from Lee Jiles, whose generosity is greatly appreciated.

The Bouvier des Flandres



Centaury's Gambit

The Bouvier des Flandres was a relatively massive, athletic, short coupled, rough coated dog consolidated into a formal breed for police, guard and military service in the Flemish region of Belgium in the early years of the twentieth century. The name derives from the age old agrarian foundations, for bouvier is simply French for things having to do with the cattle or the cowherd, and the founding stock was indeed the gruff canine guardians of these Flemish meadows of the coastal region adjacent to the North Sea. The essential function was that of the drover and guardian, sharing a heritage with dogs such as the Rottweiler in the various regions of Germany and other droving and cattle guarding stock which had served in obscurity for a thousand years in the pastoral regions of Europe, all dominant, short coupled dogs with a unique blending of power and agility, in contrast to the fleetness and endurance of the herding dogs of the shepherd.

The creation of the Bouvier as a breed must be understood in the context of these Flemish people from which he emerged, following some twenty to thirty years in the footsteps of another famous Flemish working dog, the Malinois variety of the Belgian Shepherd. The formal emergence of the Malinois as the prototype police dog from very roughly 1885 through 1905 was the foundation for a century of increasingly sophisticated and refined police dog service, and set the stage for the emergence of the Bouvier des Flandres.

Thus this rustic Bouvier served in obscurity for almost another generation in the remote northwestern regions of Flanders, adjacent to the sea, as the shepherd breeds commenced, prospered and gained worldwide prominence. Although growing interest and a hand full of registrations occurred before WWI this great conflict, fought with such devastation in this entire region, delayed the real emergence until the early 1920s.

Many of the key personalities behind these two Flemish breeds were the same men, and the social and historical forces driving the process were similar. Felix Verbanck, for many years president of the Belgian Bouvier des Flandres club, mentor to many, including Edmee Bowles in America, was not a Bouvier breeder at all but a famous breeder of a principal Malinois foundation line. Men such as Louis Huyghebaert, who was the author of the principle existent history of the Bouvier des Flandres, will be famous as the father of the Malinois as long as men value such dogs. Both of these breeds emerged from among the agrarian dogs of the Flemish people, were ushered into the twentieth century driven by the same societal, agricultural and economic changes and created for the same purpose as guard and police breeds, leaving an obsolete but honored herding heritage in the past.

Beginning in the middle 1800s the sheep in the Low Countries, Belgium and Holland, were disappearing from the fields as wool and mutton was coming for very low prices from places such as Argentina and Australia, where they were evolving their own herding dogs for their own conditions. The sheep dog was on the brink of obsolescence in Belgium, and the cattle dog was not far behind.

Beginning about 1890 in Germany and Belgium men were gathering these native shepherd's dogs, often literally from the fields, with the purpose of preserving this patrimony as the herding style of agriculture was driven from these regions of Europe by the Industrial Revolution the general movement of the people to the cities. By 1905 there were well-established national Belgian Shepherd breed clubs and police style training was ongoing in local clubs in several nations. The Germans were preparing for war on a scale which would define the history of the twentieth century, and as a footnote also the fortunes of these emerging working breeds.

The first modern, formal police dog program had been established in Ghent, Belgium in 1900, and men from Britain, Germany, France and even the United States were coming to learn and seek out these famous Belgian police dogs. This was in the very heart of Bouvier country, and indeed many of the photos of these Ghent police dogs are obviously of the primitive Bouvier type in spite of the fact that another twenty years, and a devastating war, would pass before Bouvier registration began in earnest.

The Germans, led by Most, were right behind, and German Shepherds and a few Airedales, Rottweilers and Dobermans were being established in police units across Germany and then into neighboring nations such as Austria. The police dog had arrived, and was enormously popular both in service and as a civilian companion dog.

In the 1890's an attempt to establish Belgian sheep herding trials in imitation of the British had been promoted, but quickly faded because of a lack of interest in an obsolete function; these men were looking to the future rather than grasping at the past.

The first decade of the twentieth century saw the establishment of national police dog working trial systems across continental Europe, including the Ring program in Belgium, the Dutch Police (KNPV) trials and the Schutzhund or protection dog program in Germany. These became immensely popular and influential, and each has prospered until this day.

As the Belgian Shepherd, especially the Malinois, was evolving into a breed in the modern sense from the herding and farming dogs in the Flemish region north of Brussels, further to the East, in the region of Ghent and Roulers, another agrarian dog was serving in obscurity. In the lush meadows from the rivers Lys and Schelde to the coast of the North Sea there was a larger, more rugged, more rough coated native working dog adapted to the cattle predominating in the region. This rustic Bouvier also had his advocates, men unwilling to let him fade into history with a passing way of life, men who would preserve these dogs for a few brief years, extend the twilight before another generation would dissipate this heritage in the false glory of the show ring and allow it finally to pass, to their everlasting shame.

Although there were in Belgium several competing registries and several styles of bouvier were being promoted, amid a great deal of impassioned rhetoric in the various popular magazines, the Bouvier as the breed which came down to modern times was first registered in Belgium with *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert* as the Bouviers des Roulers, after one of the principle cities of the region. To give a sense of the area involved, other cities in the midst of this Bouvier emergence include Courtrai and Ypres. Later the breed was registered by SRSB as Bouvier Belge des Flandres, and then about 1930 as simply the Bouvier des Flandres. The other varieties, a small number of which were registered in both Belgium and France,

faded away, a few individuals being incorporated into the Belgian Bouvier des Flandres breeding records.

Although there was written mention of primitive bouviers in the various books and magazines commencing about 1890, it was the twentieth century before Bouviers were exhibited in dog shows in meaningful numbers, in the Netherlands as well as Belgium, and 1914 before a written standard and registry was established in Belgium. A few dogs, less than twenty, were registered before the war, and then nothing until the Germans had been driven back. In 1922 the Belgian national club was established and very soon thereafter the Dutch club came into existence. Although the Dutch began with Belgian breeding stock and had contact with the Belgians through the 1920s, thereafter the center of Bouvier activity moved from the Flemish speaking land of creation in Flandres to the French speaking areas of Belgium, resulting in a gradual loss of contact between Belgian and Dutch enthusiasts which continued during the second world war and through the 1950s.

To comprehend the Bouvier soul, we must look into the minds and hearts of these men who, in the time period roughly from 1910 through 1915, the eve of the war, were gathering together to preserve their native cattle dogs. Just as in the creation of every breed, a concept of type, physical form, and character emerged and foundation stock was sought out according to these principles and ideals.

How were these foundation dogs to be selected? For their new breed to prosper, it needed to attract advocates, and the police dog was the dog in demand for service and which roused the passion of the common man, the dog which had captured imaginations across continental Europe. The prototype was to be the larger, more aggressive, more gruff dogs guarding the fields, and this is from whence the founding lines emerged.

The draft dog function was ubiquitous in this era, and the fate of these dogs was the subject of the book and subsequent movie *A Dog of Flandres* which had to do with the Flemish or Belgian mastiff or draft dogs, entirely different dogs from the Bouvier in spite of what is portrayed in the movies. Any available dog was under duress no doubt pressed into service to turn a churn or pull a cart, but the preference was quite naturally the native draft dogs, destined to fade into oblivion. These larger mastiff and draft dog types are mentioned in the foundation selections but were incorporated primarily to produce a larger and more muscular breed rather than one with an ongoing draft or carting functionality.

Farms worldwide have their yard dogs, thirty or forty pounds, of no particular breed similar to the old fashioned farm collie dog in Britain. Some would claim that these yard dogs are progenitors of the Bouvier too, but this is absurd, makes no sense at all. These men creating the Bouvier were looking for the foundations of a police dog breed, and would have paid no notice to these nondescript yard dogs, but passed them by without a glance on the way to the fields and pastures in search of the guardian prototypes.

The creation of the Bouvier as a police and guard dog is without doubt; it is what was novel and popular, it is what was in demand for service, it is what they said they were about, it is indeed what they declared in their standard for the world to see. Modern dilettantes seeking to portray herding, draft work or other functions as the purpose of the breed, or as sufficient basis for breeding selection, are profoundly ignorant or purposefully disingenuous; there is no other way to say it. This Bouvier des Flandres was not a random gathering of the local farm dogs, but a rigorous selection from among the elite canine guardians of the region, as bred and passed down from generation to generation.

The emerging new world was that of the police dog, the training and trialing organizations were in place and prospering mightily; and these Bouvier advocates knew they were late to the party and needed to catch up, to put dogs on the police

and ring trial fields. And by the middle 1920s men such as Edmond Moreaux were winning trial field fame with dogs such as the immortal Francoeur de Liege. In this era, the Bouvier soon had presence in the Belgian Ring championships and on the KNPV trial fields, was earning his place in this new canine police dog world.

Bouvier popularity grew steadily in Belgium, approaching a thousand in yearly registrations in the 1930s with many active and vigorous breeding programs. (A mere drop in the bucket of German Shepherd registrations.) Bouviers appear regularly in the records of the Belgian Ring working championships in this era. Although the numbers were somewhat less in the Netherlands, growth was steady there also.

France is often mentioned as a nation of Bouvier origins. But it is well documented fact that the vast majority of dogs known as Bouviers today spring from the breeding of the Dutch speaking herdsmen of Flandres, which spread first to French speaking Belgium and the Netherlands. French records are very sparse, but where they can be traced back French roots of the Bouviers of today invariably go back to these founding Flemish dogs, first registered as the Bouviers des Roulers. The old, informal French "bouvier" lines – with the small "b" – simply died out, vanished into the morass of time.

The Second World War devastated the Bouvier, not so much by the direct loss of dogs – which was of course tragic – as by the damage done to the basic social fabric of Belgium by the second German atrocity in a generation. For five long years in the early 1950s fewer than 100 Bouviers were registered in Belgium with similar dismal numbers in the Netherlands and France. The breed did indeed come very near to flickering out. Justin Chastel and Felix Verbanck were the pillars in this era, and without their iron willed perseverance the Bouvier indeed might well not exist today.

Although a few odd dogs came to the Americas in the twenties and thirties, the arrival of Edmee Bowles from Belgium early in the war, fleeing the advancing German greed and plundering, began her American saga and the growth of the breed in this country. Beginning in the middle fifties and extending into the early eighties her du Clos des Cerberes line was not only the American fountainhead, it was recognized as among the best in the world by men such as Justin Chastel, modern founder of the breed in Belgium.

The work of the Bouvier des Flandres, the reason for which he was created, is police style search and protection work. In his creation, the founders melded the native cattle dogs with the larger native regional guard dogs, a natural response to the population shift to cities and industrial work that the agricultural revolution of the last century was causing all over Europe, and in which Belgium was among the earliest and most strongly affected. The words of the founders and guardians testify to this fact. As Felix Verbanck, primary leader of the Belgian club through the early 1960s, said:

"The breeders do not forget that the Bouvier is first of all a working dog, and although they try to standardize its type, they do not want it to lose the early qualities which first called attention to its desirability. For that reason, in Belgium a Bouvier cannot win the title of Champion unless he has also won a prize in a working competition as a police dog, as a defense dog or as an army dog."

Herding is not mentioned for the simple reason that there was no longer any herding to do in Belgium, that along with draft work, it was rapidly becoming obsolete when the Bouvier was being established in the formal sense.

When our first book was being written in the middle 1980s the Bouvier des Flandres, as it existed in America, was relatively close to the old style European roots and on the whole still a credible working breed. My perception is no doubt colored by our own dogs, primarily coming from the du Clos des Cerberes line of Edmee Bowles

and a little later from Dutch working lines – in retrospect sound choices. But in the intervening years the vast majority of Bouviers being produced in America have become diluted show dogs with little remaining of the original working character, or robust physique for that matter. This has been discussed extensively elsewhere; for the purposes of this commentary I refer to Bouviers des Flandres still according to the original working character, a very small and rapidly diminishing population. Those with so-called Bouviers out of contemporary popular lines will likely need to think in terms of a new dog, very difficult to find, if thoughts of serious competition are aroused.

As late as the 1980s there were significant numbers of Bouviers on Dutch KNPV fields and serving as police dogs, but today only one or two earn a KNPV certificate yearly, and they have virtually disappeared from police service. As recently as 1978 10 out of 30 police dogs in the central district of Brussels, Belgium were Bouviers, but today they are but a sad memory.

On the whole the Bouvier tends to be slow maturing, strong willed sometimes to the point of stubbornness and tends to defensiveness in the protection work. We have experienced very little handler aggression in our own Bouviers, and this seems to be a general tendency. (We of course have always been close to our dogs, many born on our kitchen floor or in our whelping room.) As with most of these breeds, the potential for dog aggression, especially among the males, is an ever-present concern, good management and training are necessary to keep this in check.

There has been a certain amount of variation in sociability among my better dogs, and this tends to correlate to some extent with early socialization. One dog which for various reasons had little interaction with strangers before eighteen months old was decidedly unfriendly when approached closely. In preparation for the introduction to the judge part of the trial extensive acclimation was required, much of it involving walking up to a stranger, shaking hands and then having the stranger throw a Kong. My other dogs with extensive early public exposure have tended from slight enthusiasm to disinterested neutrality to the passive stranger, entirely satisfactory for me. In general the stronger working line Bouviers should be extensively socialized as young pups and then brought into regular contact with strangers in varying situations. The concept of limiting socialization for fear of the dog becoming too friendly and thus not sufficiently aggressive is in my experience and opinion not supported by actual experience. All Bouviers should be socialized as pups and young dogs and be exposed to strangers and groups of strangers as they mature; lack of sufficient aggression will generally be the result of insufficient innate potential, possible in all breeds and all lines, the luck of the draw in puppy acquisition.

It is well known that individual Bouviers in European working lines have been very sharp and sometimes less than social; how much of this relates to the preference of the handler is a valid question. In that environment the control for a good score in the trial was sufficient; some of these dogs were primarily kennel dogs with outside contact limited to training and trial days. Those with such dogs take on a great deal of responsibility, but on the other hand every serious working breed needs a reservoir of hard, sharp and aggressive dogs as a breeding resource.

There are aspects of the Bouvier character that can render dealing with him difficult. He can be quite stubborn; there is simply no other way to say it. The correct way to manage this is not to attempt to break him of the characteristic but to use it to your own ends. Once you start something and fail, the Bouvier has the upper hand; the next time around the situation is likely to be more difficult. You must proceed with deliberate caution, one step at a time. Never give a command unless you are prepared to do whatever is necessary to insure compliance if you are sure he understands what is required.

Our earlier dogs had very little interest in thrown objects such as balls or Kongs; when I threw a Frisbee for our first Bouvier, a good dog who went on to Schutzhund III, he brought it back a couple of times without enthusiasm, and eventually just carried it out into the bushes and buried it. In the early 1990s we purchased Iron Xandra van Caya's Home in the Netherlands specifically because he was a very strong dog with extraordinary drive to retrieve the Frisbee or Kong, and this carried down well into his progeny. This can greatly enhance trial preparation, be an aid in creating the animated obedience; but the question remains whether this really relates to the ultimate potential in actual police style service or is a driving factor in the ongoing separation between sport field success and suitability to real world police service.

There is a strong emotional tendency to believe that one's dog is a one-man dog loving you above all others, a belief that your absence would be a great blow, but this often has more to do with the emotional needs of the man than the dog. The reality is that most good dogs can adapt to a new handler or home if sufficient time and patience are provided, and if the new trainer is supportive. While generalities are always treacherous, my observation is that the Bouviers need of a real bond with the handler, tend to strong ties and that while transition is always possible it tends to take a little longer and require a little more effort from the new handler. Thus as a generalization these dogs take significantly longer than some other breeds to acclimate to a new owner or a new training situation; the training process tends to be longer and to require a patient yet resolute and evenhanded partner.

These are not only my opinions, for in the 1980s we were told by administrators of Dutch Police programs and Dutch KNPV club instructors that roughly about twice the training time goes into a Bouvier as a Malinois, an especially quick dog to train. When asked why, if this is the case, they included a good number of Bouviers in their program, his reply translated as roughly "we have a need for some especially serious dogs in our work, and like the Bouvier for these applications." In general, the Dutch police Bouviers have had over the years the reputation of being especially strong and aggressive, and apparently there is even to this day a need and desire for such dogs. Unfortunately, over the quarter century since these words were written, such dogs have diminished to a few remnants, a tragedy for all of us for whom the Bouvier of old has a special place in our hearts.

The origins of the Bouvier des Flandres as a cattle guardian and herder, as opposed to the Belgian and German shepherd's dogs for instance, have played a role in the creation of the modern breed. The shepherd's dogs were continually in motion, putting great emphasis on fleetness, endurance and efficiency but not generally in direct physical jeopardy, not likely to have a life or working career ended by a kick from a truculent sheep. While the demands for speed and fleetness were perhaps not as extreme for the Bouvier he did need to be quick, cautious and agile in order to avoid injury from a kick. For these reasons, relative to the shepherd's dog, the Bouvier is slightly shorter in back, more square and less angulated. He is thus agile and capable of great acceleration as compared with the German Shepherd grace and efficiency. The rough all weather coat was a requirement of day and night service in the damp cool or cold conditions in the lands of origin, directly adjacent to the North Sea.

There are also consequences of the cattle-herding heritage for the sport dog. The Bouvier learned, no doubt by harsh lesson, to be wary, to respond to a threat with a quick jab of the foot or blow by the shoulder and then duck quickly out of range and decide on a next move. The bite might tend to be inhibited, reserved for serious provocation. This is well and good but a factor to deal with in training for the Schutzhund trial where the correct response to a threat is to take the offered sleeve and then hang on. Thus one must sometimes to some extent overcome by training the natural reactions in order to succeed in the sport.

Unfortunately, the Bouvier des Flandres is rapidly disappearing as a serious working dog in the homelands and the rest of the world. From personal experience I know that the three primary Bouvier des Flandres clubs in Europe – the Belgian, Dutch and French – were under the control of conformation breeders and were never really serious about the working heritage. The Dutch club is in a way the most honest and straightforward; although they pay a little bit of lip service, the typical breeder is oblivious to character or work, and would rather sweep it all under the carpet as an impediment to pet puppy sales. In the middle 1980s and a little later the Bouvier was the fashionable dog in the Netherlands, for several years registering 10,000 pups, often more than 15 percent of the total for all breeds. But this was entirely a show dog and pet bubble, although there was a moderate amount of KNPV activity at the beginning of this wave of show dog popularity, and some growing IPO or Schutzhund activity, by the turn of the twenty-first century this had fallen off to a very low level, a trend which continues unabated today. The Belgians and the French would spout noble words, but it was nothing more than lip service.

End Game

Over the past several decades breeds other than the German Shepherd and the Malinois have been diminishing in terms of service, sport participation and the overall vigor of working lines and culture, to the point of irrelevance in the real world. To be viable, a working breed must have critical mass; that is ongoing lines or breeding programs consistently placing young dogs in service and achieving working titles rather than sporadic instances of marginal dogs. Just as nature will inexorably tend to one species in a specific ecological niche, others gradually diminishing in competition for sustenance and space, modern police patrol dogs gravitate to successful lines and breeds. (Advocates of the German Shepherd would do well to take note of this while time remains.)

Today the US military accepts only German Shepherds, Malinois and a few Dutch Shepherds; typical of the policy of other modern nations worldwide as well. American police dogs are primarily imports, predominantly Malinois, or first or second generation pups out of imports. Over the years isolated individuals of other breeds have been in police service, but this is in decline and most of these are in programs out of the mainstream; all sorts of dogs become "police dogs" in obscure situations. Individual departments are free to patronize local breeders or accept donations, but there is no ongoing continuity, nothing beyond isolated instances. Sometimes dogs are highlighted for promotional purpose with little more than a photo of the dog with a man in uniform, the dog not purchased or supported with police funds or routinely engaging in patrol.

The decline of second tier breeds, such as the Bouviers and Dobermans, was the consequence of diverse social and historical factors. The popularity of the German and Belgian Shepherds was self-reinforcing, driven by the natural tendency to gravitate to the successful breeds. The enforcement of European bans on ear cropping and tail docking put nails in the coffin, but the coffin had been under construction for decades; the decline had been well under way when these bans took full effect in the middle 1990s.

Reliance on character tests for show dogs, designed and implemented by conformation breeders, incessantly watered down to accommodate the declining character of the breeding stock of the 'elite' breeders, played a substantial role in the decline of the Bouvier des Flandres in the latter years of the twentieth century. In France and Belgium, where after the Second World War seriously working titled breeding stock became ever diminishing exceptions, the credentials of the Bouvier as a working dog deteriorated to the point where the breed could no longer be taken seriously. The French and Belgian temperament tests – generally conducted by show breeders with no real working commitment – exacerbated the situation. Ultimately

the shame must primarily descend on the show breeders and national club office holders, but there is more than enough to go around.

In the second half of the twentieth century the only significant reservoir of serious working Bouviers were the KNPV lines in the Netherlands; increasingly isolated in terms of appearance, character and blood lines, on the verge of being a separate breed. It is true that a few Belgians and Frenchmen, such as Edmond Moreaux and Gerard Gelineau, with lines from Moreaux, swam against the tide and maintained working stock in their own kennels. Gelineau took his Bouviers to the French Ring Cup Final several times in the early 1970s. For the true Bouvier advocates these men will forever be heroes, for their struggle was against the sloth and greed of the mainstream Bouvier community as well as for excellence in their dogs. These men were exceptions; largely estranged from the overall breeding communities, to the everlasting shame of the pretenders in Belgium and France.

Without exception police style working dog lines are maintained only where a significant portion of the breeding stock obtains a working title as a breeding prerequisite. It might have been possible as late as the early 1980s to recover and preserve working Bouvier lines, but the people to do the job were just not there. But it would have meant earning recognized titles in established systems rather than the invention of special tests pretending to "take account of the special Bouvier character," which always turn out to be a thinly disguised farce, diluted to accommodate the weaknesses of the stock on hand. In particular, credibility would preclude the appointment of special judges specific to the testing programs, usually show breeders essentially ignorant of and uninterested in actual working character.

There is a tendency to focus on the degeneration of the Bouvier in terms of the lack of drive, aggression and confidence. These are of course fundamental components of a useful police style working dog, but only part of the picture. The dog who is strong, brave and confident, but has not demonstrated the willingness to be a cooperative, obedient partner is just as much a detriment to the heritage, and the gene pool, as the dog that is willing but not sufficient to perform under the stress of a serious confrontation. The real problem with the Dutch show lines in particular is the tendency for stubbornness, insolence and a lack of trainability as much as the lack of true fighting spirit.

Much more can be said, and has been in our previous book, to which you are referred. (Engel, 1991)

Retrospect and Prognosis

The Ghent police program commencing in 1899 provided a brief spark of prominence worldwide. Pre WWI American police imports were primarily Belgian, but we are talking about a mere hand full of dogs in programs that were marginal and – with the exception of the city of New York – short lived. WWI cast the Belgian canine world, especially their shepherds and bouviers, into a backwater that would persist for most of the twentieth century. In the post WWI era international prominence and profit were in the show and companion market, which the Germans predominated, even in Belgium itself, and because the German Shepherd especially was under strong, unified leadership with a commitment to international promotion and dominance. For most of a century the Germans were able to play both sides of the game, predominance in police and military service as well as enormous civilian popularity.

But over the past three decades the Malinois has been the dog on the move. In the 1980s most Americans, and Europeans outside of France and the Low Countries, were largely unaware of the existence of such dogs. A few of the long coats, the Groenendaels and Tervuren, had achieved minor presence internationally as

companion and show dogs, but the Malinois, unspectacular in appearance in a world of larger, more muscular, more heavily coated German Shepherds, was almost unknown to the public at large. This was about to change, for the Malinois was on the verge of coming into widespread American police and military service. Dog brokers and police departments were becoming aware that it was possible to purchase a KNPV titled dog, virtually street ready, for very reasonable prices. The police Malinois beginning to come from the Netherlands and the emerging enthusiasm for the French Ring Sport, predominantly Malinois, provided a two pronged popularity boost in the 1980s. In this era a few Germans, such as Peter Engel (no relation) through his von Lowenfels kennel, began to produce dogs competitive in Schutzhund and IPO, both in Europe and in America. The raw numbers are not impressive anywhere, one primary reason being that there has never been any real popularity among pet and companion owners, which are by far the largest market segment for breeds such as the German Shepherd or Doberman. But on the trial fields in every protection sport venue worldwide the Malinois is a dog to be reckoned with when the podium places are at stake.

Compared to the German Shepherd the Malinois tends to be smaller, more agile, more intense, volatile, very quick and often quite sharp. The better specimens in the hands of an experienced Malinois handler are second to none in any sport or service venue. But there is another edge to this sword, the over matched handler or the dog further down the quality scale can become a liability in terms of handler aggression and control, with the potential for inappropriate damage to civilians in police engagements. Potential for good is potential for evil, and an over the edge dog or inadequate trainer or handler can create serious problems of performance and especially liability. There can be little doubt that a few dogs which would have been disposed of in Europe wound up being sold to American police departments, at one time we really were gullible enough to buy almost anything. The consequence can be serious money for lawyers and legal judgments – capable of generating newspaper stories striking fear in the hearts of police administrators and politicians who eventually have to deal with the public reaction.

Earlier there were sporadic reports, often from wishful thinking German Shepherd enthusiasts but also from more neutral sources, of police departments shying away from the Malinois for these reasons; and there was no doubt some backlash. More recently these have faded as selection, of dogs and perhaps also handlers, has improved and training has adapted to the new reality. The real value added by the police dog today is in the olfactory capability, the man search and substance detection functions, and legal consequences and public relations considerations exert strong pressure for reliable control. The reality is that the breed coming up short in terms of control has a limited future no matter how remarkable other performance aspects may be, and Malinois breeders, importers and police trainers and handlers have generally adapted.

My expectation is that the Malinois is going to be a strong and increasing factor in police and especially military service worldwide, and that the German Shepherd community is going to have to become much more work oriented and competitive in order to remain a factor. In the end this is a good thing for both breeds, a monopoly tends to result in stagnation and a lack of improvement in every walk of life.

Although the Eastern European and other non-German Shepherd lines have produced an ever increasing portion of the better working Shepherds over the last thirty to forty years, there is a general continuity in that most registrations are under FCI auspices and Shepherd breeders throughout the world maintain some sort of relationship with the mother land. Historically Schutzhund has provided a common competitive venue; if your German Shepherds worked well then people could take them to most any other nation and expect comparable success on the IPO fields.

The Malinois, not so much. Indeed, the Belgian motherland was characterized by incessant strife and lack of unity from the beginning, with none of the ongoing national promotion which so effectively projected the German Shepherd, and later the Doberman and Rottweiler, into international prominence. The popularity of the Malinois worldwide has not emerged so much from Belgium as from the Dutch, French and even Germans. And these dogs are not interchangeable in a sport field sense, that is, if you buy a KNPV titled dog or a Belgian Ring dog and take it to France there is no place to trial or showcase the dog. There are no international championships, other than IPO, with the opportunity for creating a coherent international community and culture, because there is no common working venue. As a result, the Malinois is much less of a worldwide community, and there is much more variation in physical type and character attributes. Although it is of course an over simplification, there are basically three predominant populations of serious European working Malinois:

- The Belgian Ring dogs under the NVBK in Belgium.
- The Dutch police or KNPV dogs in the Netherlands.
- The French Ring dogs in that nation.

The Belgian Ring dogs tend to be more massive and robust, due to the nature of Belgian Ring, that is, the heavy suits, the small ring area, the emphasis on the full bite and the training of the helpers, who typically are able to work to an older age. The French dogs tend to be more refined and elegant, quick rather than powerful, high in prey drive. This is of course because the French suits are very light and the decoys young men who pride themselves on speed, quickness and cleverness in deceiving the dog. The KNPV dogs have enormous variation in physical appearance and structure, making it difficult to generalize. Many of these dogs have other breeds and mixes in their immediate background such as GSD, Great Dane, or something in the neighborhood that looked interesting. Overall the tendency is larger rather than smaller, robust rather than elegant, motivated by fighting drive rather than simple prey drive.

The Belgians have always been animal trainers, and at the forefront of the protective heritage working dog movement. They led the way in the police dog application and the Belgian Shepherds, particularly the Malinois, were on the trial fields and police forces as soon or sooner than the German Shepherds. The Flemish created the Malinois which became the basis of the French working dog world and the KNPV and the Bouvier des Flandres with a population base of approximately six million compared to a German population over eighty million, and twice in the twentieth century were subjected to a German occupation which severely damaged all aspects of Belgian society, the fabric of the canine community especially as the German authorities sought out good dogs for their own use.

In a certain way the Belgians have been lost in the shuffle. The Malinois has gone on to stardom in the French Ring and on Dutch KNPV fields, but the Belgian Ring trial has fractured into three organizations, none with any serious international visibility. The NVBK people are belatedly beginning to seek an international presence, particularly in America, but the Belgians have always been a day late and a dollar short in the publicity and promotional sense, even as the Malinois almost without notice emerges as the premier working dog worldwide.

In an era when eager Americans stood by to overwhelm the winners with proffered cash at the annual GSD conformation shows, ignoring the working lines, these Belgians breeds remained in obscurity. Even in Belgium, France and Holland they have always been much less visible and popular among the public at large than the German breeds; Americans are not alone in their preference for the exotic imports. When in attendance at major Dutch conformation shows in the 1980s I can

recall seeing Belgian shepherd entries of a mere hand full of dogs, as compared to more than a hundred Bouviers. The breed clubs were there of course, you could look up names and address on the internet, but they just did not seem to matter very much.

The Malinois base was always a full order of magnitude smaller numerically because Belgium and Holland are so much smaller than Germany, and because the brunt of the two German atrocities fell on these small, virtually helpless nations. Until almost the end, the Second World War was not fought in Germany but rather in the invaded nations, and Hitler's policy was to keep the German standard of living as high as possible in order to maintain support during what he believed was going to be a quick and easy victory. It is true that events such as the air raids on Dresden were great hardships, and from 1943 onward the Russian front for the German infantryman emerged as a living hell, but the civilian population was substantially protected until relatively near the end. In occupied Belgium and Holland the Germans were actively looking for Jews and taking whatever they wanted for their war efforts, including dogs in large numbers. In Belgium particularly the post war recovery was slow and difficult, with canine activity, as reflected in registrations and trial records, greatly suppressed through the 1950s.

8

The Netherlands



Bouvier des Flandres Duko v Mereveld,
born 1969. KNPV helper Rein Beumkes

During the seventeenth century the Netherlands emerged as a major seafaring and economic power, establishing a colonial empire in southern Africa, the Far East and the Americas. Although there has been the inevitable ebb and flow of fortune, on the whole the Dutch have avoided much of Europe's religious strife and are well characterized as pragmatic, tolerant, secular and prosperous, attributes which have served them well. Subsequent to their seventeenth century fling at empire building, the Dutch, being a relatively small Nation compared to neighboring Germany, Spain and France, have with some success tended to a policy peace and neutrality.

European religious strife drove many peoples to seek shelter in the Netherlands, including Jews and Huguenots, French Protestants fleeing Catholic oppression. The accepting Dutch social structure provided a haven where on the whole they prospered, integrated and

contributed. Holland today can be characterized as sophisticated, prosperous, cosmopolitan and tolerant, as exemplified in their attitude toward soft drugs and well controlled commercialized sex.¹ As an American, I must admit that I am inclined to believe that we would be a little bit better off if we were a little bit more like the Dutch.

Even today when you drive the back roads of the broad central Brabant plain common to the south of the Netherlands and Flemish Belgium it can be difficult to know which nation you are in, and the history of these people and their working dogs is in a similar way intertwined. The Belgian herders, especially the Malinois, originated in the Flemish region adjacent to Holland; the Bouvier a little further west, toward the region adjacent to the North Sea. The people, language, culture and way of farming and life was much the same across this lush plain; it is an accident of history that these people, of such a common culture, are not united in a single

¹ Technically the nation is the Netherlands, of which North and South Holland are two principal provinces; but along with much of the world I cannot seem to break the habit of using the two expressions more or less interchangeably.

nation. The rough coated version of the Belgian Shepherd, the Laeken, was always more popular in Holland than in his nominal homeland.

After the First World war, the Bouvier des Flandres also gained popularity in the Netherlands, and for a five or ten year period commencing in the middle 1980's the Bouvier was by far the most popular dog in Holland, peaking out at over 10,000 annual puppy registrations or fifteen percent of the Dutch total. In the big picture this grass fire of popularity turned out to be an enormously mixed blessing for the Bouvier as a working dog, for the decline on KNPV trial fields took place in the same time period, perhaps providing an object lesson for others to contemplate.

The administration of general canine affairs in the Netherlands is in the hands of the *Raad van Beheer*, which translates very roughly as board or council of management or directors. The *Raad van Beheer* is FCI affiliated and is directly comparable in scope and function to the AKC in the United States or the Kennel Club in Great Britain. This organization maintains canine registrations through its stud book, the *Nederlands Hondenstamboek*, abbreviated NHSB. Police dog affairs are administrated through the Royal Dutch Police organization, KNPV. Since the KNPV does not require registration for participation, a dog being what he does on the trial field rather than what is scribbled in registry books, there is ongoing, underlying tension between the two organizations.

The Netherlands remained neutral in WWI, thus avoiding much of the tragic devastation of their Belgian neighbors to the south. The German blockade and the suspension of international economic intercourse led to widespread hardship for the

Dutch 2011 Registrations

| | |
|----------------------------|------|
| Labrador Retriever | 3529 |
| German Shepherd | 2131 |
| Golden Retriever | 1806 |
| Berner Sennenhond | 1518 |
| Chihuahua | 1365 |
| Staffordshire Bull Terrier | 1325 |
| Franse Bulldog | 988 |
| Border Collie | 898 |
| Boxer | 877 |
| Dachshund | 805 |

Selective entries below here

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Belgische Herder, Mechelse | 463 |
| Rottweiler | 454 |
| Bouvier des Flandres | 420 |
| Belgische Herder, Tervuerense | 271 |
| Belgische Herder, Groenendaeler | 181 |
| Airedale Terrier | 156 |
| Hovawart | 155 |
| Shiba | 154 |
| Dobermann | 152 |
| Briard | 144 |
| Hollandse Herder, korthaar | 144 |
| Belgische Herder, Laekense | 98 |
| Beauceron | 85 |
| Hollandse Herder, langhaar | 85 |
| Riesenschnauzer | 71 |

population, particularly since much of the food supply was normally imported. The Dutch were overrun by the brutal Nazi juggernaut in WWII and suffered grievously.

As in other nations, the indigenous police style working breeds are not especially popular in the population as a whole. This is indicated in the brief table to the left, where the first set of entries, through the Dachshund, are rank ordered in popularity, while the following entries are selected to highlight the working breeds of interest. (Much more complete tabular data is included in the appendices.)

It must be understood that the vast majority of the Belgian and Dutch (Hollandse) herders are unregistered KNPV breeding lines. Dogs competing in IPO must be registered with an FCI organization, so most of the working breeds primarily oriented to IPO, such as the German Shepherd or Rottweiler would be included in these registration numbers.

The Dutch Shepherd

Just as there was national pride in the Shepherds of Germany and Belgium, the Dutch have had a natural desire to create their own Shepherd breed. In the early days there was a lot of variation in appearance of the dogs on the farms, and if one could have gathered together samples from Germany, Belgium, Holland and perhaps regions of France it would have been difficult for an observer to label them according to country of origin; distinct, uniform appearance, for better or worse, was to come with the establishment of the conformation show as the driving force of breed creation and differentiation. But the Dutch and the Flemish, which largely created the Belgian Shepherd, especially the Malinois, have always been especially close in geography, language and culture.



Dutch Shepherd Spendow KNPV PH 1 410 pt
Owner Wilma Vogelaar, photo Michiel Schaak

Whether the Dutch Shepherd is in reality a separate breed or just a label for Malinois which are a little larger, a little less over the edge and tend toward the brindle in coat is an open question; ultimately it is what the dog is capable of on the field that matters to the serious people.

As in Belgium, the Dutch conformation community spent an inordinate amount of time squabbling about coat color and texture, which resulted in the loss of much of the original indigenous breeding population. Working character was generally

neglected by the show oriented elements. In the years prior to WWI there was mixing in of German Shepherd and Belgian Shepherd stock. WWI created huge animosity toward all things German, and German Shepherd interbreeding, to whatever extent it actually occurred, was deemphasized, with the breeds going separate ways ever since.

After the Second World War the Dutch Shepherd had been greatly reduced in numbers and was gradually reestablished, utilizing significant Belgian Shepherd breeding stock, primarily Malinois. Today, the Dutch Shepherd is sharply divided into a relatively small show dog segment and a much larger and more prosperous and vital working or KNPV population, with many unregistered dogs and ongoing mixing with the Malinois.

NHSB registrations for the year 2011 were as follows:

| | |
|-----------------------------------------|-----|
| Hollandse Herder, Korthaar (Short Coat) | 144 |
| Hollandse Herder, Langhaar (Long Coat) | 85 |
| Hollandse Herder, Ruwhaar (Rough coat) | 18 |

Indeed, the KNPV dogs can be thought of as an open breeding pool of Malinois and Dutch Shepherd, with the individual dog assigned a breed according to appearance rather than immediate ancestors. Thus it is an open question as to

whether the Dutch Shepherd should best be thought of as a breed or as simply a color and coat variety within the overall breeding population.

Within the KNPV community, where mixed or cross bred competitors are not unusual or remarkable, unregistered dogs accepted as Dutch shepherds are trained and titled, as is the case with the Malinois. As usual, unregistered in this context does not mean bad, irresponsible or of unknown breeding, for the working people understand genetic principles perfectly well and know the backgrounds of the animals they are breeding as far back as they consider it relevant.

It is important to understand that while lack of a pedigree and formal registration papers is not a problem for the KNPV trainer, those who wish to compete in international sports such as IPO or on an international level must have a dog with registration with an FCI affiliated national registry, in this instance the *Raad van Beheer*. Since most of the best working stock is from the KNPV lines, there is a substantial amount of falsification of papers. In general, unless you really know the people well and they are well connected and of long standing, having the official pedigree of a good working dog before your eyes is likely a matter of reading fiction. Thirty or forty years ago I would have been disturbed by this, but for me today this is just the way of the world, it is about dogs, not about papers. A good dog with false papers or no papers is enormously preferable to a mediocre dog with an "impeccable" and accurate pedigree.

The Dutch Police Dog Trials

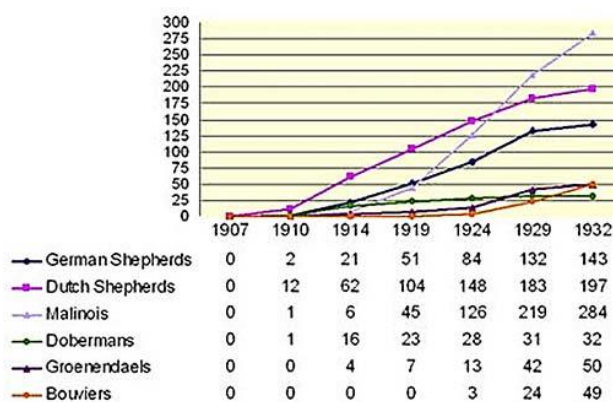


Throughout much of the world today the dogs most in demand for actual police service are those with a Dutch Police or KNPV certificate. There are a number of reasons for this, but ultimately they go back to the steadfast Dutch character, for the Dutch are above all else practical, tolerant and pragmatic; if a dog is to have a police dog certificate it should be under the influence of the police handlers and leadership in the spirit of real world police dog service rather than trial systems under conformation establishment control with more emphasis on political correctness and accommodating the less intensive demeanor compatible with companion homes. Prancing obedience, ultra precise sits and ever less demanding protection are left to the increasingly hobbyist oriented sports; Dutch police trials are about things that matter for real world police dogs, about control and restraint as well as power and aggression. Largely unknown to the rest of the world until the 1980s, this steadfast Dutch heritage has become influential and respected throughout much of the world, with the dogs themselves in enormous demand.

The Dutch were a little bit late to the party, for although there had been previous training, formal trials did not commence until 1907 under the auspices of the *Nederlandse Politiehond Vereniging* or NPV. In 1912 royal sanction was obtained to bring forth the *Koninklijke Nederlandse Politiehond Vereniging* or in English the *Royal Dutch Police Dog Association*. The KNPV designation, or the even more elite "KNPV met lof" (with honors) appearing on a pedigree or certificate are among the most coveted in the world today.

In the early years the numbers were small, with for instance 12 certificates in the year 1921 and 60 in 1925. In that era the German breeds such as the Boxer and the German Shepherd were much more predominant, much better represented than today. Prior to 1924 the Dutch Shepherd was the most numerous breed, but political machinations in the show dog community, causing many successful Dutch Shepherd breeding lines to be excluded from registration because of coat color, texture and pattern resulted in a decline in this breed.

**History of Breeds Titled in KNPV
between 1907 and 1932**



Note that these are aggregate numbers, which means that the figures for 1932 on the right are totals, adding up to 822 total KNPV titles for the first 25 years.

In addition were 5 Airedales, 8 Briards, 15 Beauceron, 9 Rottweilers, 1 Giant Schnauzer, the remainder cross bred dogs.
From KNPV Web Site

Perhaps as a consequence of these early struggles, the KNPV community tends to hold formal registration and the foibles of the show community in disdain, for such people a dog is what he can do on the field rather than what is scribbled in registration books.

Today the vast majority of KNPV competitors are Malinois, mostly without registration papers, and a few Dutch Shepherds. But this was not always the case, prior to WWII the German Shepherd and a few Dobermans were represented. The Bouvier was reasonably popular after the war through the 1970s and even into the early eighties, but by that time was in serious decline.

This KNPV trial demands a dog of great character, physical strength, agility and stamina. These trials emphasize protection work, involving

distant attacks on an adversary who strikes the dog with a stick before he actually bites and realistic gun tests. The dog is required to take a man down off a bicycle, the desired procedure being for the dog to take a leg or to leap high and grab the man's upper arm, so as to avoid entanglement in the wheels. There is a search for dropped objects (typically 2 or 3 coins or bolts). Overall, the KNPV trial demands resilient, tough dogs.

The best-known program is the *Politiehond One*, or PH-1; which is generally what is meant by a reference to a KNPV certificate. There is also a more advanced PH-2 certificate, but this is relatively speaking less popular.

For the Police Dog I examination today, there are a possible 440 points. 352 points are required for the certificate. The dog with 402 or more points is awarded the coveted Certificate met Lof (with honors).¹

At one time there was a "PH-I Certificate A" obtained for only 305 points, which was a provisional title valid for one year. Although this is no longer offered, it should be kept in mind for historical purposes.

The basic KNPV certificates include:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| • Police Dog I | Politiehond I |
| • Police Dog II | Politiehond II |
| • Object Guard Dog | Objectbewakingshond |
| • Tracking Dog | Speurhond |
| • Basic Certificate Search Dogs | Basiscertificaat Zoekhonden |

Although numbers have fallen recently, in the mid 1990's the KNPV had about 10,000 members. The Netherlands is divided in eleven provinces, and the KNPV is also divided into these same provinces. Each province has its own governing structure, and the boards of all the provinces represent all the members of the KNPV in the meetings of the national governing body.

As of April 1994 there were 509 KNPV clubs in the Netherlands, 140 certified decoys and 64 certified judges. By 2011 the list of judges had grown to 74. In 2013 there were 82 judges and 65 helpers listed on the KNPV web site.

Yearly KNPV statistics are as follows:

| | 2013 | 2012 | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 1993 |
|---------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|--------|
| Police Dog I | 429 | 439 | 425 | 545 | 507 | 473 | 607 | 581 | 580 | 695 |
| Police Dog II | 25 | 30 | 36 | 43 | 47 | 55 | 54 | 40 | 82 | 62 |
| OGD | 44 | 29 | 24 | 26 | 51 | 90 | 73 | 66 | 97 | 117 |
| Members | | | | 5864 | 6052 | 6146 | 6189 | 6293 | 6348 | 10,000 |

OGD Object Guard Dog

Judging by the more rapid fall of in PH 2 and Object Guard numbers, it would seem plausible that the motivation for the PH I is increasingly commercial rather than simply personal sport and recreation. KNPV is most popular, and the competition the most intense, in the southern provinces of the Netherlands, such as Limburg and Brabant. 2010 membership figures were 1,718 in North Brabant, 868 in Limburg, 859 in Gelderland and 524 in South Holland.

¹ Historically there have been minor variations in these point schedules.

The KNPV trial is an arduous, comprehensive daylong sequence of exercises, typically beginning with water retrieval and obedience in the morning and a sequence of protection exercises in the afternoon. The protection exercises are generally held on a large field to accommodate the extremely long distances and relatively large audiences. Three judges are used, so the obedience and search exercises go on concurrently, each judge handling the separate exercises such as the coin search, guard of object, bicycle exercises and so forth.



In the protection phase all dogs perform sequentially on the same field, that is, all dogs do the first exercise, then the second and so forth until the trial is complete. All three judges are on the field for this work, as there is a lot going on and the large distances would make it impossible for a single judge to adequately direct and observe the performance.

The Police Dog I examination has a water exercise where the dog must swim across a canal on command and return on command. There is also a large object retrieve. Obedience is much less precise but more demanding than other venues. The dog must heel on and off leash and beside a bicycle, and in both instances switch sides on command. There is a food refusal, an exercise where a dog must remain quiet during gunfire, and a one meter (39 inch) hedge jump, a 2.25 meter ditch jump and a 1.75 meter wooden wall.

The protection exercises include a guard of object, object search in the woods, a person search in the woods and transport of prisoners, including a simulation of an intoxicated prisoner. There is a long attack in which the dog is struck with a long stick before the bite, a call back from the long attack, an attack against the gun and a long attack to stop a person fleeing on a bicycle. The distance attacks are so long that I have seen a handicapped handler use a bicycle to move up into position to give the out command at the required time.

Historically the protective suit of the KNPV trial was relatively heavy and bulky and the helper, as also in the Belgian Ring, tended to be less mobile than in the French Ring, where modern materials have been utilized to produce much lighter and more flexible suits. In spite of these heavy suits, and ancillary padding and wrapping under the jacket, bruises, abrasions and more serious injuries to the helper were not uncommon.

The modern KNPV suit is a fully padded leather suit and a separate jute suit. The firm *Dog Sport Holland* was the first to manufacture these lighter, more supple tailor made KNPV suits. Today all top level decoys use such suits weighing 10 to 13 kilograms (22 to 28 pounds). These suits are lighter, have better protection in the bite areas, are more flexible and have more effective ventilation for better cooling.

In 2007 the KNPV introduced a new program for scent work, that is searching and tracking. This program had two primary motivations, one being the recognition of the increasing importance of olfactory or scent work in real world police

applications and the second a means of bringing new, younger people into the KNPV family to reverse the loss of membership in recent years. The basic certificate, the Basiscertificaat Zoekhonden is preliminary, that is a requirement or prerequisite for all of the other programs.

The Sorteerhond or Sorting Dog is a scent discrimination program, in which a number of articles with the scent of different people and placed in a rack for the dog to select. In each instance the object is a tube or pipe 20 x 20 mm x 10 cm long.

Sorteerhond 1: The dog must 3 consecutive times indicate the object with the scent of a person indicated to the dog.

Sorteerhond 2: The dog must indicate first the scent of an indicated person and from 2 different rows of 7, and after the first indication is successful, the scent of the suspected person out of the same rows

The tracking dog is similar to advanced IPO tracks.

Tracking dog 1: The dog must follow a 2 hour old track approximately 700 meters long on agricultural fields, with 8 90 degree corners, 3 small objects and one large object. The field can be sand/soil or grass

Tracking dog 2 : The dog must follow a 3 hour old track of approximately 1400 meters on different soils (also ditches and roads) with 10 corners (with a sharp 45 degree corner, a 135 degree corner and an omega). There are 4 small objects and a large object such as a rifle. The track must have both areas of sand or soil and grass. One half hour before the track is followed a person walks over an area of the track to provide a distraction.

Search dog 1: Find 2 persons in a 10 to 15,000 square meter wooded area. (A square 120 meters on a side)

Search dog 2. Find 2 times 3 different persons in a 20 to 30,000 square meters area. (A square 173 meters on a side.)

Rescue dog 1: Find 2 persons in ruins of buildings/trash in a 1000 square meter area.

Rescue dog 2: Twice find 3 persons in ruins of buildings/trash in a 3000 square meter area. (A square 55 meters on a side.)

Each year in the months of May, July and October, the KNPV holds certification trials in each province with enough candidates, organized by the national and provincial officers. Normally each dog certifies in his own province. The decoys and the judges for each provincial trial are designated by the national KNPV office and come from another province rather than being local.

Each year in the first weekend in September a national KNPV championship is held in the soccer stadium of FC Eindhoven in the city of Eindhoven.

Championship events include:

- A PH-I championship open to the ten highest scoring dogs obtaining the PH-I certificate that year.
- A PH-II championship open to the highest scoring PH-II dogs from each of the 11 provinces and the National Champion from the previous year.
- An Object Guard championship for the 8 highest scoring dogs that year.

This means that a dog can compete for the coveted PH-I national championship only once in his life. For this reason, sometimes a high potential dog will be held back a year or even two to have a better chance at every KNPV trainers dream, the national championship. From this we can see that the KNPV is much less of a sport than for instance, Schutzhund, where a dog can compete many times. This also means that a titled dog has value only as a police dog, commercial guard dog or

personal protection dog and as a breeding resource; there is no "used dog market" for trained and titled animals to be taken back into KNPV competition. (Some dogs are converted for Schutzhund, but given the age of the dogs and the differences in training and trial procedures they seldom become championship level competitors in a new sport.)

A dog may repeat an examination, but must relinquish in his current certificate. If he fails, he again becomes an uncertified dog. Repeat certification attempts are unusual, but sometimes a handler feels that his dog is better than the first score and is willing to take the risk.



Sjors, Alex van Nimwegen, Decoy J. Aarts.

Becoming a KNPV judge is a very difficult process, with a long series of challenging written and practical examinations. Each trial requires the services of three judges and two decoys.

One of the problems with all trial systems is that judges must differentiate among increasingly better dogs in order to produce winners, to know who to hand the trophies to. The best way to do this, to adapt to increasingly better dogs brought to a sharper edge by clever and persistent training, would be to introduce more complex and demanding exercises; higher jumps, longer call offs, searches in larger and more varied areas. Unfortunately in practice there is

resistance to higher standards and judges thus tend to rely increasingly on irrelevant trivialities to differentiate. If all dogs heel correctly, then perhaps the edge should go to the dog with a quicker or straighter sit or a stylish three-legged hop with the nose in the crotch of the handler. (Not to mention dogs between the legs of the waddling helper in contemporary French Ring trials.) The KNPV community has done a much better job of resisting this, and retained reasonable proximity and responsiveness in heeling, as an example, and relied on the overall length and difficulty of the program to sort the dogs out.

The typical KNPV dog only goes to one trial to achieve the certification, after which he is typically sold for police service. Prior to the 1980s most of these dogs were sold to local Dutch police agencies, but subsequently more and more dogs have gone to an increasingly lucrative export market. Most dogs succeed in their trial because the training process is long and arduous, and inadequate or marginal dogs are discarded because trainers are generally unwilling to put in the time and effort unless success is highly probable. The best dogs, particularly females, tend to be retained for breeding purposes.

A small – but elite – group of dogs go on to the annual police dog championship, but beyond this there is no such thing as a trial career, coming back to defend a championship, or multiple championships. Thus one cannot buy the winner to be a big shot next year because the dog will not be eligible to compete.

The key to the KNPV success is the ongoing relationship with the Dutch police entities. This close association has important advantages; KNPV clubs often have access to training grounds and facilities not otherwise available. Because of this official relationship certain criminal convictions preclude participation.

The Politiehond I Examination

This description of the complete Police dog one examination will give an overview of the scope and difficulty of the program:¹

Morning Program

1 Swimming

a. Swim across a canal.

On command, swim 15 meters to 30 meters across canal or open water, wait & return on command.

b. Retrieve object.

Object is stick or float about 1 meter long by 20 mm or 7/8 inch. Distance is 80 meters.

2 Jumping Exercise

a. Scaling wall – 1.75 meter or 5.7 ft. (1 meter = 3.25 ft.)

This is a vertical wall on the front, with a platform on back side. Dog climbs wall.

b. One Meter jump – 1 meter or 39 inch.

Dog must clear the jump without touching.

c. Broad jump – 2.25 meter or 7.3 ft.

Jump and return over an open pit.

d. Refusal of found food.

Food is placed next to jumps.

3 Small object search

Search for 3 objects one of which must be a bullet casing of 9mm diameter & 19 mm length. Other 2 objects are such things as coins or machine screws. Search area is 14 meters square of grass, all dogs using same area. The dog may have 7 minutes to search, but only 3 minutes for full points.

4 Heeling exercise

Dog must switch sides on command in each phase.

a. On leash heeling.

b. Off leash heeling.

c. Heeling next to bicycle.

5 Large object search

Dog must search for a large object, such as a chair or wooden box, in the woods. Upon finding object, the dog must remain at object, bark and not bite.

6 Man search

Dog searches in the woods for a man, a helper wearing the suit. Upon finding the man, the dog must guard him and bark, but not bite. Decoy remains motionless. Decoy shouts commands that the dog is to disregard. Dog may bite during the commands, but must release with no commands when he becomes silent

7 Down/Stay exercise

Dog must remain down for 3 minutes while handler goes out of sight.

¹ These rules as of April, 2013. Alice Bezemer provided information and review in this compilation.

8 Food refusal

Dog must refuse food offered by decoy and thrown on ground.

9 Prisoner Transport

Handler escorts a prisoner with a hand on his shoulder; "prisoner" pretends to be drunk and staggers. Prisoner drops object, such as a set of keys, which the dog must pick up and return to handler.

10 Object guard

Handler leaves dog to guard an object such as a blanket and stays out of sight. Helper approaches and tries to take object, dog must bite, but release and remain by object as helper retreats.

11 Silence exercise.

Dog & handler in woods must be silent during 9mm gun fire, dog must not bark.

Afternoon Program

1 Stick / Face attack

The dog is sent from a distance of 110 meters or 357 feet, the helper strikes the dog with a stick about 1.5 meter or 5 ft. long before the dog engages. "Stick" is a sapling about 1 inch at base, tapering down. After the pursuit handler and dog transport the helper over a distance of approximately 25 meters, helper then flees in the opposite direction until the dog stops him.

2 Gun attack.

In response to gun shots by helper, the dog is sent the long distance. The helper flees and is apprehended by the dog biting. After the out the helper strikes the dog three times with objects that have been placed on the ground, usually a length of rubber hose about 10 inches long. Strikes means he throws the hose at the back of the dog while on the bite, the hose remains on the ground.

3 Recall

The dog is sent from 110 meters against the helper as in the Stick/Face attack described above. When the pursuing dog is 60 meters from the starting point, he is recalled and must return to the handler.

4 Bicycle pursuit.

Dog is sent after a man fleeing on a bicycle, and must stop him. Dog either goes high to bite the arm or low to bite a leg. The leg bite is preferred; arm bite will cost one point. Almost all dogs today bite the arm. Bicycle wheel spokes & chain covered to prevent injury. After the pursuit and the out, the handler searches the helper and transports the dog, during which the helper attacks the handler. The dog must bite the helper, and release on command when he becomes still.

5 False attack

Same as Stick/Face attack above, but this time at when the dog is about 40 yards away the decoy turns around, drops stick and stands still. Dog is not allowed to bite, should pass decoy in short turn and sit or stand behind decoy to guard. Followed by transport at 2 meter distance from decoy by handler and dog.

In the afternoon protection program, the exercises are done sequentially, that is, each dog does the face attack, then each dog does the gun attack and so forth until each dog has done all five exercises. There are two judges on the field at all times in these exercises, one at the starting point and one down field.

Scoring

There are 3 separate blocks of exercises:

Block 1: 65 points.

All heeling exercises, all jumping exercises, long stay/down exercise, refusal of food found/offered, being silent and the small article search.

Block 2: 20 points

The two swimming exercises.

Block 3: 335 points

Object guard, large article search, man search, transport of prisoner, refusal to follow commands from a stranger, endurance of being hit with 3 objects during the bite, stick/face attack, throw/gun attack, recall, bike attack and false attack.

In addition to the points for these exercises, there are 10 discretionary points the judges may award for general obedience and 10 points for style and presentation of dog and handler.

Total possible points: 440

Minimum points for KNPV certificate: 352

Minimum points for honors, the met lof: 402

Current Trends

In the Netherlands the KNPV program has seen a significant reduction in members in recent years, similar to trends in other nations. Actual annual certificates are down only moderately since the 1990s, apparently the KNPV trainers, while fewer in number, are attaining more titles on an individual basis. The dominance of the Malinois on the trial fields is ongoing. The Schutzhund style IPO training has taking root and has been expanding in popularity since the 1970s and much of the training and competition is world-class. On the other hand, the FCI affiliated *Raad van Beheer* and the Dutch conformation community is every bit as oblivious to working character as the AKC in America.

Beginning in the 1980s dogs with the Dutch police certificate were increasingly purchased for export to America and many other nations, fundamentally changing the dynamics of the system, eroding the amateur character. Sad to say, in the spirit of quick training for the money, it is a fact that dogs have been killed on KNPV training fields through unrelenting pressure in training. I know this directly and personally from two unrelated KNPV judges. This situation evolved in the 1990s just as economical video recording was becoming widely available, and there was enormous concern in the KNPV establishment that sooner or later such things would appear on the evening television news. It would seem likely that the general European trend to ban useful and benign training devices such as prong and radio controlled collars reflects some general awareness of such things.

The Dutch police program has always been different from the German model – not really a sport program in the Schutzhund sense – for once a dog obtains his PH-I certificate he can compete once more, that year, in the national championship. He can also compete once in a PH-II championship. But an ongoing competition career is an unknown concept.

Many KNPV trainers are working class people in a crowded nation, where many can only keep one or two dogs in their home. Many dogs achieving a title are sold into police service. Although in the pre WWII era German Shepherds and Dobermans had a presence, in the post war era the Malinois and the Bouvier des Flandres became predominant. For a number of reasons, which I have discussed elsewhere, by the 1980s the Bouviers were fading and the Malinois, often without papers, was strongly predominant. When American police departments and dog brokers began to import these dogs to America they became very popular very quickly, aided by the fact that in general they were similar in appearance to the German Shepherd and thus looked like a police dog to the American eye.



Dutch soldiers with their dogs, circa 1914.
Probably rough coated Dutch Shepherd on the left, short coated on the right.



Léon Destailleur with
Vass du Faubourg des Postes.

France is a nation with an ancient history, a culture that was the foundation of western civilization when the Normans invaded England and French became the language of the English court for several centuries. The French language is melodic and resonant, a foundation of western literature and for many centuries the international standard of diplomacy, science and culture; if you could not say it in French it did not really matter, for you were not worth hearing. In the countryside today this is a nation of physical beauty and tranquility, in so many ways the French really do know how to live. The rest of us may not always love the French, but it is very difficult not to admire them, perhaps even with a touch of envy.

The French Herding Breeds

The popular media tends to lend the impression that elaborately groomed Poodles are typical of the French, but in reality such dogs are not especially popular. The registration statistics reveal that the French generally tend to prefer the bigger and more robust breeds, especially German or American as represented by the

German Shepherd (*Berger Allemand*) and Golden Retriever, in first and second place respectively in terms of French popularity.¹

Just as in every other nation, the farmers and herdsman of the French countryside evolved their own indigenous herding breeds such as the Picardy Shepherd, Beauceron and Briard. But among the broad population the popularity early on went to the German dogs – the Shepherds, Rottweilers and Dobermans – while the native French herding breeds withered on the vine. Even in sport the import has predominated, been the preference of the Ring Sport trainers; first the German Shepherd early on and since the 1970s the Malinois.

The Beauceron or *Berger de Beauce* is a herding breed of the north central region and the best represented French breed in Ring sport. It is a relatively large, muscular dog of short coat, reportedly part of the foundation stock of the Doberman Pincher. It is the only French breed with any noticeable representation in French Ring. 3222 Beauceron were registered in France in 2012, ranking it twenty first in popularity.

The Picardy Shepherd or *Berger de Picardie* is a medium sized, rough coated shepherd's dog of Northern France, similar in size structure and function to the more

¹ 2012 registrations for the German Shepherd were 11,205 and for the Golden Retriever 8,877. The most popular French breed is the French Bull Dog, eighth in popularity at 6189 annual registrations.

well-known native Belgian Shepherds. In 2012 there were 250 Picardy Shepherd registrations, corresponding to the rank of 111 among French breeds.

The Briard or *Berger de Brie* is a relatively large native sheep herding and guarding dog with a long and rough coat suitable for year round service with the flock, often working without supervision as with many of the flock guarding dogs of the more mountainous and rougher regions of southern Europe. There were 434 registered in 2012, corresponding to a relative popularity ranking of 90.

French Ring Sport

Everything French eventually evolves a unique flair and character, and their national protection dog sport is no exception. French Ringsport emphasizes exquisite control, quickness, finesse and speed; and favors dogs with the same attributes, the Belgian Malinois. And not just any Malinois, but their own lines, evolving for their demanding sport with relentless, driven selection.

The men who stand in as adversaries to the dog, the *Hommes d'Attaque*, use full body suits, allowing the dog to bite anyplace but favoring the leg bites because of the tactics and quickness of the decoys, who take pride in their skill, agility and ability to finesse or deceive the dog into missing a bite and thus losing points. To this end the suits are light and flexible in the extreme. Larger and more powerful dogs are at a distinct disadvantage, and those who favor such breeds need to look elsewhere or accept being on the sidelines each June when the elite men and their dogs vie for the Cup of France.

My introduction to serious French Ring was in 1987 in France, first at a local club trial and then on to Lorient for the famous cup final, on the Atlantic coast where many of the German submarines were based in WWII. Each dog coming to compete had been through a demanding series of regional selection trials, the *sélectifs*, and thus represented the best the sport and the nation had to offer. This culminating event is known as the *Coupe de France du Chien d'Utilité*, that is, the French Ring Cup. This Cup, as it is known for short, is among the most demanding and respected canine events in the world today, every man and dog that walk onto the field become forever part of the elite of canine sport.

My recollection is of two warm, sunny days late in June, with moderation in temperature insured by the nearness of the ocean. As is typical of such events, the trial was in a medium size sports arena, a soccer stadium in this instance. In my catalog are 17 Malinois, 7 German Shepherds and 2 Terveruren, all male and with male handlers. Finally, to represent France among these dogs of Flemish and German origin, there was a remarkable Beauceron, Saphir du Grand Maurian in the 25th place of honor in the Cup final.

Scanning the entries in my catalog, certain things snapped into focus, for instance the kennel *de la Virginie* was represented in first place by Tino, fourth place by Titus and 14th place by Torck.

The kennel *de la Virginie* was the life work of Daniel Debonduwe, by far the most successful Ring Sport breeder and trainer of all time, author of the famous book *L'art du ring*. On this day, Tino and Mr. Debonduwe went on to win both the Cup and the Championship. (The Cup goes to the dog with the most points on this day, while the Championship goes to the dog with the highest combined total from the *sélectifs* and the Cup trial.)

I am told that the German Shepherd in the thirteenth place, a certain Sorbonne trained by M. Gorse, is regarded by many as the greatest of his breed, nearing the end of a long career in the Ring and at the Cup, but on that day I do not remember him specifically among so many exceptional dogs and their trainers. A first

attendance at such an event, if you understand even in a small way the significance, flows together in your recollection, with so many extraordinary people and dogs.

Unlike *Schutzhund*, where the dog is taught to only bite the padded arm, the complete body suit is used, and the dog may bite anywhere. In practice, most dogs are trained to go for the legs and thighs. On command, dogs must instantly release their hold, explode off the suit. Simultaneously the decoy ceases aggressive behavior. According to command, dogs must then either return or stay and guard. Handlers must also, for the *attaque arrêtée* exercise (stopped attack), call the dogs off before they quite reach the decoy, certainly a most remarkable demonstration of control and discipline.

Perhaps the most fascinating of the exercises is the guard of object. The handler places an object, such as a wicker basket, in the center of a ring of perhaps eight or ten feet diameter on the ground. The handler then goes away, out of sight, no doubt to quietly worry. The decoy then approaches from the distance, making no overtly aggressive move. The dog more than anything wants to attack, but knows he must stay at his station. The decoy circles, shows disinterest, but moves continually closer. Finally, when he detects a moment's lack of attention, he will reach for the basket, at which point the dog must bite. When he does, the decoy must freeze and instantly put the basket on the ground. If the dog leaves the basket, or allows the man to remove it from the circle, substantial points are lost.

It is a fascinating battle of wits between man and dog, between decoy and trainer, played out mostly in slow motion with an occasional flash of action.

Among the elite names, the most revered in France, are those of Leon Destailleur and his kennel *du Mouscronnais*. Born in 1920 in Mouscron in the Walloon region of Belgium, he is generally regarded as the father of modern French Ring Sport and the introduction of the Malinois to the French working dog world.

The location of the small brick house, where this man Destailleur lived his long life, was to have a profound influence on the evolution of this sport and this breed. The French border, with the French village of Wattrelos, was literally a stone throw away.

Furthermore, Mouscron is at the very tip of the intrusion of the Walloon province of Hainaut where this province, Nord France and the Belgian province of West Flandres meet. Destailleur could literally walk out of his door to the next street and be in France. But he could also take a short walk to the North and cross another kind of border, into West Flandres and be in the same nation but where the language and culture were fundamentally different. In many ways the separation of peoples across this boundary between the Flemish and the culturally and linguistically French portion of Belgium is greater than the national boundary where one could walk across and share a drink or meal among those of his own language, perhaps his own relatives and friends. (Hilliard, 1986)

This story is deep in irony, for his early training was in the Belgian way, and until about 1960 Destailleur was among the very few men training the German Shepherd for the Belgian Ring.

But it was a different kind of dog that would lead to fame, for after the war, in 1946, he began with a bitch of the kind in those days known as *Le Petit Berger Flamand* or the little Flemish Shepherd, somewhat better known today as the Malinois. The war had decimated the canine population, and recovery was a matter of taking what could be found to begin again. This bitch, acquired literally from between the rails of a cart, was the foundation of what would establish the Malinois in France and redefine French Ring sport.

In the earlier days, French Ring was for the German Shepherd, and all the dogs went to the arm for the bite, for the Belgian Ring in that era was the only venue

where the dogs went to the leg. Training for the Belgian Ring, Destailleur, who believed that biting to the leg was founded in a genetic predisposition, selected and trained his dogs in this way, and by the 1950s had established this in his lines.

In 1962 the winds of change were blowing in Belgium, for the backbone of the Belgian Ring trainers were forming a new organization, the NVBK, in the region of Antwerp. Going forward there would be four ring organizations in Belgium, the increasingly prosperous NVBK Verbond focused in the Dutch speaking Flemish region which would predominate. *Societe Royale Saint-Hubert*, the FCI national club, carries on, but its ring program became a shell of what it had been, a dwindling list of old judges and trainers. *Kennel Club Belge* (Belgian Kennel Club) was focused the Wallonian provinces to the south and greatly in decline after more than a half century of service. The fourth organization was German Shepherd oriented in the more German speaking far eastern end of the country, and not a factor in this story, or much of anything else.

For Destailleur the handwriting was on the wall, for the Wallonians were being marginalized in Belgian Ring and the future was uncertain. In one of those pivotal moments of fate his eyes turned south to France and the rest, as they say, became history. Destailleur focused on the French Ring, then German Shepherd dominated and with dogs going entirely to the upper body. Since Ring clubs needed to be French based, he established a club in Wattrelos, although actual training apparently commenced on Belgian soil. On this base he would revolutionize the dog sport of France.

The irony is deep, and on many levels. A group of disgruntled Flemings in the vicinity of Antwerp broke off from the SRSB, the FCI Belgian national canine organization, and launched an independent structure, the NVBK, to run their own trials and registry, which has gone on to remarkable success. But there was a collateral effect, for this also set in motion a chain of events in which French Ring would be turned on its head by a Belgian breeder and trainer.

In this way the NVBK revolution in Belgium was the proximate cause of something even larger and more world transforming, the establishment of the modern French Ring Sport. But of course leadership from beyond their own culture was not a new story for the French, for Napoleon Bonaparte was in a cultural and original linguistic sense Italian.

Over time Destailleur became established as a competitor, breeder, decoy and judge. A likeminded circle of friends evolved, most especially a young decoy, fast, creative, passionate, André Noël, whose kennel was *de la Noaillerie*. Through the influence of these friends he began to produce articles for the canine magazines and promote a new style of helper work, one based on evasion and demanding that for success the dogs go to the legs. This began to take hold, and Destailleur was ready with the new equipment for the new sport. Before long those Frenchmen not content to be relegated to the club trials went north for dogs, for the Malinois, and to learn these strange new ways. By the end of the 1970's the transition was well advanced, the German Shepherd was on the way to being just another secondary breed scrambling for scraps of glory at the club trials, while the Malinois went on to yearly drink deeply from the cup.

Destailleur, like all great men, was a man of luck, under the protection of the gods. For at the very moment he chose to literally walk into a neighboring nation and rearrange their national dog sport to his convenience and liking the advent of very light, strong, flexible materials was making possible the ring suits on which this revolution was founded.

With these new suits, and a strong emphasis on quickness, evasion and agility in the work, the decoy became the dog's adversary, expected to detect and exploit any

weaknesses in the individual dog, rather than to present a uniform picture to each dog. And, of course, a star in his own right.

Over the past several years the Malinois has in increasing numbers been predominating at high places of international IPO, Schutzhund and other competition, sneaking in and eating the lunch which had always been set out for the German Shepherd. I note this with a certain gratification, not only on behalf of the Malinois, but also for the long-term benefit of the German Shepherd, which has in many lines lessened in intensity and physique because of the influence of the show ring, because the brothers of Judas held power in the SV. Schutzhund and IPO were created by and for the German Shepherd, and Malinois domination can only mean that this noble breed is in decline.

To what shall we attribute this change, this transformation of the working dog scene in France, the first among many advances of the Malinois into territory always the private domain of the German Shepherd?

There is a temptation to speculate that a factor in this tide of Malinois enthusiasm reflects a disinclination to things German as a consequence of centuries old animosity and two devastating world wars. This would not be the least bit remarkable for a man such as Destailleur, who spent the war years evading the Nazi police, where only one inadvertent incident could have meant capture and being sent to the front or forced labor and never returning, as was the fate of so many of the young men of Belgium, friends and neighbors, and so many working dog lines created through such sacrifice and devotion. In my own personal experience, Edmee Bowles, pioneer of the Bouvier des Flandres in America, driven out of her Belgian homeland with but one dog, the rest abandoned to the mercy of the German invaders, came to despise the Germans and everything German throughout her long life. While this sort of thing has faded away over time, this was not the least bit unusual in this era.

But there is much more to this. The general view of the German Shepherd community would be along the lines of the Malinois coming to the forefront because the French, with some help from a clever Belgian, essentially stacked the deck, not because the Malinois is in any fundamental way superior. The Shepherd is from his foundations a more massive and powerful dog, so the best Malinois are always going to beat the best German Shepherds at French Ring. And to breed German Shepherds to win in this ring would be to abandon their heritage, to try and make them something they are not and were never intended to be.

Michel Hasbrouck – a well-respected French trainer, writer and advocate for French Ring – has a slightly different point of view. This is not in any way the rant of some rabid Malinois fan boy, for Mr. Hasbrouck is a man with passion for the German Shepherd, which he took into the Ring for many years. This is his commentary, by private communication:

"The Malinois wins because the breed selection is different, based on the German created 'Confirmation' way.

At the minimum age of one year, German Shepherds are evaluated by a conformation judge who eventually dismisses them for breeding if they suffer from determined and sometimes minor-in-the-eyes-of-trial-trainers problems (missing teeth, long hair for GSDs, saddle backs, and so on).

But, in 1983, the French Berger Belge Club president decided that a Ring III dog was worth a 42 teeth dog, and conformation judges were compelled to grant the Confirmation to all excellent working Malinois. This way (working) champion dogs could produce registered dogs, the only ones allowed at French Ring trials.

In the same time, world GSD clubs went on refusing Confirmation to trial champions GSDs, arguing about their hair, legs or backs. As for other shepherd breeds, working lines died away.

More than this, GSDs suffer from hip dysplasia, and lots of premium rate working dogs die from bloat.

When you spend 3,000 hours training for Ring 3, and you discover your dog can no longer jump, you start thinking Malinois...

It is now far easier to find a working line in Malinois than in any other breed. The main advantage of Ring Sport Malinois bloodlines is their ability to sustain training. To stay burning, witty, obedient, even after a severe punishment or a long training session."

An in depth understanding of this requires knowledge of the structure of the French canine world, where each national breed club sets up a system under which young dogs can be "confirmed " and thus become eligible for breeding by meeting standards for structure, type and character, similar to the Koer classification system for the German Shepherd in the mother land. In order to participate in the French Ring, a dog must have a valid national Registration, which means that no matter how great a dog is his progeny cannot go on to compete unless the national breed club grants its blessing.

But in France, and in Belgium, this took an ugly turn. I will mention the situation for the Bouvier des Flandres, of which I have some experience, but which is typical of all the other breeds but one. The French Bouvier club is in the hands of conformation dilettantes who pay at most only lip service to serious working character. Their character requirement is a "unique to the special qualities of the Bouvier" temperament test in which all dogs pass, no matter how timid, except those who show any real aggression. In Belgium I was present in person to see a famous Bouvier breeder – not Chastel – take a bitch in for such a test. The requirement is that the dog engage the man in the suit, make actual contact, and this bitch simply would not engage. Finally, this famous man simply picked her up and touched the suit, and thus passed. The helper averted his eyes, and to this day I wonder whether it was to avoid threatening the poor animal, or out of personal shame for what he was participating in.

Under this system, many exceptional working dogs, including imported dogs with perfectly good registration in their country of origin, can be and are denied by a self-centered cabal of breeders in control of the national club, who prefer to go on pretending that their dogs are of working character.

But there is a major exception. In France, where the gate to the Ring requires the blessing of the breed club, the national Belgian Shepherd club, which includes the Malinois, club broke ranks and dictated that the successful Ring competitors be confirmed automatically, which is most certainly a major factor in their success.

In numerical terms in 2008, of 2640 dogs competing in French Ring, there were 1583 Malinois followed by 661 German Shepherds, 128 Tervuerens, 63 Beaucerons and 55 Rottweilers. But numbers can be deceptive, for the 128 Tervuerens were likely in many or most instances long hairs from Malinois litters or lines with heavy Malinois influence.

The reality is that French Ring is two sports, where the top level Malinois strive for glory in the various qualification events leading to the Cup finals, leaving the scraps, titles in the less demanding club level trials, for the lesser breeds.

A vaguely patronizing feature of the Cup rules reserves one or two places, of the thirty, to an alternate breed. But on occasion an exceptional dog of another breed, a

Beauceron or Bouvier des Flandres, will defy the odds and qualify in the selection trials on their own merits rather than through a patronizing exception in the rules. Even here, there is a certain place for irony. The Bouvier des Flandres Tulasne de la Genesis, owned and trained by Jean Marie Denece, was such a dog. Now one would perhaps assume that the French Bouvier community would take heart, and perhaps encouragement. But the fly in the ointment was that this Tulasne was a dog of pure Dutch police breeding, from lines looked down upon and despised by the French elite – they actually like to call themselves by such words – as low class and foreign. These French dilettantes paid a little lip service and went right back to pretending that their dogs really were capable, and proving it in their pathetic character tests and breed certifications. Although I have not experienced it for myself, my impression is that things are pretty much the same in the Beauceron world, both breeding communities produce a few specimens that can squeak through at a club level trial but fail to take the steps necessary for real working credibility.

The 2008 French Ring trial results listing has a little over 500 events, with popular dates indicating ten or fifteen concurrent trials across the nation. There is no doubt that French Ring is a vital, thriving community with a strong heritage and ever increasing levels of performance.

In spite of a lot of effort and publicity French Ring has failed to gain any real traction in the rest of the world. There are a number of factors for this, but the primary one would seem to be a simple matter of breed recognition. Schutzhund prospered in America because of the enormous popularity of the German Shepherd, based primarily on the image of the strong, noble canine police service. Americans could relate to the Schutzhund culture, take pride in the roots of their own dogs in this background, regardless of the reality of their actual potential. If they became interested and found their dog wanting, the Schutzhund judge from the last trial or a breeder with German lines was quick to offer an upgrade. Rottweilers, Dobermans and to a lesser extent Boxers and Giant Schnauzers also benefited from and contributed to this enthusiasm. And you could go to Germany and buy a titled dog and become an instant player and authority on American Schutzhund fields.

But very few Americans owned or had heard of a Malinois and even fewer were inclined to buy a funny looking dog, looking suspiciously like a run down, spindly German Shepherd, to play in a novel sport. Another significant factor is that there were many recently emigrated Germans with canine experience living in America or traveling from Germany to promote the sport and the breed, and not incidentally themselves.

On the whole the French have been at best lukewarm about the whole thing – at one point there were grand announcements about becoming the "International Ring," but a year or so later the words French Ring reappeared on the various web sites.

When you inquire as to the nature of French Ring with an advocate the likely response is to compare it to the martial arts, is done for itself alone, wherever higher levels of elegance, power and skill are sought for their own intrinsic worth. But in the real world there ultimately is a need to produce dogs capable of excellence in police work, and this is increasingly a matter of the olfactory capability, the search, tracking and substance detection applications that are more and more the foundation of police applications. I will not pretend to have answers to these dilemmas of the modern world, for ultimately it is more relevant to identify the crucial questions and hope that men of sincerity can find relevant answers.

In addition to the French Ring sport, conducted on an enclosed trial field, usually some sort of stadium, there is also a similar trial system conducted in more open and natural settings, that is, *Campagne*, which translates as "country." Although currently much less popular than Ring, *Campagne* has a long history. In 2009 their

website listed 41 clubs distributed across France and 17 judges, compared to 85 for Ring sport and 51 for Mondio Ring, with a lot of overlap.

Commentary

France on the whole has played a relatively minor role in the evolution of the police dog. Their native herding dogs, such as the Beauceron and Picardy Shepherd, have withered on the vine, while foreign breeds, early on the German Shepherd and later the Malinois, have been predominant on their sport fields. Although French Ring was for many years dominated by the German Shepherd, beginning in the 1960's the Malinois came to own the upper echelon, which is a world unto itself with perhaps the most purely sporting character, in the good sense, of any modern system. Perhaps because they have had no native breed to promote, and the consequent national pride, they have been much less successful in projecting their dogs, trial system and canine culture beyond their own nation. The French people as a whole have been disinterested, preferring the German Shepherds and later the Rottweilers and Golden Retrievers over their own native breeds.

The Malinois is very popular among the Ring trainers, but, as in the rest of the world, not so much the civilian population. While the sporting spirit of French Ring is in general admirable, the world also has a need of well-rounded lines of police dogs, and increasingly this means dogs capable of searching, tracking and substance detection, that is, dual or multipurpose dogs. The fact that French Ring ignores this olfactory capability is a serious limitation in the evolution of functional police capable lines. For these historical reasons, the French have had much less influence on worldwide police deployment practice than the Germans, Belgians or Dutch.



Although the ancient people of north central Europe coalesced as modern Germany relatively recently, in 1871 under Prussian domination, their history goes back to the epic conflicts with Roman armies and a central role in the Holy Roman Empire of the middle ages. European affairs since Napoleon have been largely a process of conflict and war, of integrating this powerful emerging state as a peaceful member of a stable family of European nations, a process which came to fruition and prosperity with the merger of east and west upon the dissolution of the Soviet Union in the final decade of the twentieth century.

These Germans are a people with a strong and compelling canine heritage, and from the beginning of the modern police dog era were enormously effective at promoting their breeds to the public, to police agencies and to the military at home, in the rest of Europe and particularly in America. Although other nations, such as Belgium and the Netherlands, have a long and honorable police service heritage, in the public eye it has been German breeds which first came to exemplify the culture and capture the imagination.

The German Shepherd

Throughout the world the German Shepherd is the quintessential police dog. So universal is the association that for many – being unaware that others also serve – they are one and the same thing. From the inception of the studbook in 1899 this incipient breed was swept up in an unprecedented wave of popularity; by the First World War many thousands were in homes across Germany, and thousands were to serve in the looming catastrophe. In the aftermath this popularity went worldwide, for the German Shepherd came home with the troops to America and within a

decade became our most popular breed. Even in pre WWII Japan there were popular large scale national clubs and military training programs involving thousands of dogs. The breed dominates the German canine world as no other breed does anywhere – annual registrations currently run two to three times that of the breed in second place, the Dachshund.

The Early Years

In Germany during the latter half of the nineteenth century interest in consolidating the indigenous shepherd's dogs into a formal breed was growing, corresponding to similar efforts in England, Belgium, the Netherlands and elsewhere. Early conformation shows with shepherd dog entries are mentioned in Hannover in 1882 and Neubrandenburg in 1885, with an entry of about ten dogs, apparently in some instances literally brought from the fields and meadows.

The first formal effort at breed establishment was the Phylax¹ Society formed on the 16th of December 1891 by a Graf (Count) von Hahn and Captain Riechelmann-Dunau, named after his dog Phylax von Eulau². This society was focused on creating an ornamental breed, for many featuring a wolf like appearance³ for commercial appeal, and fortunately withered on the vine as a consequence of internal conflict and a lack of clearly defined purpose. According to von Stephanitz:

"The original intentions of the founders of the Society whose aim, along with ours, were directed to the improvement of the breed of the working dog, were unfortunately suppressed in the first breeding Society of our race, the "Phylax" by their one sided emphasis on the purely fancy dog breeds. The natural result was that the Phylax, which was limited in general to Northern and Central Germany, began at first to pine, and finally become extinct. (von Stephanitz, 1925)

Although the formation of a national breed club and the studbook was not to take place until 1899, for a number of years there had been ongoing breeding and conformation exhibition by an actively expanding community of enthusiasts, including a certain young Calvary officer.

The man destined to formalize the German Shepherd as a breed and provide leadership through the formative years, Max Emil Friedrich von Stephanitz, was born into a prosperous, noble family in Germany on December 30, 1864. More precisely, he was born in the city of Dresden in the Kingdom of Saxony, as Germany as a nation did not yet exist. Upon the completion of his education his desire was to become a gentleman farmer; but respecting established norms and the wishes of his family he entered the military as a career officer. Von Stephanitz had long been interested in the biological sciences and while serving with the Veterinary College in Berlin gained extensive knowledge of anatomy, physiology, evolution, breeding concepts and general principles of animal husbandry.

¹ Phylax is from the Greek for a guard or sentinel.

² Possibly same as Phylax von Waldenreut, the sire of Krone vom Park.

³ (Delinger, Paramoure, & Umlauff, 1976)



Max von Stephanitz

In 1898 von Stephanitz was promoted to the rank of Rittmeister or Cavalry Captain and then retired. The conventional version of this story is that because of his marriage to an actress, Anna Maria Wagner, which was regarded as beneath his social status, he was asked to leave the service, bringing his military career to an end. This does not entirely ring true. Other authorities report that he was forced into retirement because of illness, specifically hemorrhoids.¹ Given that he was a reluctant lieutenant in his middle thirties, not the fast track in any man's army, it is entirely plausible that his prospects were unpromising, that he wanted out and that his superiors were more than willing to see him go, in which case illness or the social status of his wife would have been more excuse than cause and his promotion a fig leaf in deference to his social position.

In any event, upon retirement he purchased an estate near the city of Grafrath in Bavaria, 25 kilometers directly west of Munich in the south of Germany. Here he commenced the active process of formalizing and promoting the German Shepherd, and chose Grafrath as his kennel name. The first

mention of a dog owned by von Stephanitz was the female Freya von Grafrath, purchased in 1897. The original breeder, name and ancestry seem to be lost to history, and there are no records of descendants.

The real beginning came at an all-breed dog show in Karlsruhe² in 1899, at which Von Stephanitz and colleague Artur Meyer came upon a dog that entirely caught their attention, exemplified their vision of the German Shepherd: Hector Linksrhein, a dog out of herding lines.³ Hector, bred by Friedrich Sparwasser of Frankfurt, had been born January 1, 1895. This dog was of Thuringian stock and had passed through the hands of several breeders, including a man named Anton Eiselen, before coming into the hands of von Stephanitz. Litter mate Luchs Sparwasser, SZ-155⁴, was also to emerge as a foundation of the breed. Upon purchase Hector was according to the custom of the time renamed as Horand von Grafrath so as to carry the von Stephanitz kennel name and became the first German Shepherd in the SV studbook as SZ-1.⁵

This Hector was not an unknown dog emerging mysteriously out of the fields but rather the result of the ongoing breeding program of Friedrich Sparwasser:

¹ (Garrett)

² **Karl Karlsruhe** is just west of Stuttgart, very close to the now French province of Alsace.

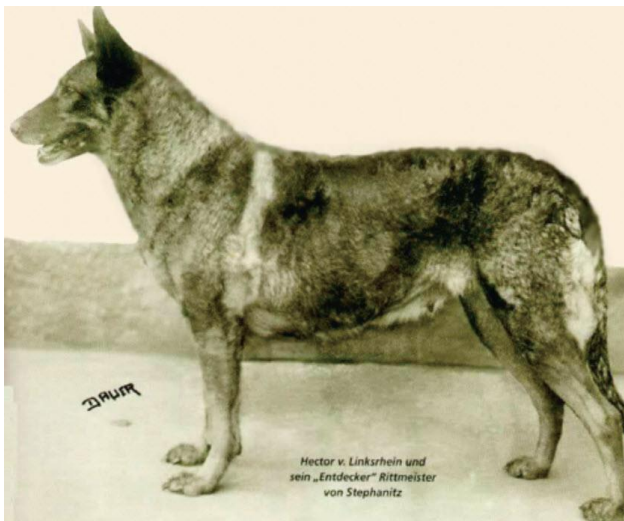
³ According to (Garrett) there is no evidence that either Hector or his parents ever actually served as herding dogs, the process of breed creation beyond the original function was already ongoing.

⁴ SZ is the designation of the German studbook or breeding registry for the GSD.

⁵ Studbook entries at this time were not necessarily ordered by date of birth or chronological sequence. Many dogs that had been born in previous years, such as the parents of Hector or Horand, would eventually be included with higher numbers.

Roland
 Pollux, SZ-151, born 1891
 Courage
 Kastor (von Hanau), Grey, SZ-153, born 1893
 Schäfermädchen von Hanau SZ-154
 Horand von Grafrath SZ-1
 Grief Sparwasser, white, born 1879
 Lene Sparwasser, Grey, SZ-156
 Lotte Sparwasser

The proprietor of the above mentioned Hanau kennel was a man named Wachsmuth, who according to von Stephanitz had a long term commercial operation, spanning some forty years, including advertisements for "Thuringian Shepherd Dogs" in the journals of various foreign countries in the later 1800s. (von Stephanitz, 1925) Although not well known today, the name Wachsmuth does surface fairly regularly in researching the literature and old records.



Horand von Grafrath (SZ 1),
 formerly Hektor Linksrhein.
 Von Stephanitz paid 200 Marks for him in 1899,
 a substantial sum at the time.

Comments with the pedigree indicate that Pollux was well-built, strong and tall, grey in color but with a coarse head resembling that of a wolf. The white male Grief Sparwasser is significant in that difficulty in eradicating this recessive color from the lines would persist for a century.¹ Neither Horand nor his parents are credited with an HGH or herding title, and apparently Horand never actually served in the pasture. Later on von Stephanitz would put great emphasis on including proven working stock with the HGH title.

There were two predominant regional populations of native shepherd's dogs from which the breed was drawn:

One of these resources was the shepherd's dogs of the highlands of the Thuringian region of central Germany, typically with erect ears

and the general appearance of contemporary specimens, though more lightly built. The Sparwasser line was typical of this "Thuringian blood." Von Stephanitz mentions Sparwasser in a favorable light and relates that his first dogs came from the Hanau Kennel of Herr Wachsmuth, mentioned above. (von Stephanitz, 1925)

The second important breeding resource was the shepherd's dogs of the Wurttemberg region in the vicinity of Stuttgart in southwestern Germany, described as larger, stronger and more heavily coated. Representing this branch of the family were the kennels *von der Krone* of Anton Eiselen located at Heidenheim and *vom Brenztal* in Giengen. Von Stephanitz mentions that the Wurttemberg dogs had a tendency to problems with standing ears, while the Thuringian stock tended toward a

¹ This does not imply that this dog is the primary source of the white coats, for the genetics for white were widespread in the primitive stock on the farms and pastures.

high tail carriage; sometimes "fixed" artificially, that is surgically, only to return in subsequent generations to the dismay of unwary purchasers.

Although Horand would become the founding prototype or ideal of the breed because of his physical and moral attributes, his influential progeny had already been produced when he was purchased by von Stephanitz. In the words of the founder:

"Unfortunately, I must admit that all of this was not accomplished in my Kennel; I was not so fortunate with him as were his previous owners..."
(von Stephanitz, 1925) p. 136

Ultimately Horand von Grafrath was bred 53 times to 35 females. Probably the most illustrious of his progeny was the male Hecktor von Schwaben, out of the female Mores Plieningen, with the HGH herding certificate and out of two undocumented dogs known as Franz and Werra. The blood of Hecktor is said to flow in every German Shepherd Dog's pedigree, but he was bred by H. Drieger and born January 5, 1898, and thus whelped long before Horand came into the hands of von Stephanitz.

The fact of the matter is that less than a dozen von Grafrath dogs bred or owned by von Stephanitz are prominent in the breeding records, and by about 1905 even this minor level of activity abated. The only really prominent von Grafrath dog was the 1904 Sieger¹ Aribert von Grafrath, selected by von Stephanitz himself, who at the time declared he would no longer show his own dogs. Aribert is not especially prominent in modern German Shepherd blood lines.

Thus we can see that the process of creating the German Shepherd was the work of a community of dedicated breeders and enthusiasts leading up to the founding events of 1899. Because of his wealth, social status, drive and dominating personality von Stephanitz receives and deserves the lion's share of the credit and recognition, but we must not forget the contribution of so many others who played key roles in the creation of this noble breed. According to Garrett, men such as Sparwasser were selling dogs on an increasing scale even outside of Germany prior to the involvement of von Stephanitz, and actively promoting them at the various dog shows. The existence of the Phylax Society a few years earlier is evidence that this was an ongoing process when von Stephanitz first became involved.

On the 22nd of April 1899 von Stephanitz, Artur Meyer, Ernst von Otto, Anton Eiselen and others gathered together in the city of Karlsruhe in Baden, on the occasion of a dog show, to found a club. The *Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde* (SV) or in English the *Club for the German Shepherd*, would become among the world's largest and most prestigious. The remaining founders seem to be lost to history. Headquarters for the club were initially in Stuttgart, but moved to Munich in 1901. In taking an overview of the literature and resource material it becomes apparent that the founding events and kennels were in the deep south of Germany, with Stuttgart a focus point in the south west and Munich even further south close to the Austrian border.

A registration book was created and Horand v Grafrath became the first registered German Shepherd Dog. On September 20, 1899, the SV adopted a breed standard based on the proposals of Meyer and von Stephanitz and later held its first

¹ Sieger is a word in German that translates as winner, but in the context of German Shepherd affairs the Sieger is the male winner of the annual national German conformation championship show, known as the Sieger Show. There are also other national Siegers in the Netherlands, Belgium and many other nations. The Siegerin is the corresponding winning female each year, but most of the notoriety applies to the male Sieger as he is generally bred to very extensively. Other German breeds such as the Doberman Pincher also designate annual Siegers and Siegerins

Sieger Show at Frankfurt-am-Main, using the titles Sieger and Siegerin. Von Stephanitz became the founding president and held the post until the year before his death, almost forty years later. Artur Meyer became secretary and conducted the affairs of the club from his home in Stuttgart. Unfortunately, Meyer passed away soon thereafter, putting an increased burden on the president. (Strickland, 1974) At the passing of Meyer von Stephanitz took on his office as secretary in addition to the presidency, solidifying his control over the breed, registry and club which he would not relinquish until shortly before his death, more than three decades later. By 1903, when the SV Magazine came into existence, there were almost 600 members.

From von Stephanitz forward until the end of the twentieth century the SV president would judge the males at the annual Sieger show and the National Breed Warden the females. In general a benign dictator in the early years of breed establishment has been a pattern in various successful breeds, as in the case of Dr. Reul for the Belgian Shepherd, for it provides one founding vision and consistency in selection. The spirit of these shows was somewhat different from the typical dog show of today in that the judge was expected to know the dogs and their lines and select those most suitable for breeding so as to guide the breed as a whole in the desired direction rather than the most impressive dogs on that day. This in general was an effective mode of operation in the beginning, but the problem with dictators is that down the road eventually you get a bad one, and he usually insures that his successors are cut out of the same cloth. Subsequent to WWII the SV leadership gradually fell into the hands of an overt show line cabal, exacerbating the ongoing split of the German Shepherd into show and working lines.

Horand and also Luchs Sparwasser, his brother, were inbred intensively to consolidate the bloodline, but as mentioned this in reality had little to do with von Stephanitz. Horand's best son, Hecker von Schwaben, the second German Sieger, was mated with his half-sister as well as through daughters of his own sons, Beowulf, Heinz von Starkenberg, and Pilot III. Intense inbreeding also concentrated undesirable recessive characteristics originating from the mixing of the original strains. To compensate for this, Von Stephanitz then encouraged unrelated blood of herding origin through Audifax von Grafrath and Adalo von Grafrath and perhaps others. The breed progressed rapidly; if registration numbers were used consecutively, without skipping any, then they were pushing a hundred thousand total registrations by the beginning of the WWI, on the order of five to ten thousand registrations per year.

Police style trials, which would eventually evolve into the Schutzhund venue, began in Germany in 1901 testing the dog's abilities in tracking, obedience and protection. In the early years there was great emphasis on the herding title, the HGH, especially on the part of von Stephanitz. There were championships for herding and police work, beginning in 1906.

From the beginning in late 1899 both the SV membership and annual puppy registrations expanded exponentially, making the German Shepherd among the most popular breeds worldwide. By the time of the First World War the SV had become one of the world's larger canine organizations with over fifty thousand members and six hundred local clubs. Overseas popularity came quickly, as these events indicate:

- 1908 First GSD Registered with the AKC.
- 1913 GSD Club of America founded.
- 1919 The English Kennel Club began a registry.
- 1925 Replaces the Boston Terrier as first in AKC registrations.

In his book *German Shepherd Dog History* Gordon Garrett mentions that in visiting herding trials in Germany even in recent years there was a class for 'Alt Deutsch Schaferhunde' or Old German Shepherd Dog; that is the actual working

lines the modern German Shepherd was created from, bred only according to their herding function. Garrett mentions that these dogs, without registration records, were included in German Shepherd lines well into the 1930s. There is some indication that a tendency to long coats and whites may go back to this, but von Stephanitz was convinced that returning to the old herding lines was necessary for the vigor and resilience of the breed. Such a resource would not be an entirely bad thing even today.

By 1923 SV membership had grown to 57,000¹ and 900 local clubs. Even in these early years the separation into working and show lines was becoming increasingly apparent; with show lines becoming more and more distant from the dogs on the trial fields and in police service.

The Founder's Touch

Max von Stephanitz is a legend and an enigma. He was a man obsessed with projecting the German Shepherd as the predominant police breed worldwide, and he succeeded in this. He was not the only one, but he was the indispensable force; he had the money and the social position at a time when social position still mattered enormously, and could be as ruthless and aggressive as necessary. His military connections were indispensable, as the German army had for many years been committed to developing dogs for war service, providing money, training programs and support. This is made quite evident by the fact that thousands of dogs, the vast majority German Shepherds, went immediately into service at the outbreak of the war. There can be little doubt that von Stephanitz promoted and enabled this, thus advancing the cause of the SV and the German Shepherd.

His 1925 book, *The German Shepherd Dog in Word & Pictures* is an enormous, 700 page tome, much of it very heavy reading, no doubt exacerbated by to the difficulty of dealing with an English translation. At heart this book is a promotional project, propaganda, as much as history. Many pages are devoted to reports and pictures of obscure breeds or varieties in remote places such as Serbia or Turkey, but with little mention of competitive German breeds or other prominent personalities. Much of it concerns issues of husbandry – breeding, whelping, puppy raising and so forth – much better explained elsewhere after a century. While he always told the truth as he saw it, he did not necessarily tell the whole truth when it did not serve his ends, but that is because his purpose was to promote and sell as well as enlighten and explain.

But on a second or third reading, after years of related search, there is substantial value, fascinating and revealing details to be teased out based on hard won knowledge of the era. As a student of canine affairs in the Low Countries, his notes on Dutch and Belgian affairs ring true as the words of a man who had been there.

As well as a military officer von Stephanitz was an academic, well versed on the science and practice of animal husbandry and veterinary medicine of the era. As has been mentioned the military was not his preference, but taken up as an obligation to his family. The first section of the book is a long discussion of animal evolution, scientifically outdated and thus uninteresting but representing the prevailing science of the era. There is a long, and quite interesting, discussion of the herding and herd guardian functions by a man who grew up in an era when these dogs were still in the fields, would provide the rootstock of his incipient breed.

¹ (Strickland, 1974)

Some contemporary readers, particularly the especially sensitive and politically correct, tend to be disturbed or horrified upon reading this book. Ardent feminists with only a shallow view of history will be particularly horrified. Von Stephanitz was a man of his time, a man of the nobility, of privilege and status, a career military officer in one of the most rigorous military cultures of history, in every sense a member of an elite class which embraced expansion of German territory and influence as god ordained destiny. Just as did Americans of the era, who saw the "winning of the west" as a birthright in spite of the fact that much of it was held by indigenous Americans, the Spanish and the Mexican nationals.

Von Stephanitz embraced the necessity of preserving racial purity and the superiority of the European Caucasian, the white man's burden, as a given, his obligation of his class. Washington and Franklin owned slaves. Lincoln emerged from this culture, had married into a prominent slave holding family, seeing it as an opportunity for advancement. Although over their lifetimes each of these men made strides toward a more liberal personal perspective they remained men of their times, as did von Stephanitz. My view is that this horror of the generally held historical values and mores is childish and naïve, a consequence of a culture so bound up in fashionable political correctness that we have become a generation largely unable to deal with reality in an ever evolving, complex and morally ambivalent world.

Von Stephanitz was a worldwide promoter of his breed, judging major conformation shows in London and visiting the United States on promotional tours. In 1930 Mrs. Geraldine Rockefeller Dodge, wife of the owner and President of Remington Arms Company, brought von Stephanitz over to judge German Shepherds at her Morris & Essex dog show in New Jersey, the largest one day show in the world at the time. The entries were so numerous that the males were done the day before the actual opening of the show.

The man was obsessed with his canine crusade, and as is typical of dog obsessed family life, where children either get enough early or are hooked, of his two children his son Otto grew up with little interest in the dogs while his daughter Herta became actively involved in the affairs of the club and the dog show world. (Strickland, 1974) Herta von Stephanitz (born 1899) published a little known German Shepherd book of her own about 1940, and was tangentially involved in breed affairs after the war.

Von Stephanitz was without doubt the strongest and most influential personality over most of four decades, but he did not have complete control of the breeding direction. As the judge of the males at the annual conformation championship, that is, the person who selected the Sieger each year, he was able to wield great power. Every breeder ultimately wanted to create a Sieger, to join the elite circle, which meant that one ignored the leader with great caution. But the histories of the era indicate that many breeders charted their own course, and many dogs obviously downplayed by von Stephanitz nevertheless were widely used at stud. (Garrett) Although the 1904 Sieger, Aribert von Grafrath, was bred and selected as Sieger by von Stephanitz, at that point in time he announced his decision to cease showing his own dogs, at least at the Sieger Show. Thus he relinquished potential prominence as a breeder in order to focus on his leadership role.

Much of the contemporary literature portrays von Stephanitz as the all-powerful and benevolent founder of the breed; but there is much more to it than this. Men such as Wachsmuth, Sparwasser and Eiselen had been actively breeding and showing prototype lines for a number of years, there was an ongoing community effort well before he became involved. The first mention in the literature of a dog actually owned by von Stephanitz was the female Freya von Grafrath, purchased in 1897, and there is no indication that he was a known figure prior to the purchase of Horand / Hector.

Aribert v Grafrath, born 1903:
Russ HGH

Russ (Ruede) HGH

Molli HGH

Audifax von Grafrath HGH

Woerro HGH

Fanny HGH

Fanny Hundin HGH

Aribert von Grafrath

Pollux

Kastor 1893

Schäfermädchen von Hanau

V Horand von Grafrath (

Greif (Sparwasser)

Lene (Sparwasser)

Lotte (Sparwasser)

Sigrun von Grafrath

Max von der Krone HGH

Tilly von der Krone 1896

Lida 1 von der Krone HGH

Mira von Grafrath HGH

Lida 2 von der Krone

Von Stephanitz was the ultimate promoter and public relations man, and he incessantly promoted himself as well as the breed, which meant down playing all others. As a modern point of reference, it is perhaps useful to compare von Stephanitz to Steve Jobs of Apple computer fame, both driven men very concerned with their personal legacy and capable of being ruthless and uncaring of others perceived as standing in the way of their personal agenda. Jobs was an incredibly gifted promoter with enormous, instinctive insight into what would sell, but he did not invent or create anything. In a similar way, von Stephanitz was an enormously effective leader with an unerring sense of promotion, but not really a breeder. Both men had a hard side, but famous and successful men are not necessarily nice men.

Occasionally today's show oriented breeders question the commitment of von Stephanitz to police work, claim that the breed is to be versatile and that there are other, equally valid, arenas such as search and rescue. This is a thinly veiled dilution of character standards, and the best response to this is a direct quote:

"The ideal of the Society was to develop Police trial Champions out of Exhibition Champions, our shepherd dog therefore, was further developed by dog lovers as a working dog. The Standard by which he would be judged and approved was this, namely:—utility is the true criterion of Beauty. Therefore our dogs exhibit everywhere to-day (in a fittingly developed frame, and never as the caricatures of Nature, the greatest of all teachers) a build of body, compacted and designed for the highest possible efficiency, spare and powerful, with wonderfully well-proportioned lines which immediately attract the connoisseur, who soon recognizes that it imparts to its owner a swift, easy gait, a capacity for quick turning and powers of endurance." (von Stephanitz, 1925) p163

There are perpetual claims that the German Shepherd is a versatile dog serving in many non-aggressive roles such as guide dog for the blind, search and rescue and various popular play sports, and that these are of equal value to the police or military roles. This is more or less innocuous chatter up to a point; but when this is extended to claim that such work is equivalent as a verification of character for breeding purposes it must be vigorously denied. It impossible for a working dog to be such an excellent search dog or assistance dog so as to be designated as breeding worthy on this basis alone, for the aggressive attributes are and must be fundamental to the definition of the breed.

The Dogs of War

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, seeking colonial territory in parity with the French and British empires, particularly in Africa. This was by no means unique, for in a similar way the United States engaged in the blatantly expansionist Mexican war (1846), aggressive western expansion marginalizing the indigenous population and the initiation of hostilities with the Spanish primarily to expand territory, power and influence, as in the acquisition of the Philippine Islands. Subsequent to the Franco-Prussian War the Germans strove for military parity or superiority on every front, as in the launching a massive capital ship construction program intended to gain parity with the British navy, unprecedented for an historically land based power.

This expansionist propensity extended to things canine, for the German military was soon engaged in seeking out ways and means of utilizing dogs in war, encouraging and subsidizing civilian training and breeding. In 1884 a war dog school was established at Lechernich, near Berlin, which produced a training manual for military working dogs in 1885. In this era the Germans were enamored with purity in breeding, which extended to the preference for purebred dogs rather than cross breeds or the undocumented working dogs of the fields and pastures. This caused them to overlook their own best dogs, still herding in the fields, to focus on established breeds, many of them British such as the Airedale or Collie. In his 1892 book on the war dog the well-known German animal painter and illustrator Jean Bungartz made an impassioned case for the Scotch Collie. (Britannica)¹

The establishment of the German Shepherd as a formal breed in 1899 and the phenomenal growth over the next fifteen years under the leadership of von Stephanitz was the pivotal event in the evolution of the modern military and police dog, for in terms of sheer numbers everything else became preamble. The Germans and the German Shepherd would be the worldwide backbone of military and police canine applications for a century.

When war came, the German army was ready with trained dogs, placing 6,000 in service at the onset of hostilities. According to records of the *German Society for Ambulance Dogs* at Oldenburg, of 1,678 dogs sent to the front up to the end of May 1915, 1,274 were German Shepherds, 142 Airedale Terriers, 239 Dobermans and 13 Rottweilers. (Britannica)

This immediate surge of dogs to the front was the fruition of a strong, formal, ongoing working arrangement for war preparation between military authorities and the SV. Every training club was a reservoir of working dogs, and the infrastructure, the lists and plans, were in place.² Von Stephanitz, SV president, was a retired German Cavalry captain and would have remained a part of the brotherhood of officers, well aware of his obligations as a military officer. He would quite naturally have retained his military associations and viewed overt preparation for war and promotion of the German Shepherd as entirely compatible, desirable and natural ends, serving the expansionist German national cause.

There is a tendency to down play the later military associations of von Stephanitz, but we know from his own words that he was back in uniform in 1914:

"In 1915 I saw no dogs in Belgium with the stock, for which the War was probably responsible." Later on the same page: "This experience I had

¹ Bungartz was an activist and promoter as well as an illustrator and author. He founded a German association for Red Cross or ambulance dogs in 1893 and established a breeding and training facility.

² (Richardson, *British War Dogs, Their Training and Psychology*, 1920)p151

nearly every day in West Flandres with the service dog of my regiment who accompanied me all over my area. Among the Walloons, South of the Mass, where the terrible closing stages of the War led me, the dogs had already been appropriated throughout the district for training in the Intelligence Service." ¹

This directly confirms the massive German confiscation of Belgian working and police dogs, setting back their working culture for two generations.

About 7,000 German Shepherds died during the First World War serving as messengers, telephone cable pullers or medical search dogs. The initial German success led to French and British efforts to launch their own programs, but it would be two or more years into the war before their efforts would begin to have practical effect. Subsequent to the war much of the German military establishment was formally dismantled under the terms of the Treaty of Versailles, but the heart of the German officer corps went underground, even then preparing for an eventual reemergence.

Show Lines and Working Lines

Although there are references in the literature and promotional material which claim Schutzhund to have been created about 1900 as a foundation on which the German Shepherd was built, this must not be taken too literally, especially in light of the fact that there is no explicit use of this term as late as 1925 in the seminal von Stephanitz book. Von Stephanitz did in fact put increasing personal emphasis on working titles, especially as the show elements, active even in these early days, came to the forefront, but much of his early focus was on herding titles such as the HGH. Schutzhund is the German word for protection, and in this generic sense they were evolving a variety of tests and trials under evolving rules and procedures. In the early years the PH or police dog title was featured, and the actual use of the Schutzhund title does not appear until much later.

As an example, the 1902 GSD Sieger Peter von Pritschen, listed in historical documents as "SZ 148, KrH PH, Champion 1902." Here we have:

- | | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------|
| • SZ 148 | SV registration number 148 |
| • KrH | Kriegshund or war dog. |
| • PH | Police dog ("Polizei Hund") |
| • Champion 1902 | 1902 Sieger. |

Thus although various police trials and certifications began well before 1910, Schutzhund titles as such did not begin to become common in German Shepherd pedigrees until the 1920s, and the program as we know it today would not emerge until the post WWII era.

In 1924 an extensive program for the breeding and training of working German Shepherds began at *Fortunate Fields*, the estate of Dorothy Eustis in Switzerland. Eustis, an American heiress from Philadelphia, and Elliot Humphrey began an extensive, innovative program of breeding and training German Shepherds for police service. The Fortunate Fields project was much more than just a breeding and training program, it was a research project dedicated to exploring the ultimate potential for canine service to mankind. Extensive and meticulous records were kept and analyzed to identify correlations between physical and character attributes and propensities. In this era before computers and spreadsheets this would have

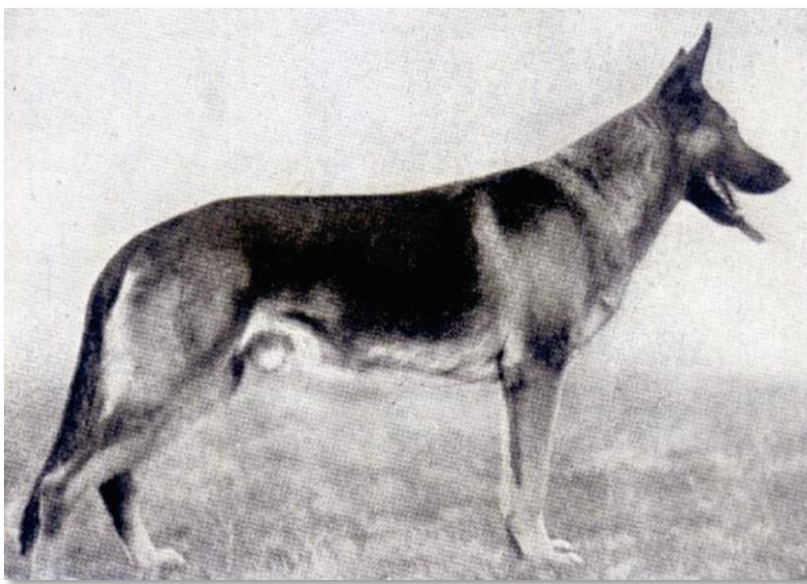
¹ (von Stephanitz, 1925)p186. This is entirely plausible in that he would have been 50 years old in 1914. Intelligence Service probably refers to search and tracking operations.

certainly been an enormous amount of work. Although the focus was on this police service, from the earliest days there was also a great interest in guide dogs for the blind, and when the *Fortunate Fields* program wound down as the Second World War approached Eustis became a founder of the guide dogs for the blind movement in America. Interestingly enough, they mention that in their program the police dogs were almost all males and the guide dogs all females.

Humphrey and Lucien Warner produced a 1934 book *Working Dogs* with an extensive report on this program and a broad discussion of working dogs in general, which is even today an important reference work. In this book they take notice of the separation of German Shepherd lines for work and show, even in the very early years:

"It will be remembered that at the turn of this century the German Shepherd as a breed began to split into two strains. The one produced beautiful dogs, including *all* the show winners. The other produced working dogs, including *all* the working champions. No dog of the championship strains born since 1909 has produced winners in *both* show and working classes. Thus the cleavage is complete."
(Humphrey & Warner, 1934) p226

But when you look at the early pedigrees and the literature going back to the beginning, as in the Garrett book, there are many dogs with the HGH herding title and the PH or police dog title, but few early dogs with an indicated Schutzhund title. A bit later you begin to see the ZPR, which was a relatively easy companion dog test, soon abandoned as not sufficiently rigorous. Schutzhund means protection dog, and was apparently limited to this in early versions, with the obedience and tracking added later. Schutzhund titles begin to show up in the 1920s, but over the years there was a lot of variation in the rules, trial procedures and breeding requirements. The gun test was apparently added later in the development, when von Stephanitz ran a surprise gun test for the males in the Sieger class, and most of the dogs ran. The process of tightening up, for instance requiring the Schutzhund III for the select or V males, came sometime after WWII. It was, and still is, very much a work in progress. The working requirement for the select class was raised from Schutzhund I to II in 1947. (Delinger, Paramoure, & Umlauff, 1976)



Klodo vom Boxberg set a new direction for the breed when von Stephanitz made him Sieger in 1925.

In studying the various early references it is quite apparent that von Stephanitz personally was pushing very hard for the inclusion of herding blood, breeding to dogs actually in herding service, even after WWI and in general seems to have been serious about work. But reading between the lines it seems likely that even then many breeders were primarily concerned with the conformation show wins and pushing back against stronger requirements. There is a general tendency to think

in terms of the good old days when everybody was serious about work and character, but the conflicts between work and show, cited as a reason for failure of the Phylax Society, have been endemic from the beginning, are based in human nature.

Degradation of working character as a consequence of the incessant pressure to win in the show ring is not a recent phenomenon, but rather was there from the very beginning. This is a revealing episode from the Garrett book:

"In one account of the 1921 Sieger show it is reported that near the end of judging for the final day, von Stephanitz entered the ring, raised a pistol and started firing in the air. The account said that he shouted as he was doing this, yelling at them to get the shy dogs out of the ring. From what I can gather it appears that was probably the first gunfire test in German dog shows. It has now become commonplace in every show in Europe. There was criticism for the lack of warning for the tests.

"From the reports it seems that almost all the dogs ran from the ring, with tails between their legs, even before von Stephanitz started yelling. Another account of the incident has a car backfiring in the first instance, not a planned test at all. By this account it was then that von Stephanitz came in the ring firing his gun when he saw the reaction the noise had caused.

"There is no disagreement on accounts about this part, Harras von der Jüch stood tall, sound and proud through the whole incident. He was the best of those passing. Von Stephanitz made him Sieger. By the following year the traditional lines were back in the front of the line at the big show. As we look at the only picture available of Harras it is not hard to understand. He looks very high and shows what has to be a terrible front, very straight in upper arm, short. As shown by his pedigree, he is a Nores son.

"He produced well and a few of his offspring are shown above. It is not known whether temperament was as much a problem by '22 with the top dogs but for sure the doubtful were left at home. It is also not known whether they kept the test going at that time but if not it soon returned to stay." (Garrett)

Rise of the Third Reich

In the post war era the German Shepherd prospered mightily, for by the end of 1932 there had been 441,000 entries in the SV registration book. (Strickland, 1974) This prosperity is all the more remarkable because it occurred in a nation undergoing enormous stress and strife, living under post war punishment by the victors and then the worldwide depression of the 1930s, circumstances which paved the way for Adolph Hitler and his Third Reich.

In the 1930's Germany was in increasing distress and Hitler was on the path that would lead to a second tragedy in a generation. As in all walks of life, SV members also affiliated with the Nazi party would have had the potential to take advantage. It is said that they began to interfere, to cut von Stephanitz off from his life's work; and that when he resisted they threatened him with a concentration camp.¹

This has elements of plausibility, but other authorities indicate that he was becoming increasingly erratic as a judge, question the wisdom and consistency of his Sieger selections beginning in 1930², and increasingly overbearing and domineering. Power does corrupt, even the best men, and the reports of concentration camp threats come from an interview with his wife many years later, after the deprivations of the war, the remembrances of an old woman, loyal to the memory of her late husband as the great man, likely oblivious to the realities of dog club intrigue and power struggle.

Finally, in failing health, he gave up his office. A year later on April 22, 1936, the anniversary of the foundation of the SV, Max von Stephanitz passed away, his personal crusade at an end, as the shadow of the coming tragedy fell across Germany and the world.

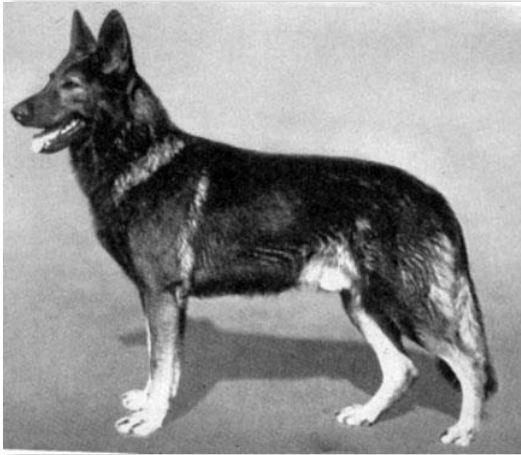
Some ultra-liberal academics make sport of portraying the German Shepherd as a symbol and instrument of oppression, of rampant militarism, of colonial subjection and Nazi oppression, citing use in concentration camps and other applications. While the German Shepherd was popular with Hitler personally and many others, and big aggressive dogs were present in colonial outposts everywhere, such dogs were popular and sought after by broad elements of society. I most certainly admire and respect such dogs, and expect that this would apply to most of my readers. On the other hand, von Stephanitz and the others involved were men of their times, tending to be upper class and very conservative; it is likely that many of their views would be very unfashionable today and thus downplayed.

Hitler was supported early on by the military as an offset to rising socialism and as supportive of the growing underground military, and the political views of most military officers, active and retired, would likely have been to some extent sympathetic in the early days. Americans such as Charles Lindberg and Joseph Kennedy were favorably disposed to the Hitler regime in the prewar era; I see no rational reason to be especially critical of these German Shepherd founders on political, moral or philosophical grounds. As I have noted, these are men of their times and can only be judged in the context and mores of their era.

Soon after the passing of von Stephanitz, in 1937, the SV did away with the annual Sieger title, which was not awarded again until 1955. Instead there was the selection of an elite group of males to establish up a recommended breeding pool. Whether this reaction was an unwillingness to give such unlimited power to another man, that is, select one from what were surely a group of rivals, or a more broadly based egalitarian impulse is difficult to say from this great distance in time.

¹ (Strickland, 1974)

² (Haak & Gerritsen, 2007), also (Garrett)



Othello vom Bergnest, born 1938

In the lead up to WWII the emergence of the Nazi regime in Germany and the increasingly intrusive control of their bureaucrats in canine affairs, especially those concerning potential police and military applications, disrupted breeding programs and the ongoing operation of existing organizations. The German military took the dogs they wanted, which along with the general deprivations of war on the civilian populations to some extent curtailed the breeding program.

On the other hand, the Wehrmacht was much less gentle in the Netherlands and Belgium and here also took whatever they wanted, dogs included, with devastating consequences for the Belgian Shepherds

and the Bouviers. Unfair as it may be, the deprivations in an occupied nation are in general markedly more severe and brutal than in the homeland of the occupiers.

Although many nations suffered grievously during and after the two world conflicts, German territory was never occupied in the first war, and while the civilian population suffered as WWII advanced and defeat loomed, on the whole the deprivations of occupied nations such as Poland, Belgium and the Netherlands were significantly greater than in the German homeland. The Belgian and Dutch breeds in particular were set back grievously during these two brutal German occupations.

Post World War II Germany

WWII brought on a dark age for the German canine world that did not abate until the reemergence of organizations and competitive events in the later 1940's. It was at this time that Schutzhund as we know it today began to emerge in terms of rules, organizations and procedures. Schutzhund titles as German Shepherd breeding prerequisites and as requirements for advanced conformation placements increasingly came into existence in this era. The DVG, the largest of about five important all breed German Schutzhund organizations, emerged at this time, being essentially a new beginning from a combination of several organizations dating back to the 1903 era. (Patterson & Beckmann, 1988)

In addition to the slightly antagonistic relationship between the SV and the all-breed organizations typified by the DVG, there are oblique references in many of the sources that would indicate an increasingly less than cooperative relationship between the breed and amateur training organizations on the one hand and the German military and police on the other. The roots of these animosities run deep. Konrad Most is well known worldwide by reason of his famous 1910 book, his articles in various scientific journals and many leadership roles over sixty years of police and military service. Yet the only reference to Most in the von Stephanitz book is a disparaging remark relating to training principles. (von Stephanitz, 1925)p 325

This disengagement between military and police agencies on the one hand and the working canine community seems to have had a number of difficult to quantify causes. For one thing, military intrusion on canine affairs was generally much more invasive and destructive than in the prior war. Also, the post WWII German military establishment was under direct allied control, with many senior officers lost in the war, executed or imprisoned in the post war Nuremburg trials. After WWI the military establishment was greatly reduced but remained intact and went underground, immediately beginning preparations for the resumption of war. None of

this existed after WWII. The intimate connection with the German officer corps, embodied in von Stephanitz, was gone or at least greatly diminished. But beyond all of this was an increasingly lucrative market for softer companion dogs, both foreign and domestic.

In the later 1940s Germany was divided into four zones by the victorious occupying nations; East Germany, and their Shepherd community, would remain isolated for nearly half a century, until the fall of the Berlin Wall in the early 1990s. This tended to retard recovery and it was several years before the prewar activity levels could be reestablished.

From 1938 until 1954 the SV did not select a Sieger and Siegerin but rather an elite group, a select class or *Ausleseklasse*. The given reason was to deemphasize the breeding to a small number of dogs and to help maintain overall genetic diversity. This may have been an admirable concept in an idealistic sort of way, but a grand winner is a big part of the publicity aspect of any dog show and thus was eventually reinstated.

The postwar period saw the reestablishment of the international organizational structures, with the German national club, the SV, as a member of the German equivalent of the AKC, that is the VDH or *Verband für das Deutsche Hundewesen*. The VDH is in turn a member of the FCI.

In response to economic recovery programs such as the Marshall Plan, registration numbers recovered rapidly, with 11,000 in 1945 expanding to 40,000 in 1948 including East Germany. By 1966 there was substantial progress with 17,000 puppy registrations in 1961 increasing to 23,000 in 1965. (Delinger, Paramoure, & Umlauff, 1976) The SV membership was at 45,000. For the Sieger Show in Mannheim in September there were 662 entries including about 35 foreign entries, probably including exported dogs returning for the competition. SV President Dr. Werner Funk judged the males and Herr W. Trox did a female class of 96 bitches. Funk's comments included a warning to breeders to be careful of an increase in size beyond the standard.

In 1983 there were 13,170 Schutzhund trials with 45,111 entries under SV auspices. Since there are several other organizations, such as the DVG, and since there is some competition by other breeds, the totals would be significantly higher. (Hasbrouck, 1984) The same source indicates that 4,269 German Shepherds became breed certified, that is, passed a Schutzhund Trial, a Koer Classification and a radiographic hip examination.

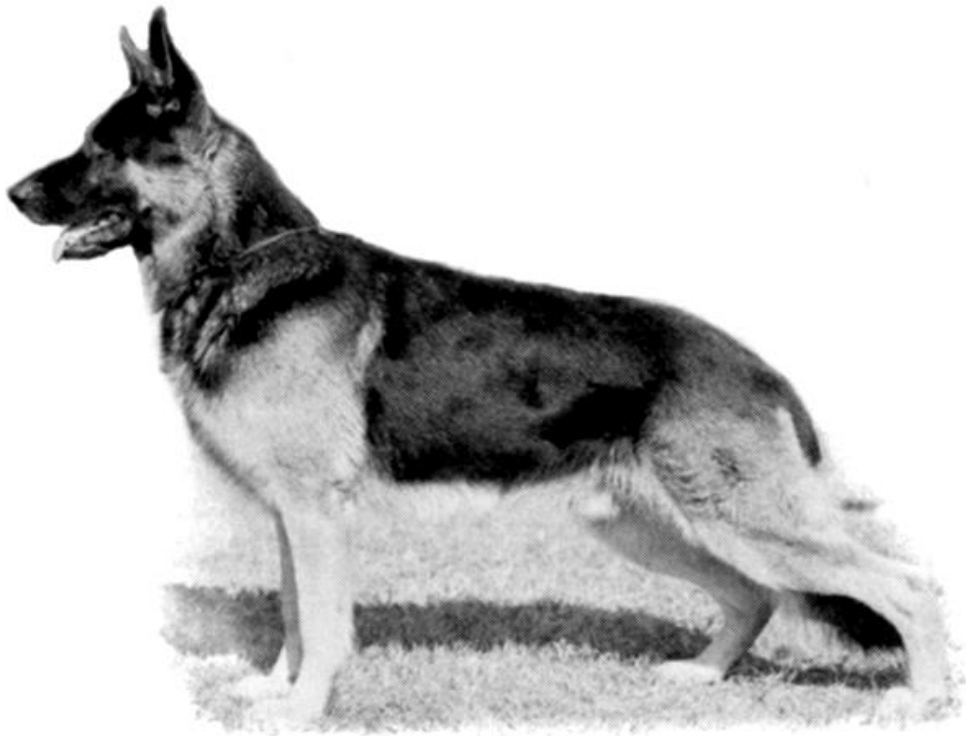
By 2010 over two million German Shepherds had been registered with the SV, roughly twenty thousand pups a year over the first century. As of 2011, the SV or national club had nearly 80,000 members, 19 Landesgruppen or regional divisions and more than 2,200 local clubs.

GSD German registrations for 2006 were 16,908, ten times larger than any other working breed. This popularity is worldwide, with 11,025 French and 43,575 American registrations in this year for example. The GSD is the most popular registered dog in France, Belgium and the Netherlands as well as Germany.

As these numbers indicate the SV is a very large organization. As in most canine organizations, most of the local administrative work is done by large numbers of dedicated local, regional and national officers and loyal club members. In addition to this, the SV main office has grown to a significant professional staff, with 65 salaried employees in the early 1990s. (By 2010 this was down to about 50.)

But there is a fly in this ointment: the 2012 count of 12,786 German puppy registrations is less than half of the number a decade earlier in 1997, which had been 29,824. German Shepherd popularity is in steep decline, worldwide as well as

in Germany. This trend is not specific to the GSD, but rather reflects a worldwide decline in purebred dogs, with particular emphasis on the larger breeds.



Bernd Vom Kallengarten Born October 23, 1957

Germany Today

National registries for purebred dogs are the foundation of modern breeds, a record or data base providing ancestry details of all included dogs and related information. These national registries are interlinked through the FCI or formal arrangements with non FCI nations to make the overall system a virtual international registry for each breed. In most instances information is submitted as a litter registration form indicating the name and registration number of the sire and dam, without any independent verification process. Usually there is no quality standard, as long as the parent names match up with the existing records, the forms are filled out properly and the fees are provided the puppies are eligible for individual registration. These systems are of course subject to fraud, that is, false indication of the parents, which can be perpetuated through generations. Recent years have seen some tightening up such as requirements for submission of DNA samples for the sires as a means of verification. But even accurate records in no sense certify or verify the quality of the dogs being bred in terms of soundness, type or character.

Most often these systems are run by a national registry such as the AKC or the national FCI organizations such as the VDH. This is necessary because many individual breed clubs are small, disorganized or lack ongoing continuity of leadership and administration, are simply not capable of maintaining long term records.

The German Shepherd, and some other breeds, is different in that the SV, the German national breed club, kept its own stud book or breeding records from the beginning, setting its own standards for registration eligibility and instituting rigorous systems both to qualify the parents according to quality and accuracy, that is, insure that the sire and dam are correct. Litters are examined by representatives of the SV (the breed wardens) rather than relying entirely on owner provided information. On paper the German way of breeding would seem to be both rigorous and admirable.

In order for a litter of puppies to be registered with the SV both parents must meet a formidable set of prerequisites.¹ These include :

- A Schutzhund or IPO title, which requires the BH with a rigorous stability and character evaluation as a prerequisite.
- An endurance test, the Aus dauerprufung or AD test, which is essentially trotting beside the handler on a bicycle for a little over 12 miles to demonstrate endurance and vigor.
- A radiographic hip examination providing certification of freedom from disqualifying hip dysplasia.

Once these preliminary requirements are satisfied, each dog must be presented for a formal breed survey where a judge or Koermeister evaluates and rates the dog according to suitability for breeding. This classification can be:

- Koerklasse 1 (Kkl1) Recommended for breeding.
- Koerklasse 2 (Kkl2) Suitable for breeding.

The judge may also find the dog unsuitable and thus not give any rating at all, precluding registration of offspring. As part of the breed survey and as a preliminary to each conformation show under SV auspices the dog must pass a brief protection evaluation, including an attack on the handler and a courage test. There is also a gunshot test. The Koermeister does a complete, written physical evaluation of the

¹ Some details are omitted for the sake of brevity; there are for instance temporary and life time Koer certifications. Also the requirements presented are for "pink papers," that is full certification. There are also registrations possible with lesser requirements referred to as "white papers" (actually light green), but these are unusual today.

dog noting details of coat color and texture, head shape and size, angulation, eye color and many other details, making special note of significant deviations from the standard. These Koer reports form a permanent, publically available record which provides an enormous reference base for historical purposes and future breeding decisions.

The attack on the handler begins with the dog at heel position, walking toward a blind or hiding place concealing the decoy with a padded sleeve and stick. At a distance of approximately twenty feet, on the judge's signal, the decoy emerges from the blind and steps toward the dog in a threatening manner, to which the dog must respond with a firm bite or grip and is then subjected to two sharp stick hits on the rib cage. The attack on the handler exercise had been an integral part of the Schutzhund I and IPO I tests but was removed in 2007, supposedly because it was too aggressive a picture for public view but in reality because too many dogs and especially bitches were failing.

In the courage test the dog is sent against a distant decoy running toward him in a threatening manner; the decoy slowing as the dog engages for a safe but challenging grip. Done properly and with intensity these tests effectively demonstrate the requisite courage, stability and confidence; but properly means real intensity in the decoy, that is, moving toward the dog directly in a very aggressive way and, once the dog engages, driving the dog, that is, stepping into the dog in an intense way and striking measured, sharp stick hits. The validity of the test depends on the integrity of the decoy and the judge, which have enormous discretion over the real challenge to the dog, with ultimate responsibility on the judge who can reject a decoy unwilling or unable to test the dogs adequately.

Done inappropriately, the test easily degenerates into a decoy showing a timid presence, essentially feeding the dog the sleeve as a play object and concealing rather than threatening with the stick which hardly touches the dog. Every show breeder knows where to find such accommodating decoys and judges. This is because under incessant pressure from the conformation element, who control the SV, the decoy work has become so weak and the judging so lenient that these tests have degenerated into little more than playing at tug with the sleeve, a pretend test.

Thus in all but name a two tier IPO trial system has emerged, featuring soft trials with easy decoys and understanding judges for the show dogs and real trials for the real dogs. Sometimes the trial is complete fiction, with the paper work appearing at the central office as if by magic, without a dog ever stepping on the tracking or trial fields. Thus the route to the Sieger Show has become a special trial for the dogs of the elite, continually diluted, often on their own training field with decoys carefully selected to go easy. These are of course fantasy titles meaning nothing, but somehow everybody is obligated to pretend that they are real. The transition from Schutzhund to IPO has been a consequence and extension of this trend.

As mentioned each SV sanctioned conformation show features a preliminary attack on the handler and courage test, but they are a charade where dogs are applauded for tugging on sleeves fed to them by absurdly soft decoys, and dancing with dogs right into show ring has become the norm. It is well known that the decoys are made aware of certain dogs – perceived as important for breeding or belonging to well-connected insiders – that must pass and be made to look as good as possible. Max von Stephanitz would most surely roll over in his grave.

The result of all of this is that the breed is more and more divided into two increasingly divergent cultures, with their own breeding lines, people, standards and heritage. Popular books and magazines, especially official breed publications, including web sites, increasingly pander to this fantasy world, are little more than fawning propaganda, promoting the pageantry of the conformation shows and brushing reality aside.

Each year the SV conformation exhibitions reach a climax at the Sieger Show, where the SV president selects the Sieger and a number of select males, which are a de facto breeding recommendation; and since the same man will judge the dogs the next year and the one after that until he expires or degenerates into complete senility the show breeders are strongly motivated to breed according to his selections. The conventional narrative focuses on these show winners, their progeny and how these lines propagate over the years. Most of the photos in most of the books, magazines and on the internet are of elaborately stacked dogs with the fashionable banana back and extreme rear angulation.

But there remains another, parallel, universe, a separate world of real German Shepherds: the dogs, breeders and trainers so many of us came to admire and respect, still found on trial fields and in police and military service worldwide. The divergence between these dogs, this old heritage, and the elite show dogs paraded at the Sieger Show is ongoing and increasing. But the house divided cannot stand, and while the old guard will stand firm until the end younger enthusiasts have more choices. The Malinois is increasingly predominant in police and military service and international competition, and if current trends continue unabated may become the de facto standard in the serious working dog world. The bubble, immense rapidly increasing popularity, is common in the conformation world. German Shepherd popularity has always been based on the police dog persona, acquired for the perception of reflected virility and manliness of the owner. But registrations have been plunging for two decades, especially in Germany, and the bubble is bursting. If the hard core working community is able to stand strong and weather the storm, this may be a good thing, provide a new beginning.

The Eastern Lines

At the close of the WWII Germany was divided into four occupation zones, administrated by the various allied powers. The three western zones were soon integrated into West Germany, but the Russian zone remained separate and became a satellite state under permanent Russian control. East Germany, more formally the Deutsche Demokratische Republik (DDR), became a tightly controlled socialist state. More importantly for our story a police state, for the government had enormous need for effective dogs to secure their borders, to keep their citizens from escaping, and to maintain order over a captive population. Dogs such as the German Shepherd, and to a lesser extent the Giant Schnauzers and Rottweilers, became a state priority, and for half a century, half of the life of the breed, there was a flourishing German Shepherd community separated from the west. This may have been a societal tragedy, but for the German Shepherd dog it was a stroke of good fortune, for the DDR dogs became a breeding resource virtually unblemished by the show dog fashion endemic in the free world. After the fall of the Berlin Wall, the DDR dogs became widely available in the west and very popular among the working community.

The DDR lines are typically more robust and massive, moderate in angulation, darker in pigmentation and coat color and serious in character. In other words, what a German Shepherd was supposed to be in the first place. My only reservation would be that while power and muscular construction are desirable, overall size needs to be moderate in the interest of agility, endurance and a long and active service life.

Czechoslovakia has a long history with the German Shepherd dog, reflecting the large ethnically German segment of the population, concentrated in the so called Sudetenland portion of the Bohemian and Moravian border regions, roughly three and a half million of the fourteen million Czechoslovakian total in this era. The Czech community was active from the early years, for Klodo vom Boxberg was the Czechoslovakian Sieger in 1923 before going on to fame in Germany as the dog von

Stephanitz selected to change the direction of the breed. Under the post WWII Communist regime security was state priority number one, and the Czech Border Police instituted a comprehensive breeding and training program with complete focus on police dog capability, all or most of the stud services coming from actual border patrol males. These dogs also became a valuable breeding resource and subsequent to the fall of the Soviet Union increasingly available in the west, where these lines remain popular among many trainers. The Czech lines are generally similar in appearance and character to the DDR lines.

Belgium, Holland and France have had enthusiastic German Shepherd training communities for many years, prior to the 1970s the German Shepherd was the predominant competitor in the French Ring Sport.

The Color Code

Apologists for the German show lines like to portray these dogs as beautiful, correct in structure and noble in appearance, and imply or claim that the working lines should be altered in this direction. Nothing could be more absurd; these show lines are an abomination, an embarrassment to the heritage and an insult to the memory of the founders. The American lines are perhaps worse, but there is some excuse in the sense that in the formative years the Americans were distant from the functional working culture in the homelands; you can forgive them to some extent because they really did not know any better.

Over recent years, the German show line selection has placed increasing emphasis on the so-called black and red color configuration. These dogs typically have a black saddle shaped area on the back and extending down the tail and a black muzzle, with the rest of the body having a rich, mahogany color described as red. Some commentators claim that this preference is based in the belief that these colors provide a less intimidating appearance than the darker dogs.

The working lines have more diversity in coat color and texture, as these things are secondary considerations in such circles. Many working line dogs are described as sable, which often means a grey or wolf color. Actually the term sable refers to a pattern of coat color and texture rather than a specific color, that is the banding of color in the individual hairs. Often the hairs are of various colors with black or dark tips. Variation in the outer coat or guard hairs and the softer under coat can often contribute to this appearance. Running your hand or a brush against the grain of the sable coat will often produce a strikingly different color and texture. There is often a great deal of variation in appearance of the coat, color and texture, as the pup matures into the ultimate adult configuration.

Max von Stephanitz is quoted as saying "No good dog is a bad color," and the dogs he used in the foundation included white or light colored dogs. White herding dogs of undocumented origin were included at least into the 1930s, after WWII the white coats were excluded in the standard, and the long coats strongly discouraged.

There are even today people who breed selectively for the white coat as a novelty, and a number of clubs for white German Shepherds have come into existence and been recognized by various kennel clubs, sometimes as a separate breed. In general they are not taken seriously by mainstream enthusiasts. White German Shepherds are virtually never seen in police service, military service or serious working trials.

As a general principle coat color is properly a secondary consideration in breeding selection, less important than structure and character but nevertheless a legitimate criteria. This is especially true in the early years of breed development, and the inclusion of dogs with white or partially white coats was an occasional practice at least through the von Stephanitz era. The lighter coats were, properly, bred out over

time, thus including new blood and enhancing desirable characteristics without permanently changing over all color in the breed.

Thus in individual situations if a dog or bitch is of sufficient merit it can be an appropriate breeding and the color dealt with later. Such dogs should in general not be shown for to do so sends entirely the wrong message to the public at large. At this point in time there is nothing in contemporary white lines to merit inclusion in any mainstream breeding program.

SV Under Siege

Max von Stephanitz had a firm hand at the helm of the SV for the first thirty five years, and his successors have also held power long term, once in office being virtually beyond recall, serving until death, poor health or ongoing senility brings the regime to an end. As this list of SV presidents indicates, relatively few men have served:

| | | |
|---------------------|-------------|---------------------------|
| Max von Stephanitz | 1899 – 1935 | <i>von Grafrath</i> |
| Dr. Kurt Roesbeck | 1935 – 1947 | |
| Casper Katzmair | 1947 – 1953 | |
| Dr. Werner Funk | 1953 – 1971 | <i>vom Haus Schutting</i> |
| Dr. Cristoph Rummel | 1971 – 1982 | <i>vom Aegidiendamm</i> |
| Herman Martin | 1982 – 1994 | <i>von Arminius</i> |
| Peter Mesler | 1994 – 2006 | <i>von Tronje</i> |
| Dr. Wolfgang Henke | current | |

This was in the beginning the strength but in the end the flaw, for power enabled the promotion of the breed nationally and internationally, charting a steady course through hardship and war. But power corrupts, and eventually those at the top yielded onto temptation, began to manipulate and connive to advance dogs, kennels

and fashionable type in service of money and prestige. Fashion dogs appeal to feeble and narcissistic people and were bred accordingly, projecting this far into the future. The Martin name comes to mind as a tipping point.

The power of the SV president has been strong, almost absolute, over the elite show lines, where the money is, because he designates the Sieger and Select dogs and has enormous influence in the selection of conformation judges and the evaluation of the females. But the SV bureaucracy has relatively little direct influence over other breeders, especially of the working lines, and trainers who to a large extent regard the bureaucracy as effete and mildly annoying. This is a good thing, for the working lines prosper because they are increasingly outside of the mainstream German show community, outside of Germany itself or carrying on the DDR or Czech lines. A consequence is that the center of gravity of the working lines, the real German Shepherds, is increasingly outside of strong SV influence.

In a business and fiscal sense, the SV is in serious trouble. Beginning in the middle 1990s puppy registrations began a precipitous decline that within a decade saw registrations cut in half, as illustrated in the table. When registrations decline so steeply, the flow of money follows and also drops; and bureaucrats and commercial breeders live on the steam of money, that is registration and show fees as well as puppy sales. Since registrations are still declining at a ten percent

German Shepherd Registrations in Germany

| | |
|------|--------|
| 2016 | 10,202 |
| 2015 | 10,523 |
| 2014 | 10,470 |
| 2013 | 11,062 |
| 2012 | 12,786 |
| 2011 | 13,339 |
| 2010 | 14,501 |
| 2009 | 15,870 |
| 2008 | 16,854 |
| 2007 | 16,868 |
| 2006 | 16,908 |
| 2005 | 18,278 |
| 2004 | 19,874 |
| 2003 | 19,882 |
| 2002 | 20,352 |
| 2001 | 21,372 |
| 2000 | 20,872 |
| 1999 | 23,839 |
| 1998 | 27,834 |
| 1997 | 29,824 |
| 1996 | 30,802 |
| 1995 | 29,805 |
| 1994 | 28,730 |

yearly clip the crisis is ongoing; fewer pups mean fewer litters, and fewer litters mean fewer trials and less training for the IPO titles necessary to qualify the breeding stock. There is a consequent over supply of judges and officials on all levels, which is not a serious financial problem but a generally demoralizing trend. The SV maintains a large office complex with a paid professional staff of about fifty, an increasing burden in light of plummeting revenue.

The response has been to throw the working heritage under the bus and put emphasis on pet sales and programs such as agility and other pet activities. Go to the SV web site to see how far you have to drill down to find a photo of a dog actually biting a sleeve, or a mention or emphasis on police service or the IPO trial program. So many of us had such faith in these Europeans; perceived them as serious men about serious dogs, turned in this direction because of frustration and impatience with the play dog atmosphere of the AKC world. How ironic to find that under pressure the SV has turned into another Mickey Mouse organization no better in any way than the AKC, even worse when you think of the noble heritage that is being shamed.

These disturbing trends have become evident at the highest levels on the international sport fields. At the 2012 FCI IPO World Championship (20-23rd September in Zalaegerszeg, Hungary) the first four places went to a Malinois. Even more striking, the first six German placements were Malinois, and the seventh was a Boxer; not a single German Shepherd from the homeland, where they created the sport. Perhaps the greatest irony is that Germany was the first place nation, with a team made up entirely of Malinois.

To maintain a bit of perspective this downward trend extends beyond the German Shepherd to all purebred dogs, especially the large and more robust. The United States and most of the rest of the world has seen registrations falling rapidly since the mid-1990s. In 2007 total German (VDH) registrations were 114,670 and in the most recent 2012 listing this had fallen to 79,934. It is difficult to know to what extent this represents a decline in the companion canine population or if increasing numbers of people are simply breeding dogs without bothering with the formalities. At any rate, it would seem that the credibility of the purebred dog is in decline worldwide.

WUSV

In May of 1968 a European Union of German Shepherd Clubs (EUSV) was formed with these founding members: Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Great Britain, Holland, Italy, Austria, Switzerland, Czechoslovakia and the Federal Republic of Germany. In 1975 this was expanded into a world union (WUSV) which currently has 82 member associations in 73 countries. While there is a great deal of verbiage about worldwide friendship and camaraderie, some of it real, the Germans retain tight control and never lose sight of the underlying marketing and propaganda functions; money does matter.

Because of conflicts in canine politics, the United States has two separate entities in the WUSV: the original GSDCA in 1975 and then later a USCA entry 1983. Almost as in an official religious mystery, these two members somehow constitute a single membership. Since only one team per member nation is permitted at the UWSV IPO championship, the selection of the American team has been the source of strife and conflict over the years, with sometimes both USCA and GSDCA being able to designate part of the team and more recently with a selection trial to designate a team. The convoluted, ongoing political conflicts and struggle between USCA and GSDCA over representation in the WUSV is a 25 year holy war with no end in sight.

One of the most popular and visible aspects of the WUSV is the annual working championship, held in various nations, including the United States. The 2011 WUSV IPO (Schutzhund) championship was held October 6 through 9 in the city of Kiev in the Ukraine. There were 108 individual entries from a total of 33 nations, 20 with full teams, including a 5-member team from the United States. The first two individual places went to Finlanders with third to a Belgian and fourth to a German.

Team results are based on the total of the three highest scores. There were twenty teams with three passing scores, in rank order: Finland, Germany, Switzerland, Slovakia, Holland, Russia, Italy, Hungary, Austria, Belgium, Ukraine, Czech Republic, France, Brazil, Kazakhstan, USA, Taiwan, Canada, Spain and Japan.

In the 1990s American teams featuring people such as Gene England and Gary Hanrahan did extremely well, but primarily with dogs purchased as trained and titled winners, often with behind the scenes financial backers. The Germans did not seem to mind their own dogs coming back and doing well, because it was a reflection of their breeding and training, good advertising for their working dog business ventures. In recent years the all-breed FCI IPO Championship has gradually become more prestigious, and increasingly dominated by the Malinois.

In the 1920s and 1930s the German Shepherd became enormously popular across the world, in nations as diverse as Japan, Argentina and the United States. Beginning in the Meiji period (1868-1912) Japan became increasingly industrialized and westernized; adapting many customs and fashions of the modern industrial West, such as dress and industrial technology. Japan also became aggressively expansionist, dominated by military leadership with the Emperor as a figure head. This extended to things canine as the Japanese military imported large numbers of dogs, especially German Shepherds, and built up their training and deployment programs. The beginnings of this came when Japan occupied German held territory in China post WWI and thus came into possession of the initial German Shepherds. Deployment was greatly extended during the Japanese occupation of Manchuria in the 1930s, providing the experience and breeding base for the oncoming war in the Pacific. Popularity among Japanese civilians also was immense, with several national level clubs and a translation of the von Stephanitz book in the 1930s. There was a substantial Japanese canine program in WWII.

Home With the Troops

Although a few German Shepherds had come to America prior to WWI, highlighted by the first AKC registration in 1908 and the founding of an American GSD club in 1913, the real advent of American popularity began as dogs came home with the troops. A vigorous community of enthusiasts emerged post war resulting in the founding of regional breed clubs, magazines and prominent breeding programs. In the twenties and thirties men such as Lloyd Brackett and Grant Mann in Michigan based breeding programs on imports, including several German Siegers and other conformation show winners.

In the post WWI era the America evolution of the German Shepherd followed the German lead as many prominent German show winners were imported for exhibition and breeding. This was possible primarily because of the difficult economic conditions in Germany, to some extent a consequence of reparations and other sanctions imposed after the war. At that time America was overwhelmingly the most prosperous nation on Earth, and we were not at all reluctant to throw a little money around.

Throughout the twenties and thirties a number of Siegers and other prominent show winners were sold to America. Klodo vom Boxberg in 1925, Utz vom Haus Schütting in 1929 and Pfeffer von Bern in 1937 are only a few examples. These dogs brought fame or at least notoriety to their new owners, predominating in the American show ring, often only really competing against the other big money imports. But it was like a grass fire, meant relatively little in the long run, for a decade or so later these dogs and their progeny were out of the limelight, and new wonder dogs from Germany were again the way to importance in America.

By 1925 the GSD had replaced the Boston Terrier as the most popular American breed, with AKC annual registrations building up from 2,135 in 1920 to a peak of 21,596 in 1926. Since the all-breed total was 59,496 that year this amounted to 36 percent of AKC registrations. Popularity persisted for a few more years and then crashed with the economy to 1,333 in 1932 and just 792 in 1935. (Goldbrecker & Hart, 1967)

The Second World War brought all of this to an abrupt end, and after the war the Germans were in disarray, with many dogs lost and dog breeding taking second place to national recovery. Gradually post WWII American registrations began to rise with 4,921 in 1947, 17,400 in 1954 and on to a peak of 111,355 in 1971. By 2006, the last year the AKC published statistics, they were back down to 43,575.

Early in the 1950s the Germans were on the rebound and the Americans were still the people with the money, so a fresh wave of German imports inundated existing American lines, emerging as prominent winners on the show circuit and as breeding stock. Notable imports of this era included Ingo von Wunschelrute, Bill von Kleistweg, Harold von Haus Tigges, Ulk von Wikingerblut and Bernd vom Kallengarten. Perhaps the best known was Troll von Richterbach, born 1953, who became the paternal grand sire of Lance of Fran-Jo, the most prominent American stud dog of the modern era.

The 1960s saw the emergence of a new, more independent direction. The import flow ceased abruptly like someone turned off the spigot and nobody even paused to look back; for the rest of the century American breeding and lines went their own way with very little foreign influence. Relentlessly tight breeding on Lance and his even more extreme progeny became the mantra of the day, and they followed like lemmings over the cliff.

American breeding never had any pretense of working character, and even in AKC obedience the American show line discards had to creep off to their own specialty shows not to flounder. The problem was that the American shepherds evolved strictly as show dogs, without any expectation or real appreciation for

working capability. There can be little doubt that many German dogs lacking in courage or overly sensitive to gun shots, of little value in Germany, found their way into the American market, and, more importantly, into our breeding lines. American breeders of the era talked openly of gun shy German dogs being a really good deal, an opportunity to acquire an attractive import with an impressive pedigree at a very modest price.

In America the German Shepherd community from the beginning was a world onto itself; those attending an ordinary (all breed) dog show would tend to see relatively few German Shepherds. The reason was that across America there had emerged numerous AKC affiliated German Shepherd specialty clubs conducting an entire, year long, circuit of single breed specialty shows. In the AKC system, the winning dogs are awarded championship points according to how many dogs are in the competition so as to prevent going to out of the way shows to accumulate points. Since the specialty shows were heavily attended there would usually be major points, but often there were only one or two points and few majors at other all-breed shows.¹ (Selected all-breed shows were traditionally heavily attended, virtual specialties, apparently this got around by word of mouth.)

Over the years there was a cadre of inordinately influential specialist German Shepherd handlers who lived on the show circuit. Beyond this first rank of five to ten there were many regional handlers who did not support themselves entirely on the circuit but were very active regionally and at major specialty shows. These handlers had enormous influence, to the point where it was very difficult for the outsider to compete, and one could remain an outsider for a very long time. Money, big money, always bought immediate insider status. Over the years, Jimmy Moses was always the big name.

Years and years ago when I was a little bit involved in Shepherds and still naive enough to take these American lines seriously I had occasion to pick up a specialty judge at the airport, a dentist from New Orleans I think, and escort him to the hotel and show, so that he would not be in contact with the competitors prior to going into the ring. Although I did not quite understand the connection at the time, this judge seemed preoccupied, even obsessed, with getting Jimmy Moses to come down and handle some of his dogs.

Naturally, at the show Jimmy won just about everything, each class was essentially a contest for second place. When the specials,² dogs already holding the championship, came into the ring Jimmy took first place at the head of the line, apparently automatically conceded as his rightful position. He stood there with his dog for a moment; then carefully wrapped the leash around his hand just right, gave it a nice tug, looked at the dog, looked down at himself. You could just hear him thinking "Yep, this is the dog, I am Jimmy Moses, the sun is shining and all is right with the world." Then he looked up, looked around at the owner, Art Saltz I think it was, a relatively big name. He got this terrible look on his face, unwound the leash, held up an open hand to the judge, put his hands on his hips and reamed – gave him a real tongue lashing. It has been years, but the words were to the effect: "You idiot, you can't double handle from there, get down at the end where you belong." The owner scrambled into the indicated place, and Jimmy once again went through the process of carefully arranging the leash. He looked at the judge, smiled, and nodded his head. The judge gave his little return smile, waved them to go around and

¹ The AKC championship requires a total of 15 points with two major wins (a major win is one with three or more points). The majors must be won under different judges.

² A "special" is a dog which is already a champion and entered in shows to compete for a best of breed selection in order to gain prestige and to compete against other dogs in multi breed shows.

pointed his finger right at Jimmy and the dog before they had done a half circle, before some of the dogs even started to move out. Would you believe it, that judge evaluated all of those dogs and determined that Jimmy had the very best one in all of fifteen seconds? Yes indeed, Mr. Moses had handled yet another dog to "Best of Breed, Best of Specialty Show." The dog, Sabra Dennis of Gan Edan, was apparently well regarded in these circles, for he went on to become Grand Victor in 1981. When they were doing the photos, the judge was heard imploring Jimmy "After all I have done for you today, when are you going to come on down to handle my dog?"

Double handling, attracting the attention of the dogs from outside the ring, is technically not permitted by the AKC but always goes on at Shepherd specialties. Although there was never much effort to enforce the ban, at one particular show there was an AKC representative present: taking note of an owner/judge outside of the ring double handling for Jimmy Moses, he suggested to the judge that he should, in consideration of his position, set a good example and obey the rules. Art looks at the rep, looks back at Jimmy, considers his options and says something to the effect "You do what you have to do, I know what I have to do" and went on with his double handling.

It has been said that Joan Firestone, of rubber company fame, spent well over a quarter million dollars having Moses show a dog named Manhattan for a year; but she did wind up with the really big tin cup at the Westminster show in New York in 1987, so I suppose it must have somehow seemed worthwhile to a person of means whose life was so devoid of meaning that such things seem important.

On a certain level all of this is little more than gossip, but it serves to illustrate the dynamics of the show dog world where professional handlers, a politicized judging culture, elaborate promotional campaigns and enormous amounts of cash have become determining factors in establishing champions, specialty winners and thus trend setting prototypes. The resulting fashions and trends lead other breeders and judges – profoundly ignorant of canine history and the relationship between physical structure and working function – to blindly emulate the "winning" breeding on a journey to nowhere. If this were only a matter of determining who got to take home the tin cups and satin ribbons, and whose dogs got their photos in the *German Shepherd Dog Review*, it could be dismissed as an elaborate diversion for shallow people with empty lives, a meaningless charade. But for those with a passion for working dogs there are serious, ongoing negative consequences, for this show system is the driving force of breeding selection, resulting in a process where fashionable "type," ever more extreme angulation and over extended side gate, rather than a physical structure conducive to excellence in real work, are predominant determining factors.

Structure and Stride

The work of the shepherd's dog, particularly the tending style dog with large herds to manage and control, requires stamina, endurance, quickness and enough size and intensity to intimidate the sheep and repel predators. These are in general very much in line with the physical requirements of a modern police dog, which is one of the reasons why they emerged from the historically herding breeds rather than the mastiff style estate guardians. Such dogs must have an efficient stride, which requires medium size, length of body and some flex in the back, and moderately pronounced angulation for reach in front and drive from the rear. A moderately deep chest accommodates heart and lung function for distance and stamina, but avoids excessive chest width which compromises efficient stride and agility. The emphasis in the cattle herding and droving breeds, such as the Rottweiler or Bouvier des Flandres, is more on power, agility and quickness, which requires a shorter back, a more square structure viewed from the side and more moderate

angulation, and thus sacrifices to some extent the longer stride, speed, stamina and endurance. Neither herding heritage requires the extreme depth of chest of the coursing hounds such as the Afghan; the shepherd's dog needs to cover distance efficiently, but not with the extreme distance speed of the coursing or sight hound.

The essential point is that when any physical attribute – angulation for a longer stride or the deeper chest for longer distance, high-speed endurance – is emphasized other attributes such as agility or power are compromised. Each breed and each working environment requires its own set of interrelated structural compromises to optimize performance, which is why herding dogs in new regions such as Australia or Argentina tend to be new variations rather than directly imported European herders. These are the basic structural determinations made by nature and man to produce diverse herding lines according to need in terms of stock attributes, existing predator threat and prevailing terrain. But the conformation systems, in both Germany and America, have taken the basic herding requirement of an efficient stride and endurance and over time degenerated into an obsessive preoccupation with exaggerated, pointless front and rear reach to the exclusion of balance, deleterious to other, equally fundamental, physical and performance attributes, most especially agility. These banana dogs, monstrosities of the show ring, extreme in angulation and wobbling in the rear, hardly capable of standing upright, would be of little practical use in an actual herding or police service environment, their only real function being to circle the show ring and induce the judge to point his finger.

In looking back to the earlier German Shepherds, even as recently as the 1950's, there was much more similarity in structure to the Belgian Malinois and the early Dutch Shepherds, although these dogs were always moderately less massive and muscular. This was the general structure that generations and centuries of service in the pasture produced, the result of practical breeding for a real herding function. The Malinois of today, and also to some extent the working line German Shepherds, retain much of this basic structure for a good and simple reason: it works.

Von Stephanitz famously observed that form must follow function; but from the beginning American breeders and fanciers were in denial, culturally compelled to ignore the practical aspects of service and deployment. Virtually none of the American breeders or judges had participated in any sort of police training, had any real familiarity with or understanding of the actual function of the breed, because the American canine culture was viscerally hostile to any sort of real aggression in any dog. Also, in this era there were only a few police canine operations, mostly small, fragile and short lived. The question becomes how can you breed for and preserve the form if you do not comprehend the essentials of the function? The answer is that you cannot, and the consequence is that breeding selection was according to fashion rather than function, and fashion is inherently a political, social and money driven process with nothing to do with the consequences in terms of physical type or performance.

The Germans of course retained the Schutzhund requirement for breeding, and in general maintained the traditional physique longer. But beginning in the 1970s the Schutzhund trial itself was compromised. The scaling wall was replaced by the A frame, which is lower than the scaling walls used in KNPV and the national Ring sports. There is no broad jump or ditch jump, and the high jump at one meter is not especially demanding. Aspects of the trial proving difficult for the dogs were remedied by compromising the functional tests rather than breeding dogs capable of performing to the existing standards. The focus changed from performance to obedience, to the detriment of physical excellence. The cane stick became the padded stick, the pursuit and turn in the courage test was abandoned, the attack on the handler was removed. Even more seriously home field trials with very lenient judges and accommodating club decoys became increasingly available, and if this was not sufficient it was possible to fraudulently submit the paper work, providing a

Schutzhund title to a dog never having stepped foot on a trial field. The Americans were ignorant, and while they may have clung tenaciously to their ignorance they were less blameworthy than the German show breeders, who knew the heritage full well, and betrayed it for money, pseudo prestige and personal aggrandizement.

The Doberman Pinscher



Richard Strebel drawing, 1903

Most of the police breeds, such as the German Shepherd and the Malinois, were created by seeking out regional dogs of an existing function and type, and then selectively breeding from within this foundation stock to solidify physical appearance and character attributes. In a sense the foundation of these breeds had been established over time as stockmen and farmers made breeding selection according to the demands of their work, and the formal breed founders, the men who created studbooks and breed clubs, were merely consolidating and completing the work of generations of herdsman, making formal an already existing breed in the rough.

The creation of the Doberman Pinscher was different in that existing lines of dogs were combined to create a new breed

with a specific purpose and corresponding physical and character attributes appropriate for that purpose. While the Doberman is a prime example of this process, the details remain murky. What is well accepted is that in the 1880s, Louis Dobermann, along with several associates, was combining various sorts of dogs so as to produce a line useful in their work as night watchmen and perhaps also dog catchers and tax collectors. This was taking place in the German town of Apolda, 155 km west of Dresden in Thuringia. The associates mentioned include a man named Rebel who was a night watchman. Also mentioned is a prominent cattle merchant by the name of Stegmann whose business involved importing stock from Switzerland for breeding purposes, creating the need of vigorous dogs to drive and protect the cattle, and also the drovers who would likely have carried significant cash for their business transactions.

This was an informal process in the sense that while they were serious and careful in their selection no long term breeding records were kept, for these were working men likely lacking the leisure and inclination to create records or to foresee that this line of dogs would endure in the long term. Throughout history men, individually and in cooperating groups, have been creating their own lines for their own purposes, most of these being transient, creating no enduring records, eventually lost to memory with the passage of time.

Louis Dobermann¹, since his name has come to also be the name of the modern breed, is often taken to be the founder, but the reality is a little more nuanced. William Schmidt, the leading American authority, mentions in his well-known book, with editions starting in 1926 and running on into the 1950s:

¹ Several variations appear in the literature, including Friedrich Louis Dobermann and Friedrich Dobermann.

"The name was taken from a man named Louis Dobermann (1834 - 1894), who held the various positions of night watchman, scavenger and dog catcher in the city of Apolda, at the time the breed became known. No one is in a position to state whether Dobermann had anything to do with the origin of the breed other than his name. He was a fancier of dogs and well acquainted with many breeds, although it must be doubted whether the ultimate breed the Doberman pinscher was his goal." (Schmidt, 1935)

Even those who credit Dobermann as the literal founder concede that he left no written records and had been gone for a number of years before others took on the task of setting up a book of origins, formal clubs and the infrastructure of a modern breed. On the other hand Dobermann was well known as favoring and breeding aggressive dogs which may well have been known colloquially by his name, which thus became attached to the breed even though he may have had little to do with the formal creation. Thus it becomes a matter of semantics, of precisely how the term breed founder is defined.

What is clear is that when Louis Dobermann passed away in 1894 there was no formal breed in existence, and the use of his name, dropping the final n, was an indication of the esteem and respect in which he was held. Whether the founding breeding stock was actually the direct result of the breeding of Herr Dobermann or more or less independently selected and combined by the later founders such as Göller in the same general style has been obscured by the passage of time. If the man was not literally the founder of the breed, he was evidently well regarded by those who did found it.

Although details are scant, it is generally accepted that the founding stock contributing to the initial amalgamation included primitive Rottweilers, German Pinschers, Beauceron and perhaps other regional predecessors to the modern German Shepherd, that is the regional Thuringian shepherds, to produce a breed synthesized from the ground up as a protection dog. It is to be remembered that terms such as Rottweiler were colloquial in this era before formal breeds, referred to type and function just as describing a man as a cowboy referred to his line of work rather than whether he was black, white or Hispanic.

Otto Göller (1852–1922), a distillery owner in Apolda, was the man who at the turn of the century brought the modern Doberman into existence as a formal breed. He seems to have operated on a relatively large scale, for it is said that at times his kennel, *von Thuringen*, held 80 or more dogs.

In 1899 Göller founded the German national Dobermann Pinscher club, which was in turn recognized by the German Kennel Club. It is speculated that it was Göller who incorporated the Greyhound, which would account for a larger and more massive dog compared to the original pinscher or terrier type. Other early figures were Philip Gruening and Goswin Tischler (1859–1939), owner of the kennel *von Grönland*. Both men were located in Apolda. Other early breeders included Gustav Krumpholz and Wilhem Kippel.

In about 1925 the most prominent American authority of the era, William Schmidt of Milwaukee, commented in his book:

"Within a short period of eleven years (in 1910) at the Sieger show in Cologne, Otto Settegast finds the breed to have reached a high degree of perfection. There was an entry of 142 Dobermans. At that time the red and tans were yet superior to the black and tans. The years following 1910 brought about a change. Dogs that were too tall and not typical in head made their appearance. It took again a number of years to weed out such animals." (Schmidt, 1935)



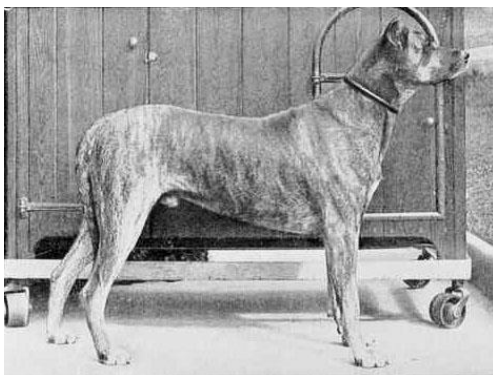
Black and Tan Terrier of the era (Drury, 1903)

Unfortunately, Mr. Schmidt does not go on to offer an explanation for this turn of events. More recently references such as Gerritsen and Hack¹ provide more information, to the effect that the inclusion of "Black and Tan Terrier" and also the Greyhound were involved in this, although details remain murky. An exact definition of Black and Tan Terrier is a bit difficult to pin down, but seems to be a general reference to relatively large, especially robust terriers of the English and Welsh country side. In any event, exactly what actually was imported and bred into the

Doberman is likely to remain a mystery.

Terriers are well known as feisty and animal aggressive, which is of course why they were incorporated into the Pit Bull Terrier and other fighting stock. The original Doberman breeding lines were famously intense, and this terrier blood created more volatility in the breed and more natural inclination to animal aggression. Otto Göller is said to have been opposed to this for several reasons, including opposition to the use of English rather than German blood, opposition to the more elegant and fragile type and opposition to the introduction of terrier like character attributes. Although the concurrent introduction of both terrier and Greyhound blood makes it difficult to sort out cause and effect, in general more elegance and refinement, and a dog higher in the leg, were the desired physical attributes. The black and tan color variety seems to have come from the terriers.

In reference to the Greyhound influence, Gerritsen and Hack comment: "It is known that about that time a very savage black Greyhound bitch was used, and from the exterior and speed of the modern Doberman it appears to have considerable Greyhound influence. This Greyhound was used in order to get the more aristocratic expression and outline in the Doberman Pinscher, but also caused problems in the type of heads, height of the dogs, and the closeness to the Greyhound-type, not to mention the changes in the character of the Doberman."



Great Dane of the Era

In time the Doberman came to have influential advocates, such as Konrad Most, the man most associated with the evolution of the police dog in Germany, famous for his 1910 training book referred to even today.

¹ (Haak & Gerritsen, 2007)

Most bred Dobermans under the kennel name *von der Sarr* in the town of Saarbrücken, west of Stuttgart on the French border.¹ He was a passionate proponent of both canine police service and the Doberman Pincher, conducting elaborate demonstrations and seminars in Germany, Austria and elsewhere.

According to the German stud book, there had been a total of 207 registrations through 1905 and a total of 1200 through 1912, the last book before the war.² (In comparison, prewar German Shepherd registrations were about 100,000.) As a consequence of these activities, and an indication of the promotional efforts of the originators, by 1911 there were 360 Dobermans among the 1300 police dogs in 400 German police canine units. (Schmidt, 1935) If these numbers are accurate, it would mean that more than a fourth of the Dobermans of the era were in actual police service, a very large amount.

Through 1933 48,000 had been registered in total, with an average of about 5000 a year toward the end of this period. In the modern era the Doberman has been much less numerous in the homeland, for there were only 757 registered in Germany in 2006, down to 616 in 2011.

The German Doberman club did not hold a Sieger show until after the war, in 1920. In this era they selected two Siegers, one black and tan and one of any other acceptable color combination. Two Siegerins were also selected in the same manner. There is no mention of work or character requirements. (Schmidt, 1935)

The first Dobermans came to America relatively late, around 1908. The *Dobermann Pinscher Club of America* was founded in 1921 and adapted the German Standard. The Doberman experienced a huge American surge in the 1970s, going from 18,636 in 1970 to 81,964 in 1978, a hefty 20,000 more than the German Shepherd. In subsequent years a surge in Rottweiler popularity would produce a fall as dramatic as this rise. There were 11,546 American registrations in 2006, fifteen times as many as in Germany itself.

¹ It would perhaps seem odd that the book of a Doberman man would have only German Shepherd photos, but what is available is the English translation of 1954, the year Most passed away, which states that the photos presented were not original but rather were taken in England for this edition.

² (Schmidt, 1935)

The Rottweiler



Havok v Schwarzen Hammer

Rottweiler enthusiasts tend to fancy their breed as going back directly to the noble war, cattle herding and carting dogs of the Romans. In one sense this is an exaggeration, for the breed is a modern concept, and focus on commonality of appearance and the closed breeding pool goes back only to the latter 1800s; there are no records of descent much before 1900. Just as in other breeds, the founding stock, according to descriptions and existing photos, had extensive variation in size, type and coat texture.

But while in a broader sense the idea of the Rottweiler as a breed coming directly from antiquity is an exaggeration, it is true that this is an ancient and persistent type. Even before the Romans, indeed going back to much earlier eras, men have had the need for massive, powerful dogs of the general Molosser type. In the 1500 years between the fall of Rome and the emergence of the modern Rottweiler innumerable regional types no doubt emerged, served and sometimes faded back into the morass of canine stock.

In central Europe in the centuries before there was a Germany there would have been a natural diversity of type, for the draft dog would have tended to be large, powerful, relatively square in stature and straight in angulation, and placid in nature. The cattle or drovers dog would have needed to be quick and agile as well as powerful and thus perhaps less massive, slightly more pronounced in angulation and more intense in nature to dominate the cattle. Functional specialization naturally leads to distinctive physical type and character; this is after all the underlying evolutionary principle of life.

AKC Rottweiler Reg

| Year | |
|------|---------|
| 1969 | 439 |
| 1983 | 13,265 |
| 1987 | 36,162 |
| 1990 | 60,471 |
| 1994 | 102,596 |
| 1996 | 89,867 |
| 2006 | 14,709 |
| 2007 | 14,211 |

specialty clubs commenced.

By 1900 the emergence of the railroad, paved roads and slightly later motor cars and trucks were rapidly rendering the traditional cattle driving and draft or carting functions obsolete, and it is said that the breed had virtually disappeared in the far southern region of Germany, in the vicinity of the city of Rottweil from which the name was taken. Just as in the other breeds, there were men unwilling to let this heritage pass into history and the remnants of these working lines were gathered together and preserved, and the process of breed creation with the written standard, studbooks and

As a formal breed the emergence of the Rottweiler was later than the Doberman and German Shepherd, where the breed clubs were unified, well established and flourishing by 1905. Although there were several Rottweiler clubs in the early period, it was about 1920 before a unified German club, the *Allgemeiner Deutscher Rottweiler Klub* (ADRK), came into existence as a consolidation of previous clubs. ADRK registry records begin in 1924.

Although there were a few individual Rottweilers in America prior to WWII, serious American presence came only after that war, and the breed was very sparse through the 1960s. Over time breed popularity tends to wax and wane according to fickle public whim, driven by such things as appealing movie roles or celebrity pets,

but nothing can compare to the surge in Rottweiler popularity, as shown in the above table of AKC annual registrations.

There is no mystery as to what drove this surge, for American fascination with the German police breeds goes back to the beginning of the century; this was the next big thing following the ebbing of the Doberman bubble. Indeed, over much of a 25 year time span the two breeds tracked almost one for one, every step up in Rottweiler corresponding to an equivalent step down for the Doberman. Both breeds for a brief time eclipsed the perennial favorite police dog, the German Shepherd, which has been relatively consistent in popularity since the end of WWI. By 2006 the Rottweiler registration count was down to 14,709.

At his best the Rottweiler is a magnificent and functional beast, powerful, relatively square and short-coupled, an admirable combination of agility and relative massiveness. But of course the Rottweiler of the American show ring is not at his best but rather a bloated caricature; the lineup of males contending for best of breed looks like a parade of pigs ready for the slaughter. It was not uncommon for the dogs being Schutzhund trained to need twenty or more pounds of fattening up for the show ring.

When I first went to Europe in the 1980s, my familiarity was of course with the American Rottweilers. The Rottweilers I saw in the Dutch IPO trials of that era were a revelation, looked like another and much superior breed, more like moderately bulked up Beaucerons than what I was used to seeing.

It is instructive to compare the Rottweiler to the Bouvier des Flandres, another cattle dog, one in which I have had some personal interest. In the French language, the Rottweiler is just another bouvier with the small b, that is a dog of the cattle herder. Now of course these dogs at first glance would seem to be radically different, but much of this is due the coat of the Bouvier and the elaborate, artificial grooming for the show ring. Think about a Bouvier closer to the original herding lines, with a much sparser coat, perhaps clipped down, and the kind of Rottweiler that could really herd cattle rather than looking like one of the cows. In both instances you have a dog square with a relatively level top line and moderate angulation compared to the shepherd's dogs. Both breeds require a relatively massive head and moderately deep chest, but should not be overly wide in the front. (In spite of show ring partiality.) Yes, the Rottweiler is a little more massive and powerful, and the Bouvier perhaps slightly more quick and agile, but the similarities, dictated by the needs of the cattle dog and the drover's dog, are as important as the differences.

The Giant Schnauzer

The Giant Schnauzer, or Riesenschnauzer, is the largest of three contemporary German Schnauzer breeds. The name is a reference to the bearded face or nose, as the word Schnauzer translates from the German roughly as muzzle or snout.

The Riesenschnauzer is a rough coated, dark colored, medium sized dog which stands relatively square when viewed from the side, historically with cropped ears and the docked tail, often compared to the Bouvier des Flandres. Many of the old Schnauzer photos to my eye look remarkably like the early Bouviers, while others have little resemblance to any of the Bouvier progenitors I am familiar with. One sometimes sees speculation of Bouviers behind the Schnauzer, but I am not aware of solid, specific references. The cattle driving or drover's dog function is also a common link with the Bouvier.

This breed was to an extent man created, that is, the result of the mixing together of existing breeds to produce the type and character desired. In addition to the Bouvier, there is mention of breeding the existing and older Standard Schnauzers with the Great Dane. There could easily be common ancestors with the German

Shepherd, for dogs with long and rough coats existed but were selected against. (Note that although the Malinois has a coat similar to the German Shepherd, the other Belgian Shepherd varieties have rough coats and long coats with a wide variety of coloration, some of which was eliminated through selective breeding.)

Although the Riesenschнауzer has never been especially common in America, there were several, perhaps six or seven, in service with the Delaware State Police in the early 1990s and there was thus a small wave of popularity on Schutzhund fields. The rest of this story is a little interesting, for these dogs were from East German border patrol lines that the fall of the Berlin Wall had made superfluous and thus available. I am told by men who worked them that several of these dogs were truly dangerous, even by police standards. And of course those who thought that the Giant was the new wonder dog and purchased indiscriminately from West German lines were most often disappointed, and the mini wave of popularity quickly dissipated.

The Boxer



Ken Johnson's Tyson

The Boxer is a German breed of the general Molosser type, that is, short haired, stocky, with broad, short skulls and square muzzles. The Boxer is bred with a severe under bite on purpose as a matter of style, which is regarded as a severe fault in the other police breeds because of the negative effect on the ability to take and hold a strong full grip. The pushed in face and very short nose are also deleterious in the olfactory or scent work; in general the creators of this breed have

historically preferred a fashion statement to a serious working dog.

Of the German breeds with an historical police service association, the Boxer is second only to the German Shepherd in general American popularity, with 33,548 new dog registrations in 2002, sixth overall in AKC popularity. In actual police or protection service the Boxer is perhaps the least common with very little pretense of serious purpose among the breeding community in America or the homeland.

11

British Origins



Edwin Richardson and his dogs.

The countries of the British Isles have in general been among the least engaged of European nations in the police patrol canine program, with no native protection breeds and a strong pacifist streak in the class oriented civilian canine community. The British have regarded protection style working dogs as a perhaps necessary but an unpleasant activity properly restricted to military and police trainers. There is little protection sport activity or civilian participation in police training as exists, for instance, in the Netherlands. The early eradication of the wolf and other predators, and the dispersed rather than large flock nature of sheep husbandry resulted in the native working shepherd's dogs being much less adaptable to the police patrol role than the continental varieties.

The hysteria driven campaign in recent years to lock out fighting style dogs, a culture with strong British roots, and eradicate undesirable foreign breeds is not an aberration, but consistent with the British character and heritage.

In spite of all of this, early in the twentieth century, there was significant activity, albeit with very little long-term consequence.



Airedale Terrier

Edwin Richardson and his Airedale Terriers

Since there was so little interest in police canines in Great Britain, simply as a matter of culture, as in America those enthusiasts who sought to create interest found themselves swimming against a very strong tide. Perhaps the most prominent and well known of these early pioneers was Lt. Col. Edwin Richardson (1860 - 1946). As a consequence of his prodding, representatives from the Metropolitan Police went to France in 1906 but were not impressed, likely going over not intending to be impressed.

The Airedale was the largest and most robust Terrier of that era; and in the eighteen nineties was imported extensively by the Germans and other Europeans. Although originally imported as a hunting dog, the Germans soon began to promote the breed as police and war dogs, resulting in the breeding of much larger dogs and altering the overall character of the breed. Although almost forgotten today, the Airedale was in Germany a serious competitor with the native German Shepherd for police and war service; perhaps even then the attraction of the exotic import held sway over the more pedestrian home breeds.

Major Richardson was a devoted promoter of the Airedale, exporting dogs to Russia where his dogs were used during the Russo-Japanese War in 1904 and in 1910.

The first British police dogs were Airedale Terriers used by the Railway Police for night patrol on the Hull Docks, to help in maintaining order among disorderly sailors returning from leave, likely in the best 'have fun when and where you can' tradition of sailors everywhere. The decision to use the Airedale was based on the perception of the breed as being "stronger, hardier and having a keener sense of smell." National pride was no doubt a factor in this perception, but in the big picture the future belonged to the herders rather than the terriers. The absence of any need for strongly protective herding breeds in Britain was perhaps the key factor in the eventual emergence of continental breeds, training and deployment practices becoming the worldwide standard.

As a side note Chapman mentions that the Airedales used on the Hull Docks were imported from Belgium rather than coming from within the British Airedale community. (Chapman, *Police Dogs*, 1990) This and other indications, such as no mention of military or police work in popular British Airedale books and publications of the era, indicate that the British Airedale establishment had a negative or at least disinterested attitude. This has persisted until this day and been a severe detriment to the advancement of serious British working canines. Actually, there was a fair amount of early day interest in the Airedale on the continent, in Germany as well and Belgium, although this seems to have pretty much died out by the 1930s.

The popularity of the Airedale in Germany, especially as a police or protection dog, likely seems strange to many of us in light of such famous German working dogs as the German Shepherd. But we need to understand that the Airedale was already a well-known breed when von Stephanitz began his first tentative efforts in the 1890s and the SV was not founded until 1899. By this time police patrol

operations were under way in Belgium and the German Shepherd was probably not widely known in Germany when the Airedale was getting his toe hold.

Edwin Richardson was the leading British proponent of the police and military canine applications, publishing a number of books, magazine articles and engaging in public speaking engagements. He was the director of the British war dog program during WWI. As mentioned previously, this was very much a matter of shoveling sand against the tide of public and official disinterest, something for which I can have a certain amount of personal empathy.

A number of sources mention that the British programs of this early era were much less formal than those on the continent such as Ghent, in that often they were not formally trained or acquired specifically for police duty but more the personal companions of the individual patrol officer. Two trained Airedales bred by Major Richardson were shipped to the Baltimore police in 1915 and put into patrol service, but this program was discontinued in 1917, apparently because there was no real knowledge or appreciation of the necessary training and the dogs reportedly never did participate in an arrest. (Chapman, *Police Dogs*, 1990)

At the commencement of WWII the British were again unprepared – had no canine military program, and needed to start again from scratch. This time the leadership fell to James Baldwin, who had been a British Army Major serving under Richardson during the WWI training program. Baldwin had become enthused about German Shepherds while serving in France and became a prominent breeder and proponent of this breed between the wars. Although it was politically correct to call them Alsatians, the German Shepherds became the preferred breed. Just as in America the supply was so short that there was a public solicitation for suitable candidates, and whatever could be acquired from most any source and trained served.

Effective, wide spread British police canine utilization was greatly repressed until well after WWII because of a general resistance to using non-British breeds – or more generally resistance to anything German.

12

The Protection Dog



Stick broken over back of KNPV Malinois. Dog is Renzo KNPV 439 pts. Owner John Kessel, helper Donne Scheidt, photo Peter Gubbels

Earlier chapters explored the ethological foundations and ramifications of canine aggression for police dog breeding, training and deployment. Here the focus shifts to more general societal implications of canine aggression, that is, breeding considerations, training and legal ramifications for civilian applications that employ dogs to enhance security of person, home or in commerce and business.

Suppressing much of overt canine aggression through breeding selection has been a major focus of the domestication and civilizing process. While aggression was and is fundamental in many working and service roles, people in general now keep dogs for diverse purposes requiring a much more passive and compliant animal: most of us today do not need, do not want and are not prepared to deal with extreme aggression in dogs.

This makes all the sense in the world, and the aggression level of each breed or line needs to be set and maintained according to the purpose through breeding selection. A relatively low aggressive potential is generally appropriate for mainstream home companions, particularly in more urban areas. The problems arise when people seeking a more assertive or virile image acquire dogs out of serious police or military service lines without the knowledge, skills and personal vigor to deal with dogs at this level: many breeders pander to this by evolving lines of soft dogs for profit, by selling the image, pretend working dogs, rather than

the real thing. Entire breeds can and do become emasculated through this process.

Well into the nineteenth century farm families made up the vast majority of European and American populations. The farmstead was isolated, that is lacking electric lights, telephone service or routine police patrol. In this world a good dog was a ubiquitous element in home and farm security, often the mere presence causing potential intruders to reconsider and desist or move on down the road seeking more vulnerable opportunities.

Farm dogs announce visitors and provide a first line of security, particularly at night. The dogs also deter predators such as a coyote or fox on the prowl for an easy meal, literally keeping the fox out of the hen house. Although there has always been variation according to local custom and personal preference, these were not in general huge or especially fierce dogs but often rather typified by the old-fashioned farm collie so often portrayed in paintings of country and pastoral scenes. Although many of the livestock dogs, particularly the tending style shepherd's dogs such as the progenitors of the German Shepherd, were with the flock or herd exclusively, it can hardly be doubted that there was significant overlap between the herding dogs

and those present in the farmyard. There were regional variations, the American Bulldog for instance evolving out of the traditional yard and farm dogs of the rural southern United States existent prior to the Second World War. As the population shifted from rural areas to cities and then suburbs as a result of industrialization people took their dogs with them, to serve as watch dogs and sometimes more aggressive guard dogs as well as family companions.

Prior to the resurgence of American police canine units and civilian Schutzhund training, roughly the 1970s, people in urban or suburban areas who felt, or actually were, insecure would have a watchdog or perhaps some sort of a guard dog to alert and bark, which would announce a guest and perhaps deter a more sinister stranger. Those wanting or needing more would tend to a bigger dog with a deeper bark. Beginning in the 1920s the upwardly mobile, perhaps needing to impress friends and family, had the more expensive option of one of the purebred police or protection breeds recently imported from Europe, one with AKC papers, perhaps a German Shepherd or a Doberman Pincher.

Those not quite certain that they were getting the real deal only had to ask the breeder, who would steadfastly assert that his dogs were exactly like the better police dogs except for a little bit of training, which he personally had never gotten around to actually participating in. If doubt persisted, he would provide innumerable anecdotes of valor and courage in everyday life, just like Lassie or Strongheart in the movies. A little later in this era professionally trained area protection dogs – junkyard dogs – were sometimes provided for subscribing businesses and there were a few marginal professional protection dog trainers, not especially sophisticated, typically utilizing the old-fashioned pillow suit. Very few civilians of any social strata had dogs that were trained specifically for protection in this era, that is, prior to the 1970s.

In America the increasing popularity of Schutzhund and the market for police dogs and training services greatly increased the supply of more robust and aggressive dogs and more sophisticated training. The Vietnam War occasioned a substantial resurgence in military applications, resulting in an increasing demand for better dogs and a legacy of former servicemen with training experience and an ongoing interest in civilian applications. As a consequence, those with an especially urgent need for security or just deep pockets came to have the option of a professionally trained protection dog, generally expensive to acquire and maintain but an elite status symbol. There was and is variation in quality among such dogs, for it is difficult for the novice to know if what he is being offered is a legitimate investment in security or, all too often, a scam, a mediocre dog with only superficial training.

Civilian canine protection applications can be broken down into three general, overlapping classifications, each with its own requirements in terms of the character, training and deployment of the dog:

- The home and family protection or guard dog, the companion who also provides elements of security on the home premises, the dogs many of us grew up with and which routinely share our lives.
- The personal protection dog, whose focus is on the full time protection role, which extends off home premises to provide protection to the individual in his routine daily life. Often provided and trained by professionals, such dogs can be very expensive and require great care and research in order to identify an honest and competent trainer and an appropriate dog.
- The area protection dog, the proverbial junk yard dog, whose function, working in the absence of human support and back up, is to deny the intruder physical access to a specific area, such as a warehouse, automotive

dealership or department store.

In the next three sections we will discuss these facets of the protective canine. Police and military service will be covered in detail in subsequent chapters.

Watch and Guard Dogs

Many companion or family dogs fulfill an ancillary guardian role, that is alert to unusual activity, persons or vehicles, on the property or premises. This is typically a natural rather than formally trained response, and the most desirable situation is where the dog comes to ignore routine activity according to circumstances, that is as in the city dog ignoring passing traffic but the country dog far up a long driveway vigorously alerting with the approach of any vehicle or person. It is generally desirable that the dog be more aware and quick to alert at night when activity is more likely to be suspect, and in general have moderately above average suspicion and alertness. Such behavior is typical of the watch dog, and is usually sufficient, all that most of us really need. The key to domestic tranquility is that the dog becomes reliably acclimated to the normal pattern of life and refrains from barking at innocently passing pedestrians or vehicles. Even if recreational barking is not annoying to the owner or family, in the urban or suburban setting the incessantly barking dog is a nuisance and a visit from animal control is just a matter of time.

Thus the effective watchdog will act proportionately, that is announce a visitor approaching the door with a perfunctory bark but respond vigorously if someone were to open the door or enter the yard, most especially at night. When the watchdog has alerted the household and in particular continues barking when a stranger enters unbidden, he has fulfilled his duty. A really intense, persistent dog, especially a small dog, who continually backs up just out of reach and intensifies his barking, is a serious problem for the intruder, for he usually is not sure who else is in the house and cannot know what the dog will do, that is, if he actually will bite. And of course, while this is going on, someone might well be calling the police or loading a revolver. The savvy intruder has good reason to move on to the next opportunity when faced with such a situation.

The guard dog takes the protection role one level up, is expected to respond with physical aggression against a persistent intruder not deterred by the vocal threat. In an otherwise empty house, especially in an isolated setting, extensive barking may not deter an intruder, and in the urban neighborhood a barking dog may be a nuisance but is not likely to cause the neighbors to call the police in a timely matter, who in any event may have higher priorities than another barking dog complaint.

While the guard dog does provide more protection or deterrence, that is postures more seriously or actually bites, there is also more need for training and supervision. Most people with a bit of canine experience can accomplish this by selecting an appropriate breed and individual pup or young dog. Such dogs should have reasonable obedience training and perhaps some specific aggression enhancement if it needs to be at the serious end of the aggression scale.

The reality of home and family protection is that a good dog functions like the lock on the front door, which could easily be picked or broken by the determined burglar but will likely send a random intruder down the street to a more vulnerable residence. No dog and no lock is invulnerable, serving primarily to deter the casual, less determined or well prepared adversary, and buy time when he cannot be deterred.

The prerequisite for the success of the family companion and home protector is that the dog be a good match and a good companion. Care of a dog in terms of feeding, access to the outdoors for the calls of nature, exercise and play is a small

price willingly paid by the dog enthusiast, but those with no particular affinity for canine companionship may soon find that the dog acquired for protection has become an ongoing burden and inconvenience. Lack of interest in the dog is likely to result in his devising his own means of entertainment, such as chewing household objects, incessant pacing or recreational barking. If this causes the dog to be confined to a run or otherwise contained for owner convenience the protective function is essentially nullified. Often the result is yet another dog abandoned to a shelter, that is, the place where they kill your dog for you because you have found him to be inconvenient.

The incremental cost of a good watchdog is nominal to those whose normal way of living includes a dog; is basically a matter of using a little more care in selection and training. This does not have to be an overly expensive dog, the world is overrun with perfectly good German Shepherds and other breeds turned in for "rescue" by people who have gotten in over their head or just lost interest once the novelty has worn off. Also, there is nothing wrong with the carefully selected mixed breed from a shelter or elsewhere, although an inexperienced person would do well to have a competent friend evaluate the dog or pay a professional trainer for an evaluation. Those who want more than a casual watch dog should identify an appropriate trainer before the acquisition; not only is this likely to avoid a poor selection, the trainer who has participated in the selection is going to be more committed to success as a matter of professional pride. (The trainer's inclination to disparage other dogs in order to sell one of his own is an issue that the customer needs to be aware of and work out according to specific judgments and circumstances.)

In general the best protection dog for the typical family is the breed or mix that they are comfortable with in terms of preference, training and maintenance. Labrador, Golden, Flat Coated or Chesapeake Bay retrievers can be perfectly adequate, and there is no urgent need to seek out one of the traditional guard breeds such as a German Shepherd, American Bulldog or Rottweiler. Those with a preference for one of these guardian breeds would seem to have an obvious choice, but this is not always the case as many individual dogs and lines are of such weak breeding that they no longer exhibit the requisite character and physical attributes. On the one hand many are fearful, timid and insecure and on the other they may be too difficult for family members to deal with. A well-adjusted retriever in the living room is a much more effective deterrent than an aggressive and unmanageable dog confined to a run behind the house. Smaller dogs most certainly have their place, can make a whole lot of noise and be evasive enough to present a real problem to an intruder, who does not want to spend a lot of time trying to catch and silence the yippy dog.

If one does decide on a traditional police breed, and is going to purchase a pup or young dog, it should be from a working line breeder who has been made to understand that you are looking for a confident dog of moderate drive. Again, if training is to be involved, identify the trainer before buying the dog.

For those who otherwise would not own a dog, a watch or guard dog in the end will tend to become expensive in terms of maintenance such as feeding and medical care and particularly in terms of a newly restricted life style. Every venture away from home, even overnight, requires arrangements for the care of the dog, and the dog is going to seek attention and companionship which the owner finds to be a burden rather than a joy. Those ambivalent to dogs in general, not likely to own one strictly as a companion, are well advised to forgo a dog in favor of an alarm system or a residence in a more secure neighborhood.

Training the home watch dog is in general a matter of obedience and manners, with particular care to avoid intimidating the dog and thus blunting his natural tendency to take responsibility for home and family. The traditional farm dog lives

out of doors and provides an energetic warning when visitors approach. Unfortunately, in the country training sometimes consists of acquiring relatively cheap dogs until one is found who will stay on the premises and is lucky enough to become car smart before being hit by a vehicle and killed.

Watch or alert dogs on the one hand and actual guard dogs on the other are not entirely separate types but represent the end points of a continuum. Dogs just do not come as neatly specified commodities like a bolt or nut in the bin at the hardware store, each one functionally equivalent. Even the better lines in a protective breed may produce pups which, because of genetics or inappropriate imprinting, are destined to become timid, soft or difficult. The dog acquired as a household watchdog may turn out to be a real guard dog when the chips are down, and this of course enhances the general deterrent effect of having a boisterous dog in the house. But on the other hand such a dog might prove to be difficult in terms of discipline and training for a timid or inexperienced owner.

Those who have a real need or desire for a much more assertive guard dog, one that can be relied on to respond with serious physical aggression, need to carefully select the breed, and especially the blood lines, for the unfortunate fact is that many dogs with German Shepherd or Doberman Pincher on the pedigree are no longer serious working dogs and likely to fail to respond to training or an actual encounter. In general, the breeder proud of his conformation show wins and the champions in the pedigree is a poor choice. Those seeking such a serious dog, unless qualified themselves, should work with a trainer, and identify the trainer before acquiring the dog.

Such a dog really does need to be trained and tested to provide control and confidence that there actually is something under the hood; the false belief in an inadequate dog may render the owner more rather than less vulnerable if he becomes careless, that is lax in locking doors, maintaining security lights and other routine measures. Training should involve practical obedience and then sessions with a decoy or helper, that is the man with a sleeve or suit. The dog needs to reliably engage and persist, and must not be run off by the adversary shouting, showing aggressive posture or striking the dog with a stick. If the dog is sound in terms of basic breeding and rearing as a youngster this need not require the extensive training of the police or Schutzhund dog, since the elaborate search, obedience and distance attacks are not necessary. The capstone, the final test, is to have a stranger, not the trainer or someone the dog has seen, with a sleeve or suit, or much better a hidden sleeve, actually enter the house unannounced to insure that the dog will reliably engage. The really robust and aggressive guard dog is not a commitment to be taken lightly, becomes a lifetime responsibility and an ongoing expense to maintain alertness, aggression and discipline.

The presence of children or other household members intimidated or made personally insecure by the dog creates an entirely new layer of complexity. One issue is that a child may inadvertently allow the dog to come into contact with outside people, often other young acquaintances, without adult supervision. Although most dogs will bond with the family and relate well to children, there are some dogs which would be fine in other circumstances, often outstanding workers, which simply should not be in an environment with children. Every breed proponent will of course claim that their dogs are absolutely wonderful with children, but this is not and cannot be universally true of any breed.

We always had aggressive dogs in the house when our children were younger with no difficulty; but both dogs and children need to be carefully evaluated, acclimated and trained in order to insure a safe situation. In my opinion it is never, ever safe to have children alone in a home with the expectation that a dog will provide security and protection; there are just too many ways for a situation to spin

out of control with tragic consequences. Exactly when a child evolves into a young person able to deal with such a situation is of course difficult to discern, and a source of anxiety for every parent with kids and dogs.

Finally, effective utilization of a guard dog in the home should be as part of good overall security plan. People, especially breeders, sometimes pander a dog as an overall solution, saying that with one of their wonder dogs on duty you no longer need to worry about locking your doors. This is nonsense, and more specifically dangerous and stupid nonsense. If doors and windows are secured, then the time and noise of breaking and entering will likely rouse the dog prior to entry. Once in the house the intruder has a lot more at stake and is much more likely to shoot, stab or club the dog, and no dog can ever be sure of defeating a man, especially one with a weapon.

The Personal Protection Dog

Searching the internet for personal protection dogs brings forth page after page of evocative full color photos, friendly, handsome dogs lounging in upscale family settings side by side with pseudo fierce dogs lunging at the whip wielding man with a protection sleeve. Warnings of rampant crime on the streets, abductions and home invasions are standard fare; all of which are best repulsed by an elite personal protection dog from their secret European sources or exclusive wonder dog breeding program. For those with the need for more, and the implied prestige, there is of course the executive protection dog. Price is usually not mentioned up front – and varies over an enormous range. Many of the dogs are trained European imports, sometimes with an actual KNPV or IPO title and sometimes pandered as "trained for" without the actual title, leading the skeptic to wonder what does actually happen to all of the dogs that wash out of Euro training programs.

But the reality can be quite different. A few years ago I had the opportunity to buy a European dog for a very low price, a few hundred dollars, but was advised not to. A little later the dog was featured by one of these dealers as a \$50,000 executive protection dog, and still later the dog was relinquished to a rescue operation out west. While I doubt that anybody actually paid anything near the asking price for this particular dog, it is unfortunately within the realm of the possible: difficult as it may be to believe people do actually get taken in by such things.

So, what, exactly, is a personal protection dog?

So many sorts of dog with such diverse background and training are given the designation that it means virtually nothing about the attributes, potential, state of training or usefulness of the dog. Unfortunately, there are no universal criteria or credible, objective standards that could lend legitimacy or establish value. There are no licensing requirements for trainers and dealers and no realistic certification programs, and the people involved like it this way. The consequence is that dogs are sold for whatever the market will bear, often at incredible, even astonishing prices.

In the police dog market brokers or breeders generally establish an ongoing relationship with their customers, deal with experienced police handlers or administrators who understand training, deployment and market value. When they deliver an inadequate dog they are expected to make good, and the broker who misrepresents or fails to stand behind his dogs quickly comes to have a poor reputation, making it more difficult to sell to any police agency. Even when the recipient is wrong, that is when the dissatisfaction is in his perception rather than the quality of the dog, most vendors will cheerfully provide a replacement because it is just plain good business. The civilian market however consists of less sophisticated customers, little repeat business and relatively little contact among the usually clueless customer population, which means that there is much less impact of a poor

reputation. Bad police dog suppliers tend to go out of business quickly, suppliers of poor personal protection dogs can go on finding new marks perpetually.

Thus there is an enormous range in terms of honesty, competence and quality among those offering personal protection dogs. Many skilled police level trainers also serve a select civilian market, and are generally reputable and deliver good dogs and training, but there are also numerous con men whose business is living off of the gullible, naive and ignorant.

In addition to these commercial vendors there are all sorts of people playing around in back yards, training mostly having to do with macho posturing and fun with the dogs rather than selling dogs or services. Much of this activity is amateur and informal, individuals and small groups getting together with a sleeve or training tug and playing at what they like to call personal protection, putting up endless videos on the internet of dogs on a harness jumping up and down in front of a guy waving a sleeve. Adult refreshments and dramatic music for the internet video generally contribute to the atmosphere. Sometimes these are people unwilling or unable to prepare for a serious sport trial, or have dogs which might seem animated or even aggressive but in reality are not confident and strong enough for the longer distance engagements with a strong decoy or stable enough to demonstrate impartiality in the presence of passive people or other dogs

In many ways a legitimate, serious personal protection dog is equivalent to a top end police dog; that is a vigorous German Shepherd or Malinois with advanced training including food refusal, serious distraction work and intense control under realistic conditions of stress and unknown surroundings. The primary difference from a police dog would generally be less emphasis on the long distance pursuits, searching and tracking, although these things can be part of the package. Such a fully trained and tested dog will cost upwards of ten thousand dollars, roughly the price of a good street ready police dog, although many people out there will take more, much more, from those gullible enough to give it up. But this is just the upfront money; in order to utilize such a dog effectively the owner must be personally equivalent to a good police canine handler or hire someone who is. In the longer term the dog will require ongoing maintenance training and testing costing thousands of dollars yearly.

A good watch or guard dog in the yard and a shotgun or hunting rifle in the front hall closet has been the foundation of rural American security, and for most of us remains perfectly viable today. The reality is that few of us need, can afford or are able to effectively deploy much more than the ordinary watch or guard dog; the so called personal protection dog thus often being little more than conspicuous consumption, a status symbol.

But there are a few people, such as those in a sensitive political or corporate office, which actually can be in danger from powerful, far-reaching adversaries such as a major criminal organization or terrorist group. Those susceptible to abduction or kidnapping, or with similarly vulnerable families, may well find that a good dog or several dogs may be part of an integrated security solution, but dogs in and of themselves cannot provide stand-alone security. Such things are well beyond the scope of this book and my area of competence; it is sufficient to point out that those in real need are well advised to seek out appropriate professional services, and to be very careful about how they go about selecting them. What I can say for certain is that if someone is trying to sell you a dog to provide this level of security you are being conned, and much more than your money is at stake.

The fundamental problem is that there are no standards, since there is no licensing system literally anyone can hang out a shingle or tack up a diploma from a mail order school and become a professional protection dog trainer. Sometimes dogs are taken in for several weeks, given just enough perfunctory training to support a

demo of the dog on a short lead lunging at someone waving a sleeve, perhaps the kid who had been "working" him all week. The reality is that such dogs often offer relatively little in the way of enhanced protection, and the business is based on the fact that the customer is generally unable to evaluate and understand what has been done to his dog and what can realistically be expected should a confrontation occur.

In summary, a good dog properly selected, raised and trained can be a real asset to family security as a watch dog or medium level guard dog without excessive expense, inconvenience or changes to life style; many family companions function effectively in this way. Those with a higher level of risk, a business executive under kidnapping or assignation threat, personally or for the family, may benefit from a comprehensive professional solution, which may very well include a good dog in addition to other protective measures. Such a situation is going to involve a lot of money, and the most difficult step is to determine who to trust, for there are many less than marginal vendors offering services, and the risk of poorly spent money is small in comparison to a failure to protect when a threat actually materializes, for there may be no second chance.

The Area or Premise Protection Dog

Beyond police applications and family or personal protection, dogs historically have been used to protect business or industrial premises, at the crudest level the old-fashioned junkyard dog. Often such dogs were provided as a service, being dropped off in the evening at the close of business and picked up in the morning. In addition to the proverbial junk yard, such dogs were used by automobile dealerships, department stores, factories, warehouses and other places of business where there was a need for nighttime security by unsupervised dogs roaming the premises. The primary requirement of such a dog is that he be loud and threatening so as to deter a potential adversary, that he be constantly on the move rather than finding himself some secure nook to sleep in and finally that he make good on his threats with a strong reaction to any intruder; reputation is essential to the effectiveness of such a program, a rapidly spreading word on the street after an incident is the best long term deterrent.

But such applications are diminishing because of the effectiveness of modern electronic alarm and surveillance services and because of the potential for legal repercussions. The legal liability and consequent insurance expense tends to expand as the courts become more likely to regard aggressive dogs as a disproportionate response to the threat of theft and vandalism, reasoning similar to that which makes booby traps, such as a trip line on a fixed shotgun, illegal in most jurisdictions. Accidents, the employee with a key returning for a personal item for instance, also are a potential problem. The supplier's expenses in terms of vehicles, gasoline and employee expenses for the larger vendors, and especially their own insurance costs, render the nighttime guard dog increasingly problematic.

Technology has been a huge agent of change; electronic intrusion detection and very cost effective and reliable television surveillance means that all areas of a plant can be under observation from central, remote locations many miles away. Sophisticated motion detectors can bring an incident to the attention of the people in the central control site, who can quickly bring the scene up on one or several television monitors and summon local security personnel or the police as necessary.

From the business owner's point of view, police intervention is far preferable to a response by a dog or an employee, for all of the legal liability and potential bad publicity falls on the agency. This is socially desirable in that our system is based on police intervention rather than private action, which can quickly evolve or be perceived as evolving into vengeance.

13

The Police Dog



Although intrusion alert and defense of the primitive band, farm or village were almost certainly canine functions from the beginning, at the dawn of the agricultural age, the formal police dog as we know it today is a relatively recent innovation, created in response to the Industrial Revolution and the consequent influx of farm labor for work in burgeoning industrial and urban areas. This process, commencing in the middle 1800s, caused radical changes in the way of life of much of Europe, particularly in nations such as England, Germany and Belgium where it originated and prospered.

As a consequence of this rapid industrialization the population gravitated to ever expanding cities, drawn from the countryside by the jobs of burgeoning urban industrial neighborhoods. Concurrent changes in rural areas, specifically labor saving innovations such as the tractor and other forms of mechanized farming, further encouraged this urban migration.

The replacement of sailing ships with steam powered vessels not only created the demand for shipbuilding and manufactured products; it made practical the large-scale importation of agricultural products such as mutton and wool, driving prices and domestic production inexorably down, greatly reducing and eventually eliminating the need for shepherds and their dogs in places such as Belgium and much of the rest of industrial Europe. This ongoing urbanization put ever-increasing demands on civil authorities for security, social order and law enforcement in an environment of expanding expectations of justice and civil liberty. A primary response to these needs was the evolution of the uniformed police patrol, which also created new roles for these displaced herding dogs.

Thus at the turn of the twentieth century, beginning in Belgium and then Germany¹, the police dog evolved to provide security and project authority for police officers on foot patrol in an era of rapidly expanding, rough and tumble working class neighborhoods. These concepts and programs, and imported dogs, soon began to spread to America and the rest of the world. In this era there were few motor

¹The precedence of the Belgian program is acknowledged by von Stephanitz:

"The splendid experience when training our dogs, and the reports of the Press of Foreign Countries about the trials made with Belgian shepherd dogs in the Security Service of the Police, encouraged the SV, as early as 1901, to suggest similar trials to the German Police Administration." (von Stephanitz, 1925)p325

vehicles and no radio communication; the urban law enforcement officer was generally alone and on foot, and thus vulnerable, especially at night. Prior to widespread street lighting especially, a good dog was an enormous enhancement to foot patrol officer security and effectiveness. Such a dog could routinely alert to hidden adversaries through the sense of smell, acute hearing and night vision, and provide physical deterrence as well as early warning. A strong dog projects fear and demands respect, and can deter an overtly violent conflict and thus affect a resolution short of a physical engagement.

Over the twentieth century the police dog role continually evolved, driven by societal change, advancement in firearm technology and availability, a transition to vehicle based deployment and the emergence of ever more effective two-way radio communication systems. The transition of police service from primarily foot patrol to vehicle-based deployment transformed police operations and necessitated a virtual reinvention of the police canine function. Indeed, the advent of the radio equipped police squad car in the early 1950's brought the initial era of the American police dog to an abrupt close, but in time also served as the foundation for a new service paradigm emphasizing the olfactory based search and substance detection capabilities.

Today security and deterrence remain as primary canine functions, but this is more often in situations of officer initiated contact, as in a building search or an active pursuit of a crime suspect, tasks without a direct civilian counterpart. Although relatively few contemporary officers walk a beat, patrol car or light truck based canine units are in ever-increasing demand for applications such as substance detection, criminal apprehension, building searches, tracking and officer security. Increasing emphasis on the olfactory capacity for substance detection, primarily drugs and explosives, resulting in the modern dual-purpose police dog, has driven canine deployment expansion in the past several decades, in military as well as police service.

Although the technology was slow to emerge, police use of radio communication for command and control has always employed advanced technology because of the enormous tactical advantage, immediate communication with officers in the field greatly extending the reach of law enforcement. In the early years vacuum tubes required voltages much higher than supplied by a vehicle battery and the installation of the equipment involved extensive modification to the vehicle. Nevertheless, experiments with broadcast or one-way radio began in the later 1920s and there were some tentative pre WWII implementations of prototype two-way radio systems. In this era radio communication was expensive, fragile and limited by the availability of suitable radio channels. WWII brought rapid technological advancement, such as the famous backpack "Walkie-Talkie" units carried by a combat infantryman, among many other consequences rendering the military messenger dog obsolete. Early systems utilized a single frequency both inbound and outbound and depended on a powerful base station with a good antenna installation to provide coverage¹ This meant that at any moment only a single officer could talk to a central dispatcher and officer-to-officer communication was generally through repeat transmission by the dispatcher. Once out of the patrol vehicle the officer was on his own, beyond direct communication and thus much more vulnerable.

Police dog deployment strategy and radio communication advancements have always been intertwined. Although the transition to radio dispatched squad cars contributed to the demise of existing American canine programs after WWII, the reemergence of the police dog has been facilitated by modern communications

¹ Modern systems rely on multiple base stationed shared channel or trunking systems with much less radiated power per transmitter.

systems which enable rapid deployment response and direct tactical, that is, officer to officer, communication. Radio equipped vehicle based canine teams can be dispatched as needed, making the service much more cost effective in that a few well managed canine patrol units can provide timely support throughout a city or district.¹

When firearms were expensive, unreliable and required great practice and skill to muzzle load for a single shot, the dog was a significant enhancement to offensive potential and a formidable weapon. Although revolvers had replaced muzzle-loading pistols, late in the nineteenth century the urban patrol officer was typically armed only with a club or baton and a whistle to sound an alarm or summon help. A good dog was an enormous step up in terms of offensive potential and officer security. But today in the age of high power semi-automatic firearms with enormous magazine capacity and quick reloading, the canine bite is a relatively low tech, secondary component of the police arsenal.

Social change as well as technical progress has had a profound effect on police canine training and deployment. In the early years the patrol officer – and his dog – had a relatively free hand; for the working class especially there was often little practical recourse for police actions and tactics. But over time the expanding expectation of legal and civil rights for all elements of society – rather than entrenched elites – made effective law enforcement strategy ever more complex and demanding. Today every police officer and police dog engagement is subject to intensive scrutiny by increasingly rights oriented civilians, and often such encounters are video recorded. It is an ongoing struggle for police dog breeding, training and deployment strategy to cope with these ever-expanding expectations.

In summary, the primary original motivation for the deployment of the police dog was enhancement of the personal security and effectiveness of the foot patrolman, generally unarmed, in an era before radio communication or even the street corner call box. Especially at night or in the rougher districts the presence of the dog provided security through physical deterrence and as a second set of eyes and ears to give warning of danger, buying the seconds that can make the critical difference in the outcome of an engagement. In an actual attack on an officer, the dog becomes a powerful adversary able to create diversion and encourage an aggressor to flee or submit to minimize his losses. The twentieth century would see enormous changes in police function in response to technological innovation and societal evolution. In order to survive and remain cost effective the police dog would take on new functions, unforeseeable in the beginning. But even today the enormous quickness, power and raw intimidation of the police dog remain fundamental to his utility and service.

¹ As a slightly ironic side note, my professional engineering career was with Motorola, the pioneering firm in the development of mobile police radio equipment, a key contributor to the effectiveness of the modern police patrol vehicle and thus in a way a contribution to the end of the inaugural era of American police canine service.

The Early Years

There are sporadic references to police style canine applications, emphasizing aggression and intimidation, going back to the Greek and Roman eras and even earlier. Among the earliest instances of more or less modern police deployment was provisional use of a few dogs for riot control in the German village of Hildesheim in 1886, conducted by Police Captain Schoenherr, who later became head of the Prussian governmental breeding program and the *Instruction School of Service Dogs* at Grunheide, near Berlin.¹



Ghent, Belgium. Circa 1907

rough neighborhoods and districts where maintenance of law and order was difficult. One officer and a good dog was much more cost effective than patrolling in pairs for reasons of security and safety. As shown in the photo, the dogs were often muzzled and provided protection from the elements. Contrary to most modern practice, in which the dogs generally live full time with their handlers, the dogs resided in a central kennel and were deployed on nightly foot patrol to enhance officer security and authority.

Photos from this era show a few much larger dogs with an apparent mastiff style background; these are unusual and do not seem to have persisted. Although Bouvier des Flandres registration would not commence in a serious way for another twenty years, photos show some of these Ghent dogs to be clearly in the Bouvier style, with others more of the Belgian Shepherd type.

The modern era of European police canine service and the police breeds emerged concurrently, with a tipping point in both Belgium and Germany at the turn of the twentieth century. Notable milestones include the first formal deployment program in Ghent, Belgium and the commencement of German Shepherd registration in Germany. Although these events have by accident of history – and the efforts of a couple of master public relations men – gained the lion's share of the historian's ink the movement was broad and inclusive, and prospered primarily because the time had come.

The first formal, full scale police canine operation was in Ghent², Belgium begun in 1899 under the direction of Chief Commissioner Ernest van Wesemael. This program began with ten Belgian herder style dogs, which increased to forty dogs the next year and then sixty night patrol dogs by 1908. (Vickery, 1984) The motivation was to enhance police officer security and authority in night patrol; increasing numbers of industrial workers naturally gravitated to and created

¹ (Humphrey & Warner, 1934) p3

² A problem in European nomenclature is that the spelling of geographical entities varies according to language. Ghent is the common English reference to the city which is Gent in Flemish, Dutch and German; the French would be Gand. Gent often appears in translations.



Bouvier style Ghent Police dog Circa 1899
Significant Bouvier des Flandres registration
would not commence for another
generation, after WW I in the 1920s

While the Ghent program is rightly regarded as the first, the reality is that this was an idea whose time had come and pioneers in several nations, especially Konrad Most, were rapidly moving in this direction. The Belgians were adept at promotion and publicity, as evidenced by the substantial written records, photographs and press coverage that have come down to us. Many departments around the world sent representatives to observe, and many went home with inspiration and young dogs, generally of the Belgian Malinois type. The Belgian cities of Antwerp, Mons, Bruges and Ostend among others quickly followed the example of Ghent by establishing their own programs, and a German Minister of the Interior sent a Police Commissary, whose favorable report encouraged German participation. (Chapman, *Police Dogs*, 1990) Several American departments, including New York City, South Orange, New Jersey and Muncie, Indiana are recorded as importing dogs from the Ghent program before 1910. (Vickery, 1984)

Sadly, this was very short lived. The Ghent program, and Belgian police breeding and deployment in general, were devastated during WWI; the invading Germans commandeered the Ghent kennel facility and ran it for their own canine program, taking what they wanted and in the end destroying much of what remained.

After the war the Ghent canine corps no longer existed in any recognizable form, and police administration was restructured without the night police as they had previously existed, allowing only a few dogs in service, which finally disappeared with the advent of motorized patrol. This situation persisted until 1979, when a new canine program began, originally using primarily German Shepherds, and there were even attempts to train dogs taken from the pound. (De Caluwe, 1995)

Somehow these references to German Shepherds serving in the Ghent, Belgium police force in the contemporary era did not at first seem to pass the common sense test, but Europeans with first-hand knowledge have verified this and I have 1985 photos of in uniform Ghent police handlers with German Shepherds. Today the Ghent canine unit is made up of Malinois, but the WWI German atrocity had pushed Belgian police agencies and the Malinois from the forefront for most of a century, even in homeland police canine programs.

If the Belgians were first the Germans were not far behind, being early and strong contributors to the modern police dog heritage. Colonel Konrad Most, a prominent German police trainer and administrator published his world famous *Training Dogs, a Manual* in 1910. Colonel Most had become active in police dog training in 1906 while serving as Police Commissioner at the Royal Prussian Police Headquarters located in Saarbrücken. In the years prior to WWII he was involved in government breeding and training operations in Berlin and developed methods and deployment concepts for police patrol and tracking dogs. As an example, his

elaborate experimental work and research provide the foundation of the crushed vegetation concept of tracking, the practical basis of most modern tracing. (Gerritsen & Haak, 2001)

During WWI Most served in high-level staff posts for the German Army and then in the period between the wars until 1937 was in charge of the Canine Research Department for the Army, and after WWII, toward the end of his life, was involved in training dogs for the blind.

It is fashionable in some quasi academic and play training circles to disparage Colonel Most, and implicitly Koehler, who is regarded as of the same school. Nevertheless, among serious people in the field there is an enormous amount of respect:

"Shortly after the turn of the century, and 28 years before the publication of *The Behavior of Organisms* (Skinner, 1938), an obscure dog trainer in Germany was busy discovering the basic principles of behavior and describing their application in training service dogs. Colonel Konrad Most, a police commissioner at the Royal Prussian Police Headquarters, anticipated many of Skinner's key concepts in his book. A pioneer in animal training, Most showed an understanding of the key elements of operant conditioning including primary and secondary reinforcement, extinction, shaping, fading, chaining, and negative conditioning (punishment). Most began training service dogs in 1906 while police commissioner in Saarbrücken. The Most book continues to be recognized as an authoritative source for canine training throughout Europe." (Burch & Pickel, 1990)

Perhaps even more telling, Humphrey and Warner, in their report on the famous Fortunate Fields project in Switzerland, an extensive research program into scientific working dog breeding, which evolved into the American Seeing Eye program of Dorothy Eustis, make extensive reference to the academic work of Colonel Most. (Humphrey & Warner, 1934)

The first formal police canine units in the United States were in New York City and South Orange, New Jersey beginning in 1907. Other early programs were in Glen Ridge, New Jersey, Detroit and Berkeley, California. (Chapman, *Police Dogs*, 1990) There were short-lived state police operations in Pennsylvania and Connecticut.

The New York program began in 1907 when the City Police Department sent Inspector George R. Wakefield to Paris and Ghent, Belgium in order to evaluate the practicality of setting up a canine operation of their own. Wakefield was apparently quite impressed with the Ghent program, actually going on patrol and observing training, and returned with five untrained year old Belgian Shepherds as a foundation for the incipient New York program.¹(Dyer, 1915)

In these years the New York canine program was quite active, with further imports of shepherd dogs from Belgium and a small number of Airedale terriers, augmented by various local acquisitions. The primary deployment was in relatively prosperous residential areas with a focus on the suppression of burglary and pushing muggers and thieves out of these neighborhoods. The dogs accompanied officers on foot patrol, often if not always muzzled, and working off lead to seek out potential criminals lurking in yards and allies.

¹ It is interesting to note how frugal the beginnings were: The total cost of the trip and acquisition was \$364.84, which included \$50 for all five dogs; \$132 for fare to and from Belgium; \$48 for board; \$3 for cabs; \$25.60 for incidental expenses incurred while looking for the dogs; \$6.60 for three crates; \$50 for freight; \$10 for duty; and \$2.65 for a book on training police dogs.



New York police canine unit on parade, circa 1910.

The New York program was the most successful in America in this era, persisting through WWII in good and bad times from 1907 until 1951. According to Chapman, the end of the canine program coincided with the advent of the radio-equipped patrol car. While the dog had proven effective for the officer on the beat, the day of the canine unit incorporating a patrol vehicle was still in the future. New York would not resume canine service until 1982. (Chapman, *Police Dogs in America*, 1979)

As an interesting and revealing sidelight, from a 1911 newspaper report on the New York program:

"The canines were taught to trip a person by wrapping their front legs around one of the suspect's legs, grasping tightly and throwing the suspect to the ground. The dogs were then taught to pounce on the suspect and bark until an officer arrived."

(Chapman, *Police Dogs*, 1990)

Although our knowledge of deployment strategy and training in this era is incomplete, the available material indicates that the dogs were generally muzzled and often off lead in order to search away from the officer on foot, seeking out potential burglars, muggers or other such men. Most references talk of night patrol and although this might not have been universal it seems to have been the primary motivation for the police dog. The practice of muzzling the dogs was apparently to prevent inadvertent injury to upright citizens, since the dogs were often out of sight or direct physical handler control. This was a time with much less vehicular traffic or street lighting, providing more cover for the criminal and much less dangerous for the dog in terms of vehicle traffic. (Most of these comments, and the available reference material, have to do with the New York program. Other agencies may have had other strategies and policies.)

In general these American police dog programs were run on a shoe string: tentative, small and lacking in long-term significance. Obtaining backing to start a program was one thing, but each change in civilian or police administration required backing of the new office holders, which might drop a program to free up funds for other uses.



Dutch Police officer and dog, 1910.
Note sword on bike.

For three years after the close of the New York program in 1951, there were no known canine units in existence in America. This marked the end of the initial era of police canine service, one that never went beyond the provisional or experimental stage and in the overall scheme of things had only minor impact on police operations in general. In this early era only twelve cities and two states, predominantly east coast, had police canine units, often existing for only a year or two. Combining this with the fact that we had no military program in WWI and the abandonment of military canine operations in the general winding down after WWII and it becomes apparent that in terms of culture and capability America was simply not ready for the effective widespread deployment of canine units, either for the military or police service.

As a broad generality, the early European motivation for canine service was dogs in the rougher industrial districts, where the focus was on projecting authority and maintaining law and order, while in America there was more emphasis on deployment in more prosperous neighborhoods in order to deter and drive out the transient criminal

element, this resulting in more sensitivity to public perceptions of control and more benign force.

The British had pioneered the purebred concept and the elaborate, pretentious dog show, and many Europeans of the era tended to perceive the English breeds as the more fashionable and sophisticated. In Germany the general desire for police canine service became more compelling after about 1870; various types and styles of dogs, such as British Collies and Airedales, were put forth as candidates for police and military service.

But eventually the trend would be strongly to the herders, both in Germany and elsewhere, such as the German Shepherd and the various Belgian herding varieties such as the Bouvier, Groenendael and the Malinois. Even today, there is an occasional unusual breed, but the German Shepherds and Belgian Malinois predominate.¹ It must be kept in mind that these herding breeds simply did not exist in a formal way prior to about 1890 for the Malinois and 1900 for the German Shepherd. Certainly the foundation stock was at work in the fields, meadows and

¹ This is of course relevant to the general purpose patrol dog, many breeds, generally less aggressive, are used for search and rescue or single purpose drug, explosive and accelerant detection.

pastures, but somehow seemed invisible for the want of fancy kennel names and registration numbers written down in a sacred book.

In general the Germans believed implicitly that a police or military dog must be of a recognized formal breed. On the other hand the Belgians, in Ghent at least, as evidenced by the many photos, were from the beginning open to many sorts of regional dogs. Germany – young, evolving and stridently nationalist – apparently was excessively focused on racial purity even in this era. Even today these attitudes persist, for in order to compete in Germany, in IPO, a dog must have a valid FCI registration, while the Dutch police dogs are what they do on the field and while the Belgian NVBK dog must be registered, it is more or less a formality.

Although the origins of the Airedale are British, it was the Germans who actually pioneered the breeding and use of larger and more man aggressive specimens for military and police applications; and there was also a great deal of early German interest in the English Collie. This was in an era, before 1890, when the German Shepherd was unknown, his progenitors in obscurity, serving the shepherds in fields and meadows with the sheep.

There were a number of reasons for the eventual predominance of the herding breeds rather than the traditional Mastiffs or Molossers that had such a long history and evolution for area guarding and human aggression applications. The herders were of medium size and thus more economical and easy to maintain, yet capable of intimidating an adversary as required. Because they were generally with the herd year round in all weather, these dogs evolved coats, metabolism and structure well adapted to the outdoor life.

The energy, and thus the destructive power, of a projectile is proportional to the mass or weight multiplied by the square of the velocity. This means that doubling the muzzle velocity makes the destructive power four times greater. This is why modern military weapons, such as the M-16, employ a relatively light but high muzzle velocity projectile producing maximum destructive power with minimum weight. This allows the infantryman to carry many more rounds of ammunition.

In a similar way, the more intense medium size dog can be as intimidating and effective as a more massive dog, yet more agile in the chase or search and of greater endurance. Such a dog is more comfortable and adaptable to smaller vehicles and generally retains this physical fitness and agility to an older age, thus extending the effective service life of the dog. This can greatly increase the overall cost effectiveness of a program.

The herding dog heritage, especially in the tending style breeds, incorporates an instinctive sense that there is a time to disengage as well as engage, that it is the protection of the flock that is essential rather than simply the defeat of a particular predator. This is enormously useful in the control aspects of the police dog, such as the release on command and the call off. Just as the herd guardian needs to break off an engagement and allow a predator to flee so as to maintain herd security, the police dog needs to be able to disengage when the adversary is defeated or the handler intervenes. Police dog examinations generally require a dog to go to the bark and hold when the adversary halts and stands still rather than directly engaging, but in actual service this is often irrelevant in that few suspects are really going to lock up and stand still, the dog will in most instances find a reason to engage. Training and deployment strategy for suspect searches is a subject of ongoing debate and contention today, driven by political and public relations considerations as well as tactical realities.

Just as the police officer wears a uniform so as to be immediately identified by the general public, a relatively uniform and consistent appearance of his dog came to be regarded as important. Indeed, the ubiquitous use of the German Shepherd throughout the world caused this breed to be known by many simply as the police

dog, and for that reason alone is often the first choice in breeds. The Malinois, making great strides in deployment in Europe and America, is similar enough in appearance to the German Shepherd to be perceived by most people as a plausible police dog based on appearance. For this and various other reasons, other breeds are increasingly rare in mainstream police patrol dog service today.

The Scales of Justice

From the beginning police canine service was aggressively promoted, especially by various breed advocates such as von Stephanitz and the Doberman community. Much of this was straightforward and positive, but some of it was over the top and at times bordered on the outlandish. As an example, beginning in 1909 the SV¹ began offering a one Mark reward to the handler of a German Shepherd "solving" a homicide case, paying out 18 times over the next year and a half.²

These promotional efforts were generally well received and popular and thus effective, and police dog exploits, especially as involved in the solution of dramatic crimes, began to gain more and more press enthusiasm, especially when the exploits of a dog could be portrayed as "solving the case" through following a track or trail or selecting a perpetrator from among a group of candidates. There is, unfortunately, a long history, in Europe and America, of canine exploits being aided by indicating to the handler the expected end of the track, the presence of the drugs or the right man in the lineup.

But the role of the police is to exonerate the innocent as well as to apprehend and convict the guilty, and when public and press plaudits become a disproportionate driving force one thing can quickly lead to another. When a handler or police authority has a suspect in mind, or is under pressure to make an arrest, the dog can be cued and encouraged, unconsciously or maliciously, to select the "right man." Even today it is not uncommon for men to be released after many years in prison because police manipulation of evidence or a compelled false confession has been uncovered.

By 1913 this sort of a thing came to a head in Germany when controlled experiments, scientific investigation, notably by Konrad Most of the Berlin police, demonstrated that because of primitive training and handling, and enthusiasm for the arrest and press attention, rendered such results erratic and open to question. The Berlin police conducted these tests beginning in 1913, and then more extensively after the war. (Haak & Gerritsen, 2007)p28

Von Stephanitz, ever the public relations man, had a differing view:

"Even though, when the Government took up the question of the Police dog, Police Lieut. Most, (the well-known author of some papers on Training, who succeeded Major Klein), showed some biased unwillingness with regard to the use of the dogs in detective service³, this did no real harm; on the contrary, it gave an impetus to the work of all convinced believers in the possibilities of the service of the dog in this very respect." (von Stephanitz, 1925)p325

This remark, the only reference to Most in the 700 page book, is telling. Max von Stephanitz was not in the business of publicizing or promoting other breeds or sharing the limelight, and Konrad Most, an advocate of the Doberman, which he bred

¹ German Shepherd club in Germany

² (Haak & Gerritsen, 2007)p26

³ Detective service here means searching, tracking, canine selection from a line up and other olfactory service.

under the *von der Sarr* kennel name¹ and was active in demonstrations and seminars, and also the author of the most notable training book of the era, was a very important man. (See the biography of Most in an appendix.)

Modern Deployment Strategies



The German Shepherd dog was predominant in police service throughout the twentieth century.

As previously mentioned, by the early 1950s the American police dog – always a marginal factor in police service – had gone extinct, primarily because of the transition from foot patrol to mobile deployment and the advent of the radio dispatched patrol vehicle. Canine service would not reappear with any vigor until new needs and roles were identified and cost justified a decade or so later. Ironically enough, the mobility and reach of the radio dispatched patrol vehicle would in coming years enable a new paradigm, where rather than supporting an individual officer on a beat a vehicle based canine team would respond – quickly be where needed – often in minutes. In principle such teams provide backup and ancillary services, such as drug detection or building search

potential, to every officer on the street, rather than just those with a dog of their own. This has proven to be a remarkably successful and cost effective strategy.

As police programs gradually began to reemerge in the later fifties and especially the sixties, there were new priorities and missions. One of these was crowd control, but police excesses in responding to civil rights conflicts, particularly in the American South, ultimately had a negative impact, causing a second major downturn in the use of the police canine, with many units curtailed or eliminated entirely because of adverse public perception and reaction. Police oppression is never pretty, and snarling dogs and fire hoses on American streets came to be emblematic of an ugly chapter in our history. In retrospect this was a major setback in American canine deployment, for the strategy and motivation simply did not match up with the realities of the time, training and discipline were insufficient and most importantly media driven public perception was increasingly negative.

The Vietnam war was a turning point, marked the advent of an era of expansion, a revival of police canine service. There were several factors leading to this:

- Military canine service in Vietnam had been and was perceived as very effective.
- The level of press and television coverage had generated a great deal of public awareness and acceptance.
- Illegal drug distribution was coming to be perceived as serious national priority, and drug detection had proven effective in Vietnam.

¹ (Schmidt, 1935)

Many experienced veterans, including canine handlers and trainers, were reentering the civilian workforce. Although very few of the dogs returned¹ the knowledge and experience necessary to identify, acquire and train effective dogs provided a foundation for a reemerging police canine service.

Although the original roles of officer security and criminal apprehension remained, they became secondary to the use of the remarkable olfactory, hearing and night vision capabilities, enabling the dog to seek out the hidden or unexpected adversary or those lost and in need of help. Tracking and area searches, especially building searches, which had been an incidental or secondary function from the beginning, took on more and more importance.

Beyond this, substance detection, primarily drugs and explosives or bombs, brought an entirely new dimension to the utility of the police canine. In the perception of mainstream middle America drug usage emerged from the exotic neighborhoods of New York and San Francisco in the post-Vietnam era to become a primary focus of law enforcement, a crusade ideally matched to police canine capabilities. Subsequent to the Vietnam War searching for hidden substances such as drugs, fire scene accelerants, cadavers or explosives became the driving force behind the expansion of police canine units.

Thus while citizen and officer security retains high priority during an actual engagement, today the primary function, and cost justification, has tended to be oriented to search and substance detection. Because of the specialized nature and extensive, time-consuming training the modern canine team normally serves as a resource for the entire city or district. The mobile canine team is typically deployed on routine patrol, but available to be dispatched by radio to support any other unit, that is provide a drug search, backup in a confrontation or building search.

Thus in a way, since most officers do not have a dog, protection has become an ancillary or secondary role in conjunction with the search and detection services. Of course, a successful area or building search will often result in an arrest, and the presence of the dog can be a significant factor in maintaining control and in the worst case of an attack on the handler the dog can come to his aid. The dog is generally trained to respond to a direct attack on his own initiative, without specific command of the handler. This self-initiated defensive response is of course the natural instinct of a good patrol dog, carefully nurtured through breeding selection and training. But it is a double-edged sword, and the handler must provide the tactical oversight and control to avoid putting the dog in the position of making an inappropriate engagement in circumstances that he cannot be expected to comprehend.

Upon arrival at a crime scene, the perpetrator is unlikely to step forward, politely make introductions and offer his hands to be cuffed. Especially if not in plain sight, he is a potential danger to the officer and others present; a dog can very effectively search the immediate area to detect and perhaps apprehend a suspect. Once the scene is secured, it is the function of the police officer to gather evidence necessary for a successful prosecution. Here again the dog can be an effective aid, bringing attention to small objects such as a gun casing or shell, hidden in the grass or elsewhere. In the Dutch police trials, one exercise involves dropping two small metal objects, such as a coin or machine screw, in a grass area approximately ten by thirty meters. The dog must on his own search to find both objects and bring them to the handler. The same grass area is used by all of the dogs participating in the trial. (An alternative practical protocol might be to have the dog indicate the article so that it could be examined and perhaps photographed in the original setting.)

¹A shameful episode of our military history to be covered in the next chapter.

A fundamental reality of police operations is that the normal reaction of the criminal when the police arrive on scene, or at the end of a car chase, is to flee on foot, sometimes with dramatic helicopter news coverage. If the subject can get out of sight, even for a few moments, he can often disappear into the city streets or countryside and thus be out of reach, with the potential to commit further crimes. If he goes into hiding, he is likely in familiar territory and has the potential to wait out the police.

The police dog can be extremely effective in such situations, outrun and bring down the fleeing man or quickly locate and detain a suspect hiding in a field or a ditch. Wall climbs and broad jumps are part of all training and trial regimens in recognition of the fact that agility in the chase is fundamental to the realities of the patrol function. When the suspect gets out of sight even for a few moments the pursuing officer is in danger of failing in the chase, for there are so many places the man could have gone, but the dog uses his nose as well as his eyes and ears and quickly takes the right path. A man fleeing an officer alone can go to ground, hide almost any place, and have a chance of remaining quiet and leaving later, but a handler and dog team is likely to go directly to the hiding suspect. Even when the fleeing suspect has been gone for minutes or even hours the patrol dog can often track him down and apprehend him or show where he has gone.

Aggression and Discipline

In the early years of canine deployment aggression was the primary persona of the police dog from the perspective of the street officer, the suspected criminal and the public at large. Enhancement of foot patrol security and projected authority was the essence of the original justification in terms of cost effectiveness and of law and order. Although search and substance detection roles have taken on increasing importance in recent years, and justified much of the rapid expansion of canine service, most police dogs today are dual purpose and retain an important aggressive role. Part of this role is based on the psychological impact in that the presence of the dog quite often is enough to deter confrontation and allow the officer to diffuse a disturbance or affect an arrest. Just as the side arm is most successful when never actually discharged, the effectiveness of the police dog is greatest when deterrence resolves the situation without a physical altercation. In order to achieve these ends in a society increasingly sensitive to the legal and civil rights of all citizens, the dogs must be stable and under reliable handler control. To achieve this takes effort at every level, that is in breeding and selection, training, and deployment policy and strategy.

The aggressive potential of the police dog was always a two edged sword; the innocent and fearful as well as the guilty and aggressive can be intimidated and subdued as well as injured or disabled. An imposing physical presence and assertive demeanor served as an effective deterrent from the beginning; it was primarily a man and his dog against the criminal elements in an era with less emphasis on esoteric criminal rights, where the idea of lower class criminals going to court to sue for damages, civil rights or discrimination would have seemed absurd – what happened on the street more or less stayed on the street. But these days are gone, and that is a good thing. Today all elements of society are more aware of the legal limitations to police authority, civil rights and recourse to the courts.

Aggressive, rights oriented media, the ubiquitous potential for video recording and a generation of emphasis on civil rights have required increasing sophistication, restraint and self-control in police work. This is especially true of canine patrol because the original function of the police dog was largely intimidation and aggression; the snarling, lunging dog on the end of the lead had become embedded in the folklore. For all of these reasons the focus of canine selection, training and

deployment needs to be on the stability and control of the dog, and the handler. If and when the subject becomes willing to surrender the likelihood of the inadvertent bite or excessive suspect injury needs to be minimized through the handler's ability to restrain or recall the dog as the situation warrants.

Just as there are detailed incident reports whenever a sidearm is discharged or even displayed, canine bites almost always require a detailed incident report, including photographs of associated wounds. The primary purpose is to provide documentation in the event of defendant court action, and as an internal record for review. There are strategies and protocols according to departmental policy, one often being that photos for the records are always taken subsequent to hospital or emergency treatment when the wounds are cleaned and spattered blood is removed; even the most vile criminal can be painted as vulnerable and pathetic, and thus deserving of leniency. Unfortunately, court decisions can be based as much on emotional response as relevant facts, especially when a jury is involved. Beyond the specific incident, these records are necessary for statistical purposes, as abnormal numbers of gunshot or dog bite instances or outcomes can indicate problems in training, officer discipline or deployment strategy.

In this era of criminals with arsenals of heavy duty, rapid-fire weapons, organized crime, ubiquitous inner city street gangs and widespread substance abuse confrontations or crime scenes can quickly escalate, requiring effective planning and strategy to maintain security and order in our cities. SWAT¹ teams with elaborate firearms, support systems and other modern technology and tactics have been adapted to cope, requiring effective training, strategy and tactical leadership to maintain control and resolve a situation with minimal violence. Police dogs have often had a significant role in this, and just as police officers are selected and trained with great care the dogs must also be especially well bred, evaluated and then trained.

In America virtually every sworn officer is armed, and when the canine team arrives on scene there is likely at least one ally already present, the requesting officer. In such tactical situations effective handler control of the dog becomes paramount, which demands effective discipline. The first priority is that the dog be under sufficient control so as not to be a hazard for already on the scene police personnel, be part of the solution rather than part of the problem because of a lack of control: a dog escaping and going in search of an adversary on his own is likely to become the highlight of the evening news, not generally good public relations.

Although it is unusual, every police encounter involving physical conflict has the potential to escalate into a serious confrontation. The resulting potential for confusion, unforeseen circumstances and collateral damage – the fog of war – can arise in many ways. The dog may perceive another officer or uninvolved civilian as an adversary and engage, causing injury and disrupting ongoing operations. The handler or dog may be injured, incapacitated or even become a fatality. Other police dogs may be present.

Discipline and control is created and maintained in multiple reinforcing layers. The first level of control is the decision to deploy, that is when to make the dog present. Normally the dog is confined in a cage built into the back seat of the patrol car or the back section of a light truck. There are circumstances such as heavy vehicular traffic or crowd engagements where the potential benefits of deployment are outweighed by hazard to the dog, the possibility of inappropriate aggression or negative physiological effect on ordinary citizens or possible violators.

¹ Special Weapons and Tactics

Vehicle containment requires careful management, as the temperature can very quickly rise on a warm day, with possible fatal consequences. The primary responsibility for the well-being of the dog is with the handler, who must be constantly aware of the circumstances when out of the vehicle. The sad fact is that every year police dogs die because their handler did not care enough to adequately monitor the physical well-being of his canine partner; dogs are with distressing frequency left to die in an overheated vehicle. In order to minimize this danger, ancillary air conditioning and ventilating capability is normally provided in the vehicle. Another safeguard is often an automatic temperature alert system which will detect and report overheating by way of the police radio communication system or other media. Normally cold weather is not a problem; the dog is entirely safe and comfortable in the vehicle in spite of extreme cold; he is dry and sheltered from the wind, and came from ancestors in north central Europe who normally were in the fields with the stock in the winter months.

Once the dog is actually deployed, taken out of the vehicle, primary control is the leash, and sometimes a muzzle. On leash the dog is immediately available, is sometimes an effective deterrent and is under direct handler control. The leash is sometimes replaced by a long line, ten meters (30 ft.) or even more, usually in some sort of a search context. The long line is very often snapped to a ring between the shoulders of a harness, which allows the dog to pull into it without interfering with breathing. (The normal six-foot leather leash is usually attached to a collar.)

The final and most critical level of control is the obedience of the dog, training allowing the handler to restrain the dog by voice or hand signal. When the dog is sent after a distant or fleeing person, he is trained to respond to a handler recall command by either returning or going to a down but alert posture. This is one of the primary advantages of the police canine: he is less than deadly force in that even when there is an engagement, the subject is bitten, his life is usually not endangered, and if there are new circumstances after sending the dog, as in the handler reevaluating the send decision, the object going out of sight or another person appearing in the field of view the dog can be recalled.

The primary reason that modern police dogs have evolved from the herding breeds, specifically the tending style dogs such as the Belgian and German Shepherds, is that the function of the dog was the preservation of the flock or herd rather than the defeat of the predator, such as a marauding wolf. When the predator has been forced to cease the immediate, direct threat the instinctive action is to allow escape and remain with his charges rather than pursuing. Wolves hunt in packs, and are perfectly capable of employing part of the group to draw off the guardian dogs, leaving the stock alone and unguarded, at the mercy of the other wolves. (As explained fully in the first chapter, the herding functionality of these dogs is substantially different from the Border Collies which typically come to mind as herding dogs.) Historically, wolf eradication was the function of entirely different sorts of dogs, sight hounds such as the Russian or Irish Wolfhounds, now existing mostly as nonfunctional recreations or replicas.

The point is that the police patrol dogs evolved within a venue where the potential for control and limitation on aggression comes from within the dog, as when the herding dog repels the wolves or other predators but breaks off the engagement, remains with his herd, when they disengage and retreat. Such dogs are easier to control and train because of this instinctive tendency disengage when the adversary yields rather than to fight to a conclusion regardless of consequences or external handler command. The police dog needs to be agile, quick and amenable to control rather than just large, powerful and aggressive, which is why he is drawn from among specialized tending or herding dogs rather than powerful mastiff style dogs or swift, relentless sight hounds such as the wolf or deerhounds. Just as a good

police officer has the potential of both aggression and restraint, his dog must share these qualities, this balance.

Modern technology is increasingly used to provide assistance for control and safety. Many canine patrol vehicles are equipped with a radio-controlled device allowing the release of the dog from a distance as needed. This is of course a very critical decision, for releasing the dog when on a traffic stop gone wrong puts the dog in danger from oncoming traffic, such a decision must weigh the benefit the dog can provide against the danger to the dog and others.

Sometimes the use of radio-controlled collars extends beyond training to actual patrol service to enhance control under the stress of engagement. While an increasing trend, such electronic aids are never perfect, can fail or run out of battery capacity at the wrong moment. The officer likely has a communication radio and a drawn pistol to deal with, and additional devices increase the chance of a mistake or accident. Reliance on the remote collar to overcome disobedience in the dog, lax training or generally weak discipline can be of serious concern. If control of the dog is dependent on the device any one of several eventualities has the potential to produce a bad outcome. The device may simply fail at the wrong moment, run out of battery capacity for instance, the handler may drop or lose the controller or be incapacitated, shot or otherwise injured. The result of any of these eventualities may be an uncontrolled and likely highly excited dog loose on the scene.

A police dog engaging another police officer is unfortunately not an uncommon occurrence, and can be very disruptive operationally and cause serious injury or disability and the consequent great expense. Other officers shooting an out of control police dog sometimes becomes necessary, or a poorly trained or frightened officer may shoot a dog when the situation could have readily been dealt with using less extreme methods.

In the event of an incapacitated handler, other police personnel on the scene must deal with his dog, which will very often be in an extreme and somewhat unpredictable emotional state. If actually engaged in a search the dog may continue, and thus require control, or he may become very defensive of his downed handler, a situation others must deal with in order to come to the aid of the man down. In extreme cases, the dog may be shot to regain control, always a tragic outcome.

The reality is that police dogs are expendable, sometimes put in harm's way to preserve the life of a human being. Injuries to the dog, very serious in and of themselves, also can pose immediate problems in that the injured dog has the potential to become indiscriminately aggressive. The need to secure the dog and provide medical assistance can greatly disrupt the ongoing tactical situation. This is an especially difficult situation if both the handler and his dog are injured and the dog must be secured by other personnel.

In the ideal every person in the department with the potential to be on scene needs to understand the potential and limitations – and hazards – inherent in the dog. If the handler is incapacitated, other police personnel need to be able to step in and stabilize the dog, and perhaps further its utilization. In particular, those in the chain of command need to understand the potential and limitations of the canine teams so as to utilize them most effectively and safely. Training for these realities is an inherent cost that needs to be factored into the decision to build and maintain a police canine program.

Pistols and squad cars are commodities, essentially interchangeable and quickly obtainable as needs change or losses occur. Police dogs are not commodities; each one is different and distinct and must be put in the right situation with an effective handler in order to realize his full potential. Bad decisions can lead to bad outcomes and legal, administrative and political ramifications. The assertive, powerful, impulsive dog must be matched with a handler physically and psychologically

capable of standing up to the dog and being in command. The best dog for the late night factory or warehouse search in an industrial district may not be an ideal selection for a lost child search. Good canine unit leadership, planning and policy are just as essential as good dogs and handlers. Tactical decision makers, including watch commanders and dispatchers, need to have some comprehension of these issues, and the experience of the handlers needs to be part of the deployment decision-making process.

Once engaged, the canine handler has the ultimate responsibility to foresee circumstances where the aggressive potential of his dog, selected for in breeding and enhanced in training, will lead to inappropriate intervention, and provide the necessary restraint, control and discipline. Establishing and maintaining an effective, reliable, safe police canine operation is a demanding and expensive process. This requires effective, responsible canine officers and strong dogs, but even more fundamentally good leadership all the way up the chain of command to ensure the acquisition of appropriate dogs, effective training programs and appropriate deployment policy and tactical leadership.

Scent Work: Search and Detection

Over many years the persona of the police dog was the aggressive dog, the German Shepherd or Doberman biting the man in the protection suit and projecting fear and respect for the law in the criminal elements; the excitement of the chase, an active guard or the physical engagement where the perpetrator is bitten and subdued.

But this is a distorted and increasingly obsolete perspective in that the olfactory capability, the ability to search, track, find evidence and detect substances such as drugs, explosives or accelerants, is in reality of more intrinsic importance and utility than the potential for overt aggression. If German Shepherds and Malinois were not capable of searching or substance detection, were one-dimensional pursuit and bite machines, they would be of much less practical utility, and the police canine service as it exists today would be much less prevalent and much less fundamentally useful. And more to the point, enormously less cost effective.



KNPV line Dutch import Malinois tracking and evidence search exercise with new police handler. Notice nose pushed deeply into the grass. Instructor Rik Wolterbeek on right.

As discussed in more detail in the chapter on scent work, there is a distinction between tracking, which is the systematic following of the surface or vegetation disturbance caused by the footsteps of the person, and trailing where the actual personal odor is the focus and the nose tends to be carried higher and focused on the air scent as well as near ground body odor. The tracking dog is focusing on the

actual damage to vegetation or changes to the surface and is characterized by the nose very close to the surface, often probing each footstep. Trailing, typical of many Bloodhound scenarios, involves the dog sniffing the air for indications of the actual body scent of the person. The trailing dog may at times be many yards or meters away from the actual path of the person. Although sport scenarios such as the Schutzhund tracking exercise are purely tracking, often in practical situations there is overlap with the dog following ground disturbances and airborne scent according to circumstances, perhaps alternating modes according to circumstances during a particular search. Although the practice may not be universal, my observations of imported KNPV dogs, already familiar with free searching, being prepared for American service involve the new handler teaching the dog a bit of formal tracking similar to the Schutzhund work, sometimes interspersed with off lead object searches involving several objects.

The patrol dog such as the German Shepherd is sometimes initially trained strictly for tracking, as in the Schutzhund trial. The dog learns to indicate any objects with the scent of a person, such as a billfold or weapon, which are possible clues and potential evidence. Such dogs, if solid trackers, in general readily convert to a more varied style appropriate to police applications.

In reality, under the pressure of the search, the distinction between tracking and trailing tends to become blurred and the dog does what the dog needs to do, and the function of the handler is to decide how much direction and restraint can be given without discouraging and impeding the dog. In practice, a tracking or trailing process can evolve into an area search, where the dog may circle and when coming down wind of a hidden person or object go directly to the source rather than following out the trail. Generally the handler wants to discourage this and only allow it when the track is actually lost, in which case a wider search might possibly find either the person or a point from which tracking can be resumed.

The typical dual-purpose police dog has outdoor search, tracking or trailing capability in addition to his drug detection and building search capabilities. When the need arises on a crime scene or in response to a missing person report the dog on the street is the most immediately available asset and if time is of the essence this is likely the dog that will do the job. If a crime subject has been seen fleeing time most definitely is of the essence in that the suspect typically is highly motivated to be long gone by the time the dog approaches. The distinction between pursuit and trailing may tend to blur when the distance is short and closing.

When there is more time, it is often desirable to bring in specialist dogs and handlers. Reports of missing persons, such as overdue hikers or people failing to show up at an expected time and place, are often deferred because of a lack of sufficient indication of illegal activity or immediate physical danger. When the search dog is brought in several hours later, the scent is likely to be much older and confused by other activity in the search area. In such instances, specialist police teams, sometimes Bloodhounds, or volunteer search and rescue organizations may be the most appropriate choice.

The street patrol dog accustomed to building search operations is increasingly likely to be trained in an active search and bite or engage mode or at least accustomed to an aggressive encounter at the end of his search. Such dogs are from the police breeds where aggression is a fundamental part of the breeding heritage, and a certain amount of aggression is necessary to make the cut in the selection process. Such dogs are problematic, to say the very least, when searching for an innocent civilian, potentially an especially vulnerable child with a mental disability or a confused or senile older person. Although some agencies do not permit such patrol dogs to search in these circumstances because of the danger to the subject and the enormous legal liability, sometimes the dog at hand is used on a very short lead and

with close up assisting personnel as available. This is a compromised situation in search effectiveness as well as danger and liability, as the tightly constrained dog can only cover a small fraction of the area an off lead search and rescue specialist dog could. Every situation is different and tactics must be dictated according to the potential benefits and liability, which is only one of the reasons that police command personnel need to know as much as possible about specific canine capabilities and potential, so as to make the best possible decision in conjunction with the handler.

One of the most difficult challenges for the police handler is the search subject heavily under the influence of alcohol or drugs, prescribed or illicit, whose actions are unpredictable and may strike out in irrational violence or flee or conceal themselves out of fear or guilt. Such people may illicit unpredictable reactions from the dog, who has been bred and trained to respond to aggression with aggression, which can come in many and diverse forms. Foreseeing such reactions and maintaining control and insuring safety and security for all is one of the most difficult challenges the canine handler, or any police officer, can take on.

A related service is scent discrimination, that is a process in which a dog sniffs an article suspected of being touched or owned by a perpetrator at a crime scene and then having the dog pick a suspect out of a lineup. Just as drug dogs can give false indications because of overt or unintentional handler cuing, canine criminal identification needs to be subject to rigorous standards of training and procedure. Unfortunately, police and prosecuting attorney corruption, convicting men with false testimony and other illegal means, has extended to canine service where prior knowledge is supplied to the dog handler, who produces the desired indication or trailing result. The canine team is subject to this, since the handler "reads" his dog in ways that are not generally apparent to observers; if the handler says his dog has made an indication it is difficult to contradict, and if he has been called in specifically to make the indication the temptation to encourage or perceive the right response is ever present. Such things have been the subject of much litigation, and the courts are gradually establishing rules and procedures to protect individual rights and ensure honest police work while maintaining a framework for effective police investigation and crime solving. This balance is among the most difficult to strike and maintain in a free and democratic society, but it also the most important: unbiased scales of justice are the foundation of our civilization and national integrity.

The Building Search

The building search is one of the most common and useful tasks performed by the police dog. When an alarm system results in a call to a nighttime warehouse or similar place of business, without a dog it is difficult and time consuming to determine if someone is actually present, the level of threat and most importantly their actual location or hiding place. Most of the night could be spent searching a larger warehouse or production facility without finding a person, and almost no matter how much time is spent it can never be certain that nobody was or is lurking. Furthermore, it is easy to bypass a hidden person, allowing him to slip out and escape or attack from the rear.

When an intruder is in or suspected to be hidden in a warehouse or place of business, the most desirable outcome is surrender in response to the called out "Police. Come out or we will send the dog!" The senior police tactical leader, often the handler, perhaps alone, is never certain who is in there: it can range from a fifteen-year-old kid on a prank to an armed psychopath perfectly willing to die in order to take an officer with him. Increasingly common use of dangerous, diverse drugs, legal and illegal, and alcohol mean that rational decisions cannot be assumed; totally rational, stable people very seldom wind up hiding in a warehouse. The subject has the potential to become incredibly, irrationally and unpredictably violent

and dangerous. He may also be armed with an array of high power, large magazine capacity weapons.

Men search primarily by sight, with a lesser likelihood of hearing something, and are at a tremendous disadvantage to a dog, which will rely primarily on his nose. There are thousands of places to hide, but the odor, confined in the building, often leads the dog directly to the hidden person. You can hide your body, but it is extremely difficult to conceal or mask your scent, and most of the search subjects will not understand how the dog is working or how to evade detection. A good dog will quickly find a hiding person, enabling the police officers to make the apprehension in relative safety; having a barking dog in your face or on your arm tends to make it obvious where you are and distract you from running or the effective use of a weapon. And as a bonus, calling out "Police, come out or we will send the dog" accompanied by enthusiastic barking can often produce the most desirable outcome, a nonviolent surrender, with very little risk. Although it should always be policy to emphasize the control of the dogs and the reluctance to deploy them, a well-established reputation for police dog enthusiasm on the street enhances the likelihood of surrender rather than the need for an apprehension.

Searching is a demanding and often difficult task with many variations. The search can be for a known felon or a likely suspect, but also for a lost child, a drunk or a disoriented elderly or impaired person. A search area can include city streets, warehouses, rural fields or forests and involve water in the form of ponds, rivers and lakes. Part of the training of every Dutch Police dog, for instance, involves working in water with object retrieval and directed stream crossings.

The aggressive patrol dog may not be the ideal choice to search for a lost child, but the search might of necessity be initiated by an experienced handler exercising tight control of the dog because time is of the essence. Volunteer search and rescue units provide noble service in many contexts throughout the world, and are most effective when there is good liaison and cooperation between police administration and volunteer unit leadership to insure that the right dog or dogs deploy in the right places and at the most opportune times. But when time is critical, as in the instance of following a trail from a crime scene or a child or elderly person wandering off in severe weather, either a trained dog on the force is going to do the search or the opportunity is going to be lost.

Beginning the 1980's and 90's there was a vigorous ongoing debate on training and tactics for the patrol dog search. The traditional doctrine had tended to support what is known as a find and bark or find and guard strategy, in which the dog was trained to bark vigorously at the discovered subject as long as he remained passive and motionless. This is the normal procedure in sport and trial programs such as Schutzhund and KNPV and tended to be perceived by the public, and many politicians and senior administrators, as the obviously correct approach. The find and bark advocates argue that being the subject of a search does not convict one of a crime, and that the dog might find a child, a sleeping night watchman or other sorts of people with any number of perfectly legitimate reasons for being in the search area. Proponents of the find and bark have included men such as long-term Chicago Police training director Ken Burger who argue convincingly that the liability of a find and attack strategy is inherently disproportionate force and ultimately going to lead to serious liability problems in the courts. (Burger, 1991)

The alternative strategy, the so-called find and bite model, expects the dog to engage immediately anyone found in a search. The proponents argue that it is much more practical and realistic to teach the dog to engage directly because this is his natural propensity and it is more of a deterrent to the criminal element. They further argue that if the man has a weapon, especially a gun, the bark and hold dog is simply being set up to be shot.

The vulnerability of the dog to a weapon in the hands of the found person is a risk that the handler and his supervisors need to evaluate on a case-by-case basis. The hard reality is that a primary reason for the dog is that he is expendable; sometimes he must be put at risk in the interests of officer security and safety. Searching on a lead rather than free is an option where the subject is likely to be dangerous, but on the other hand a potential impediment to the mobility and quickness of the search.

The key defect in the find and guard or find and bark strategy is that in training the helper is a confident, secure man with protective clothing and a padded arm or heavy bite jacket. The man is in no real danger and under no real stress, he is in control of this situation, or should be. The guard and bark is under tight discipline from both the handler and the helper. But on the street the object person is going to be fearful, armed, aggressive, inebriated, incapacitated or any combination of these things. The subject in most instances is simply not going to be able to stand quietly facing the dog, and this is going to cause even the best trained and disciplined dog to engage. Find and bark is, in many credible minds, the wrong strategy because on the street it simply does not work.

A second, and perhaps more telling, consideration is that handlers under the illusion that their dog will refrain from a bite are much more likely to send him in a situation where encountering an entirely innocent and vulnerable person, such as a child or an elderly person, is possible or even likely, often with a bad ending.

The find and guard procedure is universal in the dog sport world because it demonstrates admirable control, is enormously good public relations, and because the intensity of the guard reveals much about the dog's drive and character. The problem is that higher-level politicians and police administrators – sometimes lacking in general canine experience or the realities of on the street canine work – find the perceived public relations value of the find and bark scenario irresistible and embrace it in spite of the underlying reality.

An increasing majority of the most experienced and qualified trainers and handlers believe that a police dog sent to search is almost certainly going to engage, and if this is not an acceptable tactical and legal risk in a specific situation then the handler or senior person present needs to refrain from sending the dog or decide to search with the dog on line or otherwise restrained so as to allow the handler to make the ultimate decision to engage. Hopefully all of these training time and effort resources are going to enhance realistic control aspects, such as reliable call offs under practical, stressful circumstances.

That said, there remain experienced, credible trainers and handlers that advocate the find and bark. Some argue that the find and bite is encouraged by brokers and commercial trainers because it easier to train, and because it can conceal weakness in the dog. This has been one of the most contentious and passionately argued issues in police canine work over many years.

My personal experience is Schutzhund, and I well know the time and effort that goes into training the guard exercise. As a breeding suitability exercise this gives insight into the intensity of the dog and the trainability, the potential for handler control. But at some point a reality check becomes necessary, the realization that it is past time for IPO to be reevaluated, to introduce into the program exercises such as a KNPV style distant call off and release commands when engaging the decoy. IPO desperately needs to edge back closer to the real world. Unfortunately, those in control seem to be oblivious to this need, are satisfied to see the program become more and more stylized and out of touch with real world police canine applications in terms of training and breeding.

The War on Drugs

In America, the war on drugs has been a primary driving factor in the expansion of police canine deployment. The proliferation of illicit drugs, such as the narcotics, and related crime, emerged during and subsequent to the Vietnam War era. As a high school student in the late 1950s and collegiate undergraduate in the 1960s marijuana was associated in our minds with exotic Jazz clubs and the heroin or opium user was envisioned as the unimaginably deprived "dope fiend," but none of us had ever met one. Although as engineering students we would likely have been the very last to know, I was never aware of anyone known personally to be involved; it was another, hardly imaginable, world. As the last generation prior to the flood of baby boomers we were on the cusp of change in so many ways.

In the intervening years drug usage has exploded into every segment of society and commences at ever-younger ages, even in our grade schools. It has filled our prisons, with the highest percentage of incarceration in the world, largely with minor, nonviolent offenders who would otherwise mostly be paying taxes rather than being transformed into real criminals in our prison system. The international scope of illegal drug operations has been a major challenge to law enforcement agencies, and transformed American police service. It is a war we are not winning, and probably cannot win without transforming our nation into an oppressive, heavy-handed police state.

This ever expanding use of narcotics and other illicit drugs has been an extraordinarily difficult law enforcement challenge for half a century, and the burgeoning use of the police canine has expanded in lock step as a counter measure. Well-trained detection dogs have emerged as a first line of defense, particularly at international borders and in searching vehicles suspected of transporting hidden drugs. A good dog can move quickly down a line of a hundred bags in the luggage area of an airport and focus in on the one with the drugs or find the vehicle with the drugs at a traffic stop or in line at a border. In general most experienced trainers and handlers believe the ideal situation to be the single purpose detection dog, selected strictly according to the search and alert potential and trained with a complete focus on this specific role. In many situations, such as an airport or other point of entry, there is more than enough work to occupy a handler for a full shift daily; making the dedicated dog a practical solution. Such dogs can be smaller and more agile for searching the cargo bay of an airliner, a warehouse or any other confined space. The candidate pool is significantly larger than for the dual-purpose dog; the breed and individual can be selected strictly according to the prey or food drive for the search and other desirable physical and character attributes. Candidates not making the cut as a patrol dog can often become excellent dedicated detection dogs.

Because of formal educational requirements, demanding physical fitness levels, firearms qualification, emotional stability and other cognitive and character attributes, the fully sworn police officer is, and should be, a highly qualified and relatively expensive asset. The handler of the dedicated drug dog can be a specialist, with simpler and less comprehensive qualifications, and thus much less expensive in terms of training and ongoing cost. Such a person need know only how to handle and care for the dog in a very specific, limited set of circumstances.

The single purpose drug detection dog is thus much more cost effective not only because of the potentially increased efficacy, but also because both the dog and especially the handler can be less expensive to acquire or recruit, train and pay or maintain. The actual drug find is most likely to occur where there is backup immediately available, in the form of onsite or nearby police personnel, to make any necessary arrest and process prisoners, or where there is not a potentially threatening person present, as in a baggage area or loading dock search. The handler need not be capable of controlling and motivating a highly aggressive dog;

the dogs can be more easily dealt with by others and perhaps kenneled on site, further increasing cost effectiveness.

Proponents of the single purpose dog point out that the dual-purpose dog will always involve compromise in selection, training and deployment strategy, which by definition means the dog cannot always be the best in both roles. The law enforcement administrator must always strive to provide the most cost effective service possible, and that ultimately taxpayer pressure will bring in someone else if he is perceived as coming up short. For the canine unit administrator, and for the entire working police canine community, this in general means that the dual-purpose patrol and detection dog is usually the most cost effective solution on the street, and that efficiency in breeding, selection and training of such dogs is essential to insure ongoing taxpayer support.

On the street the law enforcement canine handler functions in much different, more complex and difficult circumstances than the single purpose dog handler. Engagements occur at traffic stops, checkpoints and crime scenes, often in the dark – environments fraught with inherent risk and danger. Engagements may be in isolated areas or at night where backup may not be in place at the critical moment of confrontation; and those present are likely to be potential suspects, who may become violent and aggressive, resist arrest, flee or fight back. In this environment, a dual-purpose drug and patrol dog, a German Shepherd or Malinois, is an enormous enhancement to officer security and the ability to affect an arrest without incidental violence. Because of the need to have the drug-detecting dog immediately available, because of the need for officer security in the search and arrest and because of cost effectiveness considerations, the need for the same dog to serve all necessary functions, the vast majority of police canines today are selected and trained for dual-purpose service.

Over the years, many breeds, methodologies in training and deployment strategies have been devised and implemented on a provisional basis, and mostly fallen away. There have been a few instances of experiments with a single officer patrolling with two dogs, usually a Malinois or Shepherd as the primary dog and a second dog, often a smaller and less aggressive, who is a drug specialist. This is expensive in terms of support and possibly the expense of a bigger vehicle and in terms of the care and maintenance of the dogs, where the handler must feed and train both dogs and provide ongoing maintenance training. Furthermore, two dogs mean two dogs to integrate into personal and family life and possible discipline problems if the dogs tend toward mutual aggression. This means that every day there are two dogs that need personal time and attention for training and just to hang out with the boss. This approach, and many others, have been abandoned because of practical deployment and cost considerations.

When the explosive or bomb detection dog makes his find in a safe way there has by definition been a successful mission completion; a potential tragedy has been averted. Identifying, finding and prosecuting or otherwise neutralizing the people behind the bomb are secondary issues.

But drug detection is only the first step of a process that must lead to a conviction of those responsible in order to be truly successful. This means that the chain of events leading up to the find or arrest must stand up in court as a legally valid search and the procurement of evidence must meet all legal thresholds. This will often require a certification process to demonstrate that an indication by the dog is valid probable cause for a search. The dog with a history of false indications will likely be cited by the defense attorney as a transparent pretext for an illegal search. For this reason, the training needs to create a minimal percentage of false positive indications as well as the reliable ability to find drugs in difficult circumstances.

Complete, specific documentation of successful training against false positives becomes a fundamental requirement for successful prosecution.

The Bill of Rights, as implemented as the first ten amendments to our constitution, has had a profound effect on the evolution of our nation and the overall American experience. The Fourth Amendment reads:

"The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized."

As the use of drug detecting dogs has become more prevalent and effective, the responding defensive legal strategy has often been the claim of violation of constitutional protections against unreasonable search and seizure. As these cases have wound their way to the Supreme Court case law is gradually laying down the ground rules. A major Supreme Court decision in an Illinois case has held the routine sniffing drug check as part of a traffic stop to be legal if it does not detain a citizen unreasonably and racial or ethnic profiling is not a routine cause for a search. In practice this means that if the dog is there he can sniff around the car, but you cannot hold a person for an hour waiting for the canine unit to respond to a radio summons.

A further legal strategy has been to question the accuracy of the dog, to demand proof in court that the dog's indication was highly likely to be valid because of a proven historical high success rates. A drug dog is accurate because of good selection, training and deployment practice, and if false positive indications in training are condoned then it will translate to false indications in service. One might argue that a hit rate of forty percent is reasonable, that you will find many drugs that way, but the negative factor is that the sixty percent false positive indications are going to result in inconvenience and annoyed citizens, perhaps extremely annoyed citizens. Furthermore, at some level of false positive indications the courts are going to find that they do not constitute probable cause; and the resulting searches, and any evidence or illegal drugs recovered, might well be non-admissible in court.

As a personal experience, in the terminal in New York on the way back from the Netherlands, I was in a line of passengers and a handler with a Beagle made a pass, most likely looking for produce or other agricultural products banned because of potential disease propagation. The dog went quickly down the line, but sniffed carefully at my shoulder bag, but then went on without making a distinct indication. The handler gave me a look, but passed on. Clearly the training and discipline demanded a very specific indication in order to justify a further search, which was not present here. We had been in many kennels and at various training fields, my bag probably picked up some scent, perhaps I put it down and it was marked, providing an international canine greeting for the next dog. The handler later approached me and asked if he could look in my bag, he was clearly uncertain about what was going on with the dog. When the cops or the handlers make good decisions, and follow the appropriate protocols, there is nothing about it in the newspapers.

There are significant variations in the quality of trained dogs in use, and the need to weed out the less well trained through education, public pressure and increasingly comprehensive certification programs is necessary for ongoing taxpayer support. Routine canine drug or explosive screening has been expanding into our airports, court buildings and schools. Police search and surveillance practice always walks the knife-edge of appropriate diligence and breaching the protection of the constitution against inappropriate search. In reality, this is an ever-moving demarcation point, for

no one can doubt that the 9/11 atrocity provided security and police administrators new latitude, both in new laws with expansion of legal search procedures and circumstances and in increasingly permissive interpretation of existing law.

Police or contractor administrated drug scans in schools have been controversial. A uniformed officer with a holstered side arm and a German Shepherd going up and down a line of grade or high school students looking for drugs is not the educational atmosphere most of us want, and certainly not good public relations. Benefit in terms of drug recovery and deterrence would seem to be out of proportion to the fear and disruption of the educational process and the police state overtones. On the other hand, searches of lockers, desks or classrooms when students are absent are less objectionable and yet still capable of detecting drugs or serving as a deterrent if the students are made aware of the practice.

The police force, and particularly the individual officer, is inevitably under enormous pressure. When heinous crimes are in the newspapers and on the evening television news there is enormous pressure to produce a suspect, and district attorneys routinely launch political careers on the basis of high profile convictions. It is a melancholy yet inevitable fact that the system finds and convicts innocent people in response to these pressures, and the canine handler is under particular stress. A sniff based canine indication of the presence of drugs, according to extensive court rulings, provides a constitutionally valid probable cause for a search. But the indication is ultimately in the mind of the handler, who can see or produce such an indication at will regardless of the actual presence of drug odor; more than almost any other area of law enforcement the integrity of the system is directly dependent on the moral integrity and courage of the individual handler. Most often these ideals are lived up to, but constant vigilance on the part of police administration and the court system is necessary to insure justice rather than just convictions.

In summary, canine drug detection must be scrupulous in training, record keeping, certification and evenhanded application so as to build public confidence that searches of vehicles or premises are according to the spirit and letter of the law rather than using the dogs as a pretext or an excuse to profile, intimidate or violate constitutional rights.

Explosives and Bomb Detection

Festering international terrorist activity, culminating in the attack of September 11, 2001, created a radical transformation in internal and external security practice. A consequence has been ongoing military involvement in the Middle East, where the tactics of the adversary focus on hidden explosive devices and suicide bombing operations. This has brought the explosive detection potential of a good dog to the forefront as a means of detecting and thus being able to disable or safely discharge explosives before they cause damage and loss of life. Dogs have also been effective in detecting accelerants, that is, remnants of flammable substances at a fire scene, possibly indicating arson and thus the likely concealment of evidence.

Bomb and explosive detection in critical applications such as airport security and Middle East military operations have thus been a major focus of canine application in recent years, and well-trained dogs have been in great demand. For obvious reasons of security, police officers and trainers are in general extremely reluctant to discuss tactics and details of training, which of course must be respected.

Although carefully selected Shepherds and Malinois are high potential detection dogs, in applications with significant civilian exposure, such as airport security, a breed with a non-aggressive persona, such as a Labrador Retriever, has obvious advantages. In such applications, a smaller dog can be much more agile and thus have easier access in restricted area searches such as the interior of an airplane. The

consequences of a single failure to detect are so potentially devastating that the dog is usually a full time, single purpose dog. Also, in this environment, there is often so much work to do that explosive detection becomes a full time occupation.

In other applications such as the general police patrol, the dog who will reliably alert on explosives, guns or ammunition brings an extra dimension in terms of finding evidence as well as the detection of an actual explosive device.

Although there is much commonality with the training methods employed for drug dogs, the explosive detection dog must have an extremely reliable passive alert, that is, upon sensing the presence of explosives react calmly, go into a sit or other passive posture and not scratch at, push with the nose or otherwise disturb the suspected explosive device.

The law enforcement patrol or specialist dog is virtually never trained to detect both drugs and explosives. Training for several substances is not especially difficult, but dogs are fallible and subject to momentary confusion and mistakes just like any other creature, man included. Missing a single concealed drug package in the broad scheme of things is not of extreme consequence, but any missed explosive device has a high potential for a disaster, and any compromise in training is too high a price to pay for convenience in training or deployment. In some situations outside of the mainstream law enforcement applications, such as general drug sweeps in prison systems or schools, some dogs are trained to alert on firearms as well as drugs. The use of this training strategy is of course a judgment to be made by the individual institution, but not generally considered bad practice in these specific circumstances. (Frost, 2010)

Explosive detection is actually a diverse set of specialties, including bomb detection, explosive detection, land mines, firearms and ammunition, each requiring specific training methods and the corresponding deployment tactics. The land mine dog is typically a specialist, and the dog primarily intended for civilian vehicle checks would have differences in the details of training from a military dog being prepared for the extreme hazards of the war zone. The people involved are in general very reluctant to talk about details.

Explosive detection is also extremely important for national security, and thus a key element in the protection of government leaders and officials and government and military facilities worldwide. According to Chapman the United States Secret Service began using explosive detection dogs in 1976 to protect the President, other officials and foreign dignitaries and heads of state. By 1988 there were about thirty-five detection dogs serving as part of the Secret Service. (Chapman, Police Dogs, 1990)

Crowd Control

Throughout history those empowered to impose law and order generally answered only to an elite set of authorities, had a free hand to enforce discipline and insure order and tranquility, if not justice. These were times of entrenched class social structures, and the function of civil authorities was primarily to enforce and maintain class privilege. Large, aggressive dogs often had a role in this, were extraordinarily intimidating and effective at creating fear and breaking down morale and the willingness for overt resistance. This was a fundamental reason for the Molosser or Mastiff style of dog, and some of the earliest nineteenth century records of police dog programs indicate that crowd control or riot suppression was the primary reason for their creation.

In modern democracies with established legal systems increasingly open to all, and an active press to highlight abuse, the use of dogs to counter civil disturbance becomes more problematic. While those sympathetic to law and order as an

overriding priority may applaud canine intimidation in a crowd control or riot, others will see the dogs as inappropriate force, manifestations of police abuse or even brutality.

In our era, establishing policy for canine deployment to maintain order in crowded areas or regain control in case of riot or civil disruption is a most difficult task for the administrator of a police canine unit. While a small number of handlers with dogs can provide significant leverage both in a physical and psychological sense, there are always among the mass of people individuals of vulnerability, such as children, or inadvertent, innocent bystanders. Avoiding civilian injuries, brutality or inappropriate intimidation needs to be a priority because it is the right thing to do, and because it is the general inclination of the press to focus attention on such things, which are inevitably used as a basis for criticism in the aftermath. In spite of the serious potential hazards, crowd control is in general a somewhat common police canine service. As an example, most British police officers are not armed, and the use of dogs in crowd situations there is not especially uncommon.

A complicating factor is that a primary objective of most demonstrations or riots – perhaps the overriding objective – is to provoke police retaliation that can be used to gain sympathy for the cause; and nothing is more evocative than direct canine engagement in the media, especially when victims can be portrayed as innocent, young or vulnerable.

The use of dogs and fire hoses in the civil rights conflicts of the 1960's American south is a primary example, for these images are seared in our common memory half a century later. In the aftermath of these events there was enormous backlash against police canine deployment; as a direct consequence, some canine units were disbanded entirely and many others either banned use of the dogs for crowd control or set in place rigid deployment policies and restrictions. This was a real setback in police canine programs, which would not entirely recover until the priority of suppressing illegal drug distribution emerged after the Vietnam War.

Historically strategy for canine use in crowd situations was often to feature the dogs, bring them out early and up front, for maximum psychological impact to nip an insurrection in the bud, quickly break the spirit of the crowd and to provide ongoing long-term intimidation. One of the positive outcomes of this unfortunate era in America is that overt police intimidation of any segment of our population is much less politically, legally or morally viable. Today there is need for much more caution, and when the dogs are in use the usual practice is to minimize exposure, especially where it is likely to draw the attention of the press and the cameraman. American police agencies seem to have this well under control; I cannot recall an instance of well-publicized canine presence in a crowd situation in recent years. The dogs may on occasion be in the background, but they are not often making the evening television news, which is a very good thing any way you look at it.

Administration and Leadership

Effective administration and sound acquisition and deployment strategy are just as critical to the police canine operation as strong dogs, committed handlers and good training. Most units prosper because they are effective and beneficial, make an ongoing contribution to fulfillment of departmental objectives. But canine units are not essential, are vulnerable to reduction or elimination in difficult economic circumstance or when new civilian or police leadership is not fully committed. In order to prosper in the long term the unit must be continually justified by proven effectiveness and public acceptance. This means that it must be cost effective, project authority on the street and yet not be perceived as an agent of inappropriate police intimidation. In many ways these requirements pull in different directions, necessitating compromise and balance in strategic planning and tactical operational

imperatives. Maintaining integrity, effectiveness and respect is a difficult ongoing task which can only be accomplished through excellence in leadership, administration and planning.

While bringing a new dimension to police presence, the canine unit also adds a new layer of complexity to police administration. The dogs must be selected, trained and deployed so as to be effective, but reliably under control, unlikely to engage an innocent person, including ancillary police personnel, under conditions of enormous stress to the people and the dogs alike. If a ten-year-old child turns up in a building search and the dog bites indiscriminately the press will most certainly go into spasms of righteous indignation, never mind that there was no reason for the kid to be there or that they have no viable alternatives to suggest.

Not only must the canine handler have and maintain the attributes of a good police officer – that is know the law, be proficient with his side arm, maintain physical conditioning – he must also maintain readiness in his canine partner. The training and deployment regimen must provide a dog that is effective, physically fit, aggressive and reliably under control. But beyond these burdens, substantial as they are, the handler must always be situationally aware of his dog and environment, for the dog implicitly has the license to perceive imminent danger and respond with aggression. The handler must foresee and avoid circumstances where the dog will understandably but inappropriately perceive a threat and react, an enormous ongoing responsibility. This commitment must come from the top down as well as the ground up, be the expectation of the leadership, the real standard of behavior, and the result of commitment and training at every level.

Police administration must take care to pair the right handler with a capable, compatible dog and then provide professional instruction and training, both prior to deployment and ongoing, to make this work. This means either carrying the cost of competent police dog instructors on the staff or paying outside agencies to provide instruction and education. Either option is expensive. Furthermore, the canine teams – especially the drug detection dogs – require ongoing testing and evaluation, maintaining accreditation, in order to insure successful prosecution subsequent to the drug find.

Dogs live in their own world and respond to stressful confrontations according to their nature and to training and handler interaction and control. The handler must not only determine appropriate force but also be able to sense his dog's state of mind and deploy him accordingly. This requires a strong bond and deep understanding between handler and dog, which only evolve through training and a long term working relationship.

It is essential for those in command to understand this bond and make training, deployment and assignment decisions accordingly. It is natural to regard squad cars as interchangeable assets and assign them according to convenience; but when this mind set carries over to the dogs serious consequences can ensue. Although not now common practice, there have historically been circumstances where dogs were assigned to multiple handlers. Such a policy makes it difficult to insure proper rest, training time and recreation for the dog. But the primary difficulty is that a strong dog and handler relationship is difficult to achieve under such circumstances.

While the dog is the responsibility of his handler, it is essential that other officers be able to manage the dog in case of handler injury or separation during deployment. The dog and handler are often dispatched to provide assistance to fellow officers, and they need to be part of the solution rather than a new problem. Training and planning for such contingencies should be part of the routine training regimen, and shooting the dog to regain control, while sometimes a tragic necessity, is not a good plan.

In America the police dog is usually the property of the department and represents a substantial investment in terms of acquisition cost and training. Sound management requires that as much as possible the dog and handler team form a long working partnership. In the ideal, a dog will enter service with a well-trained, handler and serve out his career as part of that team. If free of injury the dog entering service at two to three years of age can typically serve for seven to eight years, a little more in exceptional situations.

Today, the vast majority of police dogs live with the handler when off duty. Some become well integrated with the family and spend time in the residence; others are routinely segregated in a run or other enclosure, perfectly practical as long as adequate exercise is provided and there is sufficient protection from the elements according to local climate. This is highly variable, and family integration requires that all members be accepting and able to deal with the dog as necessary; taking daddy's police dog out to play is no more appropriate than wandering around the neighborhood with his service revolver. There is a lot of variation in police dogs, some perfectly good dogs need more rigid discipline and thus need to either be contained or directly under the control of the handler at all times.

In many departments there is a policy of rotating officers among diverse duties in order to enhance training and preparedness and to have personnel always available trained to respond to a specific situation. The ambitious individual officer wanting to advance must gain diversity in experience in order to move up in the ranks; and the canine program as a whole benefits from the presence of higher leadership and administrative personnel with real hands on canine experience. Many other situations, such as a handler injury, disability, retirement or personal preference will from time to time necessitate the end of the relationship. If the dog is near the end of his career an early retirement is often a good outcome, but otherwise the dog needs to make the transition to a new handler.

The transition is either going to take significant acclimation and retraining time or result in a less than service ready team on the street. Side arms and shotguns are standard issue items, but each police dog is unique in many ways and effective application is dependent on a firm bond and relationship between the officer and his dog, which takes time and dedication to build and maintain. Rotating dogs too often can also have serious consequences in off duty family situations; the dog well adapted to one home and family may not integrate well into another and may not adapt immediately to a kennel environment.

The nature of the dog always needs to be a consideration in team assignment: some dogs though when properly managed are very effective become dangerous in the hands of a not sufficiently dominant partner. When dogs are routinely assigned by administrators without personal hands on canine experience a difficult dog can fall into the hands of an inexperienced handler. This can sometimes be made to work when the transition occurs under the close direction of a good instructor, but expecting an immediate transition without sound training can create a real danger to the officer, his family and the public at large. Time allocated to training, and thus out of service, must be adequate to maintain readiness yet used efficiently and diligently enough to maintain long term cost effectiveness in the overall program.

In one instance a five-year-old Malinois with an outstanding service record was reassigned to a third handler, a police officer lacking canine experience. The dog was strong and aggressive and needed careful handling. In spite of being warned, when the officer was out of the home his wife let the dog out of his crate, and their small child was seriously injured by the dog. The knee jerk reaction, especially in the press, was that the dog should be put down because he mauled a kid, but a closer look is called for in such situations, for this may or may not be an indication of an inappropriate dog, but it is a clear indication of a failure of policy and administration.

When you really think about it, this is so stupid on so many levels it is hard to know where to begin. In the first place, it is a serious breakdown in training and administration to drop an experienced, aggressive dog on a rookie handler, apparently with inadequate training and preparation. Next, from the dog's point of view he had been abruptly abandoned by his partner of several years and placed among strangers, who did not handle the transition appropriately. Obviously, nobody could have explained all of this to the dog and in spite of being of a very strong character he was just a dog, having your long term handler drop you off and not come back has to be enormously confusing and stressful. Any aggression against an innocent person is undesirable, but it is especially egregious when it is the consequence of stupidity in training and deployment, the failure to understand and empathize with the nature of the dog.

One police officer of my acquaintance commented that his Malinois is a police working dog, not a family dog. He said he would no more let his police dog loose with his family than he would let his child take his Glock out to play with the kids in the neighborhood. In a sense, this should be the default policy, with family integration to be carefully introduced in appropriate circumstances. This is of course a case-by-case personal decision, but the police administration and leadership need to supply guidance, especially to inexperienced handlers, in dealing with these issues.

Sometimes a causative factor for inappropriate training, living and deployment circumstances and decisions comes from believing misguided public relations propaganda. Some advocates tend to be reassuring and claim that a police dog is just like any other dog, except that rather than living full time in the home they happen to go along to help mommy or daddy at work. Well, a good police patrol dog is not just like any other dog; he is specifically bred and trained for aggression. Sure, some police dogs integrate with a particular family nicely, but this needs to be decided on a case-by-case basis, taking a good look at the dog, the maturity and competence of the handler and the general home situation. The spouse of the handler uncomfortable with the dog is always a serious problem. There is nothing wrong with a police dog living primarily in a kennel run as the norm; this can keep a lid on all sorts of potentially bad situations.

The police department is akin to the military unit in that it is founded on esprit de corps, top down commitment to the enforcement of law and order with ongoing respect for civilian dignity and rights. An essential element in military integrity, discipline and readiness is the separate system of military justice which closely binds the chain of command as embodied in the officer corps with legal authority. This is much less true of police operations, which interact primarily with citizens rather than adversaries on the battlefield. This makes police operations vulnerable to much of the labor strife encountered in the private sector. For these reasons entrenched bureaucracy and police associations or unions can cripple a canine program.

As an example, Ken Burger, the now retired long time director of the Chicago Police canine program, some years ago mentioned in an extensive *Dog Sports* magazine interview that because of union rules the assignment to the canine unit was according to seniority rather than aptitude and a desire to contribute in an extraordinary way. This meant that some handlers were just men with seniority looking for a soft job, who would more or less do what was required by the book and then go home, which is not a situation conducive to excellence. (Burger, 1991) Chicago is of course world famous for corruption, featherbedding and padded work rules – ask any down town convention exhibitor who has had to pay an electrician several hundred dollars to plug in a spot light – but while most police operations are effective and professional all governmental agencies, especially those involving union representation, are vulnerable to this sort of thing. Excellence in a canine program

directly depends on the selection of aggressive, athletic handlers willing to go the extra mile, where the assignment is a privilege rather than a right.

Acquisition and Training

The rapid initial expansion of European canine police service and the police breeds such as the German Shepherd, beginning about 1900, was mutually supportive and reinforcing; police and sport trainers, breeders and the emerging national canine organizations were a community with common goals in spite of differences in language and culture. The time had come, it was as simple as that. The involvement of senior police and military leadership, such as Most in Germany and KNPV officials in the Netherlands, was enormously beneficial to the vigor and growth of the entire culture.

In America, things were much different. A primary reason was the time lapse; serious American police canine activity did not commence until the 1960s or become mainstream until the 1970s. The canine establishment, based on the British pattern, was hostile and obstructionist, strongly discouraging serious dogs or any activity involving canine aggression. Where the European founders were able to deal with supportive or at least neutral national organizations, the AKC was historically always hostile.

For these reasons America police service evolved in isolation from civilian amateur activity emerging in the same time frame or a little later, relying almost entirely on Europe for dogs, training methodology and guidance. The consequence was very little communication, cooperation, mutual support or sharing of resources with the emerging amateur working dog community, which was weak and late to evolve. Each set of people forged their own European bonds, but were virtually independent, so much so that they were not even well enough acquainted for distrust. Another factor has been the general tendency in American police circles to turn inward and distrust civilian authority or cooperative relationships beyond the necessary interaction with the politicians and office holders, who supply the money and appoint the senior commanders.

American sport trainers from the beginning were isolated and dependent on Europeans for breeding stock and training philosophy. Importing titled dogs for instant credibility and a shortcut to the podium became fashionable, but did little to enhance the domestic working dog culture or the credibility of the movement. Much of this European subservience was about the seeking of acceptance and approval, condescending pats on the head from Europeans in positions of perceived prestige and authority. There was generally little interest in the actual utility of the dogs beyond accumulating certificates and cups to wave on the podium, and making money selling dogs and services to newcomers seeking their own cups.

In the early years there was the hope and expectation that American unity would in time evolve through emulation of European synergy, adopt the better aspects of the culture and tradition. Instead Europe has drifted in the wrong direction, toward estrangement between police breeding, training and service on the one hand and the incessantly watered down IPO sport program of the FCI on the other.

This has been especially fraught in Germany, particularly in the German Shepherd community. Schutzhund originated as the definitive German Shepherd character gage, the prerequisite for breeding. IPO had existed for many years as a similar international program with different rules and philosophy. In 2012 Schutzhund went out of existence, and the IPO sport program became the German Shepherd performance and character evaluation process. This was not destined to end well, for the FCI continued to water down the IPO program, dropping the stick hits from the FCI IPO championships in 2014.

European emphasis on conformation lines, primarily in the German Shepherd, with increasingly feeble character expectations exacerbates this general deterioration of the heritage. Thus when the police resurgence and awakening sport interest commenced in America, broadly speaking in the 1970s, the unity in Europe, most especially Germany, was dissipating, with the emerging predominance of show line breeding and sport training standards diverging increasingly from the realities of police service.

For all of these reasons American police dogs have primarily been European imports, or dogs a generation or so removed. This has occurred either through brokers or by sending in house personnel to evaluate, select and purchase dogs, both untrained prospects and trained or titled dogs. Military acquisition has followed similar patterns, although they have had their own breeding program at Lackland for a number of years. American civilian trainers, mostly Schutzhund enthusiasts, have also remained dependent on imported dogs for competition, often trained and titled dogs.

Many American police departments, especially the smaller or relatively newer units, acquire dogs and training through commercial vendors. The quality of the dogs and training varies, for anyone can line up a source of European dogs, easy to do if you have the cash, and be in the business of supplying police dogs and training. The problem is that dogs are not a commodity. Within reason you can purchase a specific model Glock automatic according to price and service, but every dog is different and it is enormously more difficult to select and negotiate price. Administrators of smaller or newer canine units are quite often lacking in experience, which is why they are going to the commercial supplier for the package solution in the first place. If the agency does not quickly evolve and become more sophisticated, the supplier has no reason, other than personal integrity, to advance the quality of the dogs or training because that would mean that he would need to supply better and thus more expensive dogs. For this among many other reasons there is enormous variation in the quality of police dogs on America's streets today. The solutions for this need to come from within the police agencies, and cooperative training, competitive events, outside evaluations and formal certification requirements would all help in raising expectations and standards.

Having spent a little time observing training in a vendor facility, it becomes evident that success takes more than just the right vendor, has several components:

- A quality dog with appropriate early socialization and training.
- Knowledgeable, experienced instructors able to project enthusiasm.
- Engaged police administration committed to training and excellence.
- Candidate handlers that are sound patrol officers with a strong work ethic and enthusiasm for working with the dogs, willing to go the extra mile, and the ability to bond with the dog.

As in every sphere of business, there will always will be manipulative, deficient and even fraudulent police dog vendors, it is in the nature of human beings and free enterprise. The only driving force for better vendors is better informed and more sophisticated customers. In this environment good police administration means as much as possible bringing the knowledge and experience in house, to come to the point where the department handlers and trainers, and former handlers still within the department, perhaps at administrative levels, are able to evaluate dogs, training and performance. This often does not scale well to the smaller programs, which must either function in cooperation with neighboring agencies in terms of training and leadership or rely too much on the commercial vendors. Strong administrative experience, knowledge and engagement tends to result in a stronger vendor relationship, because of the certain knowledge that poor dogs or service will not go

unnoticed and could result in losing the business. Good vendors are created by strong, knowledgeable, demanding customers. Bad vendor relationships are those in which the vendor is able to manipulate and in effect manage the canine unit to his own benefit and profit.

One experienced police trainer has commented that among the reasons for the lack of interaction and cooperation between the police canine community and the sport training in America is that vendors and brokers have tended to encourage dependence and disparaged the amateur or sport training. While this is only one aspect of a very complex reality, which has been discussed extensively in earlier chapters, it does ring true in my ears.

Police dog candidates are increasingly being bred specifically for sale to American police agencies, both here and in Europe. This is not just a matter of good breeding stock, proper care of the bitch in whelp, attending the whelping of the litter and providing clean runs, good food and medical care. As discussed in the *Nature and Nurture* section at the end of Chapter 2, the young dogs need intensive socialization, especially in the two or three weeks after the eyes open. This may seem to be a matter of just having people play with the puppies, but it is more difficult than that. The pup ideally needs to get into some sort of a family situation. Just as the assistance dogs for the blind are fostered out for a year or so to provide this critical socialization, our military breeding program at Lackland Air Force Base and commercial breeding operations seek out people to foster candidate pups.

Fostering a pup for assistance training or the military is generally a matter of a contribution to the common good, a service to society as a whole. Fostering a pup for a commercial operation brings forth a complex set of issues, in that the process greatly adds to the value of the pup, presenting the question of who should share in the eventual purchase price. The free enterprise answer is that the market should dictate price, that if puppy fostering becomes a paid service rather than a civic contribution the person needs monetary compensation. One problem with this is that money will attract people seeking money, and some will seek to acquire many pups, perhaps from different agencies, and simply feed and kennel them for the allotted time and then turn them in for payment, which of course means that the whole exercise has been more or less pointless. These are complex and unresolved issues.

Canine units are expensive and under continual pressure to justify their existence in terms of cost effectiveness. Obvious components of cost include procurement of the dog, provision of food, shelter and medical care and the necessity of special equipment, such as larger and extensively modified vehicles. But the major ongoing expense is training in that the handler generally is on duty during routine training, either on an overtime basis or on the clock detracting from patrol availability.

Eight to sixteen hours a month of maintenance training per dog, a modest schedule, quickly adds up, is a budget item of many thousands of dollars for even small programs. If the training is local, the dog is generally available for dispatch in case of an incident, offsetting some of the expense, as breaking off a training session at any point is generally not harmful; indeed, preparing for the unexpected is one of the fundamental aspects of the training.

Beyond the time of the individual handler, there must be people to direct the training, observe and correct procedures, serve as protection helper, evaluate the dogs and generally run the program. Smaller units often use outside professional services because it is impractical to find or pay an in house trainer. Larger departments often maintain in house training and supervisory staff in addition to the actual on the street canine handlers. Regardless of the organizational details, these tend to be experienced, capable people, and thus relatively expensive in terms of salary, the provision of office space, vehicles, equipment such as bite suits and sleeves and other ongoing expenses.



British police officers patrolling the docks and rail yard.
1941

In order to justify their expense, police dogs increasingly need to serve more than a single purpose. In particular, the olfactory potential is of fundamental importance, for the modern police patrol dog must be capable of searching a building, doing an outdoor area search, scanning the ground and grass for evidence and tracking and searching for a criminal or lost person. When a track is long or difficult, or the weather is hot, tracking can require great stamina and endurance, as it

is very demanding and difficult work. With the exception of a few specialist situations, such as an occasional Bloodhound, the police dog in America today is a German Shepherd or, increasingly, a Malinois.¹ This is because the medium size and great stamina of the herding dog is an excellent match for the police patrol role and because viable candidates in other breeds do not exist in sufficient numbers.

The growth of police canine programs, and increasing military requirements, has created a brisk and expanding demand for capable dogs. Many years ago in Chicago public radio announcements that the police department was seeking donations of candidate canine patrol dogs were fairly common, and such dogs were in fact utilized. But the reality is that effective police canine patrol programs require more than pet breeding cast offs, demand that the dogs come from serious breeding programs where the stock is realistically tested to establish that they indeed do have the physical and moral attributes necessary. In general the vast majority of unwanted dogs in civilian hands are unlikely to stand up under training, and taking on a dog that at some point has to be discarded is an expensive and wasteful process.

Today most American police dogs are imported, primarily from countries such as the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium and the Czech Republic, or are first generation offspring of such dogs, often bred specifically for police service by commercial operations. Breeding has been ramped up to produce dogs specifically for the American market, attracted by prices upwards of five thousand dollars for an untrained year and a half old dog. American quasi-amateur dog sport programs, primarily Schutzhund, have played relatively little part in this, which is generally not a good thing.

When I was spending significant time in the Netherlands it was quite common to find police officers as active trainers in KNPV clubs, and when introduced to higher-level KNPV officers they were quite often police administrators in their day jobs. This perception may be slightly skewed by the fact that the friend whom I usually stay with is a KNPV judge; perhaps I have just been less fortunate in my American connections. But on the whole my opinion is that the fact that European police officers, club trainers and trial participants have close relationships – indeed are

¹ Dutch Shepherds being essentially a coat variation of the Malinois.

often the same people – is a fundamental causative factor for the widespread success of Dutch police canine programs.¹

Part of an ongoing canine operation is or should be periodic performance review of team effectiveness. In the middle 1980s, I was fortunate enough to spend a day at a police training and evaluation session at Apeldoorn in the Netherlands. The practice there was that each six months an outside evaluator was brought in to conduct what amounted to a mini KNPV trial, which as I recall took about half a day for the six or seven Malinois and five or six Bouviers then on the force.

My impression was that if a dog looked good, and had looked good previously, the test was perfunctory, short and quick. Presumably in a questionable situation the evaluator was free to test to whatever level he felt necessary to verify the dog. An interesting point is that if the dog failed to qualify again after being on probation the dog would or could be eliminated. But if the dog went the handler most likely lost his canine handler status and privileges. There are no doubt provisions where it seems to be a fundamental problem with the dog rather than the training, but to continue as a handler you were responsible to maintain the readiness and discipline of your dog, which would seem to be simple common sense.

Trends

Over the past twenty years there has been enormous demand for police and military canines, domestically driven primarily by the war on drugs and the enormous demand for bomb and explosive detection dogs in the various Middle Eastern conflicts.

Reliable statistical information on the number of police dogs in American service is surprisingly difficult to come by. According to Chapman there were approximately 7000 police canine teams in America in 1989. There does seem to be steady growth, as there are reliable reports of over 9,000 in police dogs serving in America in 2002. (Mesloh, 2003) The post 9/11 emphasis on security would make a somewhat larger figure seem likely. Although long-term demand seems likely to remain high, in the short term the winding down of our Middle East commitments is likely to reduce demand.

The wild card in all of this is the evolving American attitude toward recreational drugs, which is generally softening. Possession of small amounts of drugs such as marijuana is increasingly treated as a minor infraction, often ignored at officer discretion, and increasingly condoned on a state by state basis. Although federal law and enforcement aggressiveness remain relatively stringent, state laws are increasingly relaxed in terms of medical use, which is often a wink-wink acceptance of recreational use, and outright legalization.

Widespread acceptance of recreational drug use would seem likely to diminish the demand for police canine service. Legalization of soft drugs, particularly marijuana, would present retraining and management problems in that positive find indications on newly legal substances would likely be interpreted as civil rights or constitutional violations.

¹ This is especially effective in the Netherlands, neither the Belgian or French sport programs seem to have police relations that are comparably strong and cooperative.

14

The Dogs of War



U.S. Marine handler, Corporal Michael Galloway and Scout Dog Stormy search a tunnel and find an enemy satchel of explosives (Vietnam, 1970). Stormy's first handler was Ron Aiello.

The propensity of primitive men to raid neighboring bands or villages did not abate as we advanced technically and socially, learned to fashion ever more sophisticated and effective weapons. Advancing civilization provided the technical and societal means to plunder on an ever expanding scale.

As understood and explained by scientists such as Konrad Lorenz, this innate aggression is a necessary evolutionary adaption for survival. But establishing social mechanisms to limit aggression has become much more difficult as advancing technology and production potential have provided increasingly effective weapons. The domestication of the horse provided mobility for larger and more robust states and to enable more far reaching excursions. As a consequence small scale skirmishes between bands evolved

over time into full scale wars among nations.

Dogs were participants from the earliest times, providing intrusion warning, searching out opportunities for plunder and directly fighting an adversary. Such things were natural extensions of the herd guardian and hunting roles, emerging out of ancient, evolutionary established predatory and territorial instincts and the family group or pack social structure. Even into the era of swords and spears aggressive dogs could be a significant factor in an engagement, just as in the hunt.

En masse deployment of war dogs of the Molosser type has been depicted on the walls of the ancient Egyptians and Assyrians and in the writing of the Greeks and Romans, sometimes with armor and spiked collars. Although the vision of hordes of snarling, spike collared hounds hurtling into enemy ranks is dramatic, details of breeding, training, logistics and deployment strategy are sparse. Those with the least bit of practical canine experience can well envision the care and effort necessary to loose masses of dogs in the vanguard of battle, for those large and aggressive dogs would have needed handlers and trainers to make them ready and willing at the appointed place and time. Even transporting the accouterments of war, the spiked collars and body armor, from battle to battle, indeed, even feeding the dogs, would have been a resource consuming logistical challenge.

Engagement tactics would have been problematic, for in the fog of war battle fields become confused and turbulent places. When the command went forth to release the dogs effective training and deployment strategies would have been critical to ensure that confusion and fear was struck in the ranks of the foe rather than your own advancing lines. The extent to which the purpose of the dogs was

psychological, creating fear, rather than tactical is difficult to discern at this point in time.

In this era battles were decided in hand to hand combat, where discipline, holding the line of battle, was fundamental. Although we know little in the way of detail, what we do know, the descriptions of body armor and spiked collars, of massive deployment, indicate that the purpose of the ancient war dog was to disrupt and distract the adversary, to render him vulnerable through injury and fear, disrupting formations and dissipating discipline.

Since we have limited knowledge of how common or effective packs of dogs were or might have been, evocative drawings on ancient walls may have been akin to some modern depictions of war, having more to do with image and propaganda than reality; war stories have no doubt been told as long as men have gone to war. But chained or restrained dogs as perimeter defense are commonly mentioned in history, as in Napoleon's Egyptian campaign and later in Russia. Attila the Hun is said to have routinely employed dogs as perimeter guardians of his encampments. Dogs restrained by handlers, or tied to fixed points, would have provided intimidation, deterrence, defense and the option of loosening them at an appropriate moment. Psychological factors, the fear that they might be loosed, likely played their own role.

Although the massive deployment of war dogs had long faded in Europe by the medieval era, the surge of European exploration and colonization of remote regions devoid of guns and steel brought forth new opportunities for dogs of war, as exemplified by the overrun of the Aztec empire by the Spanish Conquistadors and a little later the suppression of slave insurrection in the Caribbean islands and elsewhere. New world agriculture and mining, from South America through the American South, became dependent on African slave labor, and the ever present threat of insurrection on every scale, as illustrated by the successful revolt in Haiti, became an oppressive part of colonial life. In most regions slaves far outnumbered European owners and overseers, and every means of containment and control was employed.

Large and aggressive dogs, bred specifically for the purpose, often of the Molosser type, played a major role in intimidation, recovery of runaways and punishment. In the Caribbean particularly packs of savage dogs, bred over time for the purpose, were routinely deployed; fear, the expectation of savage attack by packs of dogs, was an ever present reality for the slave population. Such dogs, evolved by crossing Bloodhounds with especially vicious mastiff or bulldog lines, came to be known as Cuban Bloodhounds, and also as Nigger Hounds and other pejorative names meant to demean and instill fear.¹ There is little doubt that there were diverse regional varieties, with some the cross bred hound type and others more of the Molosser style, precursors to the modern Dogo Argentino and Fila Brasileiro.

In antebellum America much of this fierce canine persona was created by packs of slave hunting hounds, made famous in the movies and portrayed as hunting escaped prisoners as well as slaves. While all sorts of dogs were likely employed, the emphasis was on specific lines such as imported Cuban Bloodhounds. This savage, terrifying persona became legendary because of the reality and because the image was projected in lurid press accounts and through word of mouth – creating subservience through fear and intimidation was the underlying purpose. Although

¹ Bloodhound enthusiasts emphasize, correctly, that these were cross bred specifically for fierceness, and that the original Bloodhounds of the era, and those of today, were and are much more benign.

such dogs to a large extent disappear at the close of the war, remnants of such lines likely persist in our southern farm dogs.

Although in most of the world today military and police dogs are less often deployed for terrorism and oppression, such things do, and always will, go on. Even in the American South of the civil rights era, the 1960s, such dogs were deployed, along with the fire hoses and police lines, for intimidation. Throughout most of history, fear of the military or police dog was there because it was put there, was the purpose of the dog, was a perfectly rational response to the reality.

The Modern Era

The widespread introduction of gunpowder transformed all aspects of war. As artillery increasingly dominated the battle field and the rifle became more sophisticated and effective castles were transformed from strongholds of survival to picturesque relics, armor and the mystique of the knight were relegated to the realm of legend and the offensive role of the dog abated. Just as the infantry man with a modern repeating rifle rendered the cavalry charge obsolete, modern firearms removed any remaining vestige of practical use for war dogs as offensive weapons.

Today purely aggressive dogs are out of the mainstream of modern, progressive military and police applications. While it remains true that contemporary police breeds, such as the Malinois, are capable of serious aggression, and are bred and selected to be high in fighting drive, to be of use in the modern context this aggression must be secondary and supportive rather than the primary function. Discipline, restraint and control are canine watchwords where the dogs routinely come in close contact with diverse military, supporting and civilian personnel. The static perimeter guard role, long a mainstay of canine service, has to a significant extent been taken over by electronic and optical intrusion detection technology, such as television surveillance and night vision devices.

In the twentieth century, beginning in WWI, military dogs increasingly served as messenger, search, detection, scout and patrol dogs as exclusively aggressive roles diminished. This transition was gradual, for the old fashioned military guard dog, persisting into the Vietnam era, was in no essential way different from the perimeter guard dogs of Napoleon or even back into the era of Greeks and Egyptians.

Although many breeds were proposed and touted for modern military service, the tending style herding dogs, especially the Belgian and German Shepherds, emerged as the practical type. Although breeds such as the Airedale and Doberman served through WWII, these breeds were generally abandoned as the modern era progressed. There is a touch of irony in the fact that breeds specifically created for man aggression, such as the Molossers and Doberman Pinchers, fell by the wayside as the herders, with the inbred instinct to protect the flock or herd rather than focus on engaging the predator population, came to the forefront.

As Napoleon famously commented "An army marches on its stomach," and dogs have contributed to logistical, behind the lines support roles throughout history. The American Army deployed sled dogs as recently as WWII – to rescue downed aviators in northern latitudes among other things – and the indigenous draft dogs of Belgium played a minor role in WWI. Dogs have always fulfilled the more informal and mundane roles of watch dog, guard dog, draft dog, pack dog and even messenger; when man goes to war warriors have needs between battles, and the dogs, like the camp women, were always present as mascots and simple companions if nothing else. The Roman Legions often took herds, and accompanying dogs, on the march to provide food; to what extent the dogs participated in battle can only be a subject of speculation.



Keeper Reid with Tweed (left).

WW I British Messenger Dogs
(Richardson, 1920)

During the American Civil War dogs were employed as sentries, mascots and as makeshift search or patrol dogs, but there was no formal program of recruitment, training or deployment on either side. Dogs were used at prisoner of war camps where they served as guard dogs; and where packs of hounds were maintained to chase down escaped prisoners. No doubt the canine packs maintained to pursue and punish fleeing slaves were well adapted to this new role.

The first formal, large scale deployment of the modern war dog took place in the First World War, most prominently and successfully by the Germans, the only nation with a substantial, long term prewar program in place. Although the Americans had no military dogs of their own, they were able to utilize British and French dogs to some extent. (Chapman, Police Dogs, 1990)

The early German enthusiasm for military applications naturally brings to mind the prominence of the German police breeds, but this was going on in the later 1800's before these now famous breeds had been formalized, were still in the fields and meadows with the sheep and cattle. Although there had been growing interest, the German Shepherd national breed club and the rapid proliferation of the

breed, and to a lesser extent the others, particularly the Doberman, would not occur until the later 1890s.

In their search for war dogs the Germans were focused on the formal purebred rather than cross breeds or undocumented dogs of the fields and pastures. In this era many of the prominent purebreds were British, the progenitors of the German police breeds still unnoticed in the hands of shepherds, drovers and farmers. The breeds considered included the Poodles because of their intelligence and trainability, but they lacked ruggedness. The St. Bernard was a candidate, but had degenerated, was too far from their functional roots. The Great Danes were large, unwieldy and difficult to control. The larger hunting dogs were robust, but the inherent hunting instincts were a serious impediment to training; the deeply ingrained inclination to chase rabbit or deer presented discipline issues. The Airedale was a contender early on, and many served in the German military in both world wars, but they would fade.

In his 1892 book on the war dog the famous German animal painter and illustrator, Jean Bungartz, made an impassioned case for the Scotch Collie. (Britannica) Beyond his illustrations and writing he was directly involved in the Red Cross (military medical assistance) dog program of the German Government, was in fact the director. This experimental program seems, at least initially, to have been focused on the Collie, and his participation would persist until well into the twentieth century. Von Stephanitz was not enthused about Herr Bungartz and his Collie dogs.

Commencing after the Franco-Prussian War, in 1870, the German military had begun encouraging and subsidizing civilian training and breeding. In 1884 the first war dog school was established at Lechernich, near Berlin. Training was diverse,

including messenger dogs, scout dogs, sentry service and ambulance or sanitary dogs. Jean Bungartz, a hands on man as well as a famous artist and writer, was the head trainer with his particular interest in the Red Cross dogs. These ambulance dogs were the subject of incessant promotion and publicity prior to WWI, in several nations, largely because many of the promoters were essentially breed advocates seeking service venues which would engender positive public perception. In the harsh reality of WWI trench warfare expectations faded and interest did not reemerge after the war.

The Herrero Campaign (1904-1907) in German South-West Africa (modern Namibia) served as a proof of concept proving ground for the German war dog program. Some sixty dogs were deployed with the military and were deemed effective as security, search and patrol dogs in difficult terrain and operating circumstances. This success provided impetus for the German program in the lead up to major European war. In a war of subjugation over the native population there was no expectation of public concern over harsh treatment or injury to victims with no legal rights or standing, which provided a great deal of latitude for experimentation with little expectation of negative press or civilian wringing of hands.

The establishment of the German Shepherd as a formal breed in 1899 and the phenomenal growth over the next fifteen years under the leadership of von Stephanitz was the pivotal event in the evolution of the modern military and police dog, for in terms of sheer numbers everything else became preamble. The German Shepherd would be the backbone of military and police canine service for a century.

WWI

When war finally came, the Germans were ready with trained dogs, placing 6,000 in service at the onset of hostilities. According to records of the German Society for Ambulance Dogs at Oldenburg, of 1,678 dogs sent to the front up to the end of May 1915, 1,274 were German Shepherds, 142 Airedale Terriers, 239 Dobermans and 13 Rottweilers. (Britannica) About 7,000 German dogs were destined to die during the First World War, serving as messengers, guard dogs, telephone cable pullers or medical search dogs.

The allies – the British and French – were late to the war dog game. A formal British program was not established until 1917 at Shoeburyness, some three years into the war, under the auspices of the signal section of the Royal Engineers. This program was under the direction of Major Edwin H. Richardson, who had been promoting and studying military and police canine applications for many years. The initial dogs going into service were those that he had been training privately, and the supply of dogs was largely from private citizens in response to a well-published plea for donations. As mentioned, there was no American war dog program at all.

Emphasis was on the messenger service, but sentry dogs were also trained and deployed. Of 340 dogs sent to France from the school within a certain period, 74 were collies, 70 cross bred sight hounds or Lurchers, 66 Airedales, 36 sheep-dogs, and 33 retrievers, the remainder being made up of 13 different breeds. (Britannica) The static western front provided relatively little opportunity for the scout or patrol style of service that would prove so successful in the South Pacific in the next war, and in Vietnam.

One of the primary uses of the dog¹ was for message delivery, as practical radio use was in the future and telephone lines took time to lay and were subject to

¹ Carrier pigeons also played a role, sometimes transported to the front on messenger dogs.

sabotage or monitoring by the enemy. High value goods, such as maps, ammunition or even cigarettes could be transported. Elaborate training and deployment methods were devised, including the delivery of pigeons by dogs for return messages. The trench warfare contributed to the practicality of this, for it provided cover for the dog and established routes which could in some circumstances be learned and repeated. In more dynamic tactical environments, with routine advances, retreats and troop movements, a returning dog might have to seek the handler by use of his nose, that is, find where he had moved to, which introduced an element of uncertainty.

The British used messenger dogs with a single handler or trainer, the dogs being taken forward by ordinary soldiers and then released as necessary with a message in a tube or container attached to their collar, the dogs returning to their handlers by instinct and training. Among the advantages of this approach was the efficiency in terms of personnel, that is a single handler typically worked several dogs, since specialist handlers were not required at the point of origin, usually the front lines, the dogs having been taken forward by ordinary soldiers, and all of the dogs could return to a central location, usually some sort of command center. The Germans employed teams with two handlers for each dog so they could be sent back and forth, sometimes referred to as liaison dogs.

Richardson, in his famous book on war dogs, says that the simpler single handler system was necessary for the British because there was no preexisting program and reservoir of trained dogs and handlers. He advocated that a certain number of liaison dogs, those capable of going back and forth between two handlers, should in the future be trained and maintained ready for service, but much to his frustration the British program was abandoned after the war.¹ Richardson indicates a strong preference for use of male dogs and reports that retrievers in general were not as satisfactory. Terriers such as the Airedale and also smaller breeds such as the Irish Terrier were successful in his program, and he was entirely open to the use of mixed breed dogs. Statistically, the Collies, Lurchers and Airedales predominated.

A central British kennel and training operation was established in France at Etaples. The dogs were ready for deployment after five or six weeks of intensive training. From Etaples the dogs were posted to sectional kennels behind the front line, each kennel consisting of about 48 dogs and 16 men. From these kennels the handlers, with up to three dogs, were sent forward for duty behind the trenches.

The French canine training center was at Satory, established about the same time as the English school at Shoeburyness. Shepherds of various kinds, Airedale Terriers and Scotch Collies were among the breeds utilized. In addition to the messenger, sentry and patrol dogs, the French also trained dogs for transport, that is, pack and draught dogs.

As mention previously, the German war dog program was large and diverse, with German Shepherds, Dobermans, Airedale Terriers and Rottweilers the preferred breeds, roughly in that order. The Germans emphasized the dual handler messenger dog system, the so called liaison system, with the dogs travelling back and forth between two handlers. The two handlers generally had several dogs, and were trained or adaptable to cable laying and transporting carrier pigeons, ammunition, maps or other light, high value items. If there were no military missions, the dogs were run without messages as necessary in the interest of training and conditioning.

According to Lemish the British and the French had twenty thousand dogs by the end of the war, and the Germans thirty thousand. Least anyone retain any illusion of the romance or nobility of war, thousands of these unfortunate dogs, acquired and

¹ (Richardson, 1920)



trained at such sacrifice, were simply put down at the end as surplus. (Lemish, 1996)

After the war the Germans were under onerous terms, very seriously limited and restrained in their military activity, which made another war virtually inevitable, and the British and French greatly diminished their own military preparedness. The Americans disarmed almost completely, and only low level, sporadic interest in dog applications would come before Pearl Harbor. Canine programs were

very much on the back burner everywhere, but the Germans, under duress and economic hardship, persisted as best they could.

But in spite of the short sighted curtailing of activity, the effectiveness of war dogs in these new roles was in general proven, and the service would expand significantly in the future. The Germans especially learned their lessons well, and even in spite of the restrictions of the peace terms carried on their training and breeding programs.

But not all war dog programs were successful. In the years leading up to the war a great deal of publicity and effort had been devoted to the so called sanitary or ambulance dogs, intended to find wounded and disabled men on the field of battle and provide assistance, often in the form of guiding rescuers to the wounded men. A principle factor in the effectiveness of the medical assistance dogs was to have been the ability to distinguish between the dead which they were trained to ignore and the wounded who they were to respond to by encouragement or taking a hat or object back to the handler, thus summoning help. All of this was based on the assumption that the unmistakable red on white cross symbol used on men, animals, hospitals or ships would be recognized and honored. Such turned out not to be the case. According to Edwin Richardson:

"Had these conditions obtained in this war, ambulance dogs would have been of great assistance. As it was, however, when the French army hurriedly sent some of their ambulance dogs with their keepers to the front in the earliest feverish days, the first thing that happened was that, although both men and dogs wore the Red Cross, the enemy brutally shot them all down whenever they attempted to carry out their humanitarian work. It was also found that, when the opposing forces settled down into trench warfare, the opportunities on the Western front were closed. The only ambulance dogs that were used with any success were those with the German army when the Russians were retreating on the Eastern front." He continues: "... the conditions on the Western front soon became, as I have said, impossible for the successful use of ambulance dogs. The French War Office entirely forbade their use with their army after the first few weeks." (Richardson, 1920)

It seems that the Ambulance dog, the soldier's friend, was created for public relations reasons as much as anything else; advocates seeking a favorable public persona for their breeds and the dogs generally. Although peace time, civilian oriented search and rescue carries on, formal military programs of this sort no longer are significant.

The Specialists

In modern warfare many soldiers are specialists, and this is even more true of the military dogs: there are a number of distinct functions or missions that demand selection for specific characteristics and the provision of specialized training according to their expected role in combat or behind the lines. Trainers and handlers of course also require their own specialized skill and knowledge sets, and more senior officers and noncommissioned officers need to understand these roles and deploy the teams accordingly, something that has not always been appreciated or achieved in practice.

Most military training programs are thus set up to produce a specific skill set, that is specialist dogs such as sentry, patrol, scout and search dogs. But these roles – discussed in subsequent sections – can overlap and evolve in service as handlers, perhaps assisted by trainers in the combat zone, adapt their dogs according to circumstances, tactical needs and perceived potential in the individual dog and handler. As a prime example, many of the WWII Marine messenger dogs were converted to scout or guard dogs in the South Pacific theatre. In the fog of war, capacity for adaption and improvisation is essential.

The Messenger Dog

In WWI the primary canine function was, arguably, that of messenger dog. As illustrated in innumerable tales of dogs returning home over daunting distances, they are capable of navigating difficult terrain and avoiding detection or interference. The four footed drive, low profile, ability to blend in and innate instinct to find a way home were the ingredients for service, and until the advent of reliable, effective field radio units the messenger dog was found to be quite useful and effective. The dogs were often acclimated to carrying a pack so as to deliver supplies or ammunition, and some were trained to string telephone wire up to a mile using special harnesses.

Dogs could move rapidly in adverse terrain and presented a difficult target for the rifleman. While most often the dog returned to the handler, it was also able to follow and find the handler by scent at a distance up to several miles in case circumstances, the shifting battle, forced the handler to move. This is a brief description of WWI German service:

"... a dog was intercepted no more frequently than a man, and furthermore, if a human messenger is captured he can be forced to amplify the information he carries whereas no one has yet learned how to make a dog talk."

"The infantry and the artillery have separate sets of liaison dogs, because the infantry dogs run from the front lines back and vice versa while those of the artillery run parallel to the fighting line. It has been found that if a dog regularly runs in a given direction there is less chance of its changing its course when crossing other lines of canine communication. All animals are taught to run wearing gas masks as frequently they must cross gassed areas."

(Humphrey & Warner, 1934) p19

The Germans – and the Americans in WWII – employed two handlers for each dog so they could be sent back and forth. The initial Marine deployments in the South Pacific were half messenger dog teams, with one dog and two handlers, the other half being scout dogs. In the early deployments messenger dog usage turned out to be minimal and they were deemphasized as the war progressed. Many were converted to scout, guard or other duties. (Putney, 2003)

In WWI British messenger dogs used a single handler for the dog, which was taken forward in the care of the ordinary soldiers and then released as required to

return to the handler at a base location, usually some sort of command post. Each base end handler typically worked with several dogs since individual trained handlers were not required at forward points in the lines. The special collar with a message tube was typically put on immediately before the dog was sent to build the association with the task required.

WWI had been largely a static engagement where the soldier walked into battle and much transport was by horse and mule, but increasingly WWII, particularly the European and African theaters, involved rapidly moving tank warfare, deployment by truck and generally mechanized operations, made messenger dogs increasingly impractical. In addition to this the early phases of WWII saw the introduction reliable portable field radio units – the famous Walkie-Talkie – which came into widespread use and were very effective.

In the South Pacific the rain and wet conditions typical of jungle warfare reduced the reliability of the radio gear in the early stages and thus the messenger dogs retained a minor role. But improving radio equipment and tactics over time reduced this role, and many messenger dogs were converted to sentry or scout duty. (Putney, 2003) The relative number of messenger dogs deployed with new units also was substantially reduced over time, and the Marines eventually stopped training such dogs entirely to focus on the enormously effective and in demand patrol dogs.

The overall transition away from the messenger dog was gradual, for they were still being trained to some extent at the Camp Carson Army center as late as the early 1950s.

The Sentry or Guard Dog

The dog of war conjures up the image of the snarling, barking beast straining at the end of a lead, but this guard dog is only one of several types, and in many ways the least sophisticated and demanding in terms of training and handler sophistication. The function of such dogs was to protect fixed bases, encamped troops or any other static asset, anywhere a watch or guard is needed. These dogs were selected to be active and aggressive to protect the handler and to give warning of an intruder; sometimes their highest priority was to live long enough for the handler to recognize and warn of an intrusion. When the handler lacks a radio, the barking of the dog may be the primary warning and notification mechanism. Often deployed as a foot patrol, they are also useful when a jeep or other vehicle is utilized.¹ Sentry dogs are to a large extent born rather than made, for the instinctive, even excessive, aggression cannot be effectively created where it is not there, and making lesser dogs aggressive by abuse, by backing them into a corner and making them fight, is unreliable because in the field there may not be a corner and flight might very well win out over fight. The sentry dog needs to form at least a minimal bond to the handler, and a certain level of insecurity can aid in this; there is in general no need to be restrained or social, for the world of the guard dog is one dimensional, he is in many programs either on duty or in confinement.

There has been significant variation over the years in the sentry dog, for when they are selected and trained for total aggression they can be dangerous even to the handler, and to veterinarians and others who must care for and interact with them, as when the handler is off duty. Furthermore, such dogs can be deployed only where

¹ There are also references in the literature (Richardson, 1920) to long metal lines strung between stationary points, sometimes with a shelter for the dog, so that he could move back and forth as the line from his collar to the slide on the static line allowed him to cover a great range. I am unaware of any contemporary applications of this sort, which are probably precluded by considerations of legal liability.

there is no expectation of interaction with people who may have legitimate business or a legal access to the area. There are a lot of advantages to a more stable, controllable and better-trained dog.

In the modern world of increasingly effective electronic surveillance, that is very economical networks of TV cameras and intrusion detection, and increasing legal liability, this old fashioned one dimensional security dog is increasingly obsolete.

The Patrol Dog

The next step up from the sentry or guard dog is the patrol dog, which is trained so as to be very similar to the traditional police dog. The patrol dog can work in a crowded environment and is much more sophisticated in terms of response to handler management; that is will out reliably and can be recalled. Just as in their civilian counterparts, the military patrol dog, often serving with the military police, is often a dual-purpose drug or narcotics detection dog. Such dogs require a generally better and well-rounded dog, much more training and a more sophisticated and well-trained handler.

Beginning in the Vietnam era, the focus of military training has shifted from the guard dog to the patrol dog. Much of the discussion in the police dog chapter is directly applicable to this sort of military dog, rendering further comment superfluous, but such dogs are very important in military service.

The Scout Dog

The sentry or guard dog is by definition always playing defense, deployed to warn of intrusion on fixed assets such as a military base or encampment. This is a relatively straightforward role, relying in the natural instincts of the dog to bark and show aggression in the presence of a threat, requiring only minimal control and skill in the handler. But neither war nor football games are won on defense, in order to prevail it is necessary to seek out and engage the adversary. This is the purpose of the military scout dog.

The scout dog is deployed with a patrol, a group of exploring soldiers generally seeking out the enemy to force engagement or establish his deployment pattern. The function of the scout dog is to detect and silently give warning of the presence of a concealed adversary, primarily by means of the sense of smell but also hearing. Silence is essential because even the smallest sound could potentially alert the enemy and thus transfer the advantage to him, endangering the entire unit. The scout dog role is among the most sophisticated and useful, requiring an especially proficient handler capable of reacting to the first hint of alert in the dog and maintaining situational awareness. In the most effective mode the dog is off lead and ranging ahead so as to give the earliest possible warning while keeping the handler and the rest of the patrol as far back from danger as possible. This requires strong control, which must be silent or almost silent, in order to keep the dog within sight and thus under control and capable of giving warning.

Scout dog candidate selection must emphasize alertness, intensity, the acute sense of smell and the ability to remain silent when detecting the enemy and seeking out his position. The dog must be cooperative and trainable; remain under close control as he detects and then moves up to engage the enemy or while withdrawing from a superior force as the tactics of the situation dictate. While the guard dog need be little more than neutral to his handler, the bond between handler and scout dog is the foundation of the effectiveness of the team.



Vietnam era scout dog US Army Photo

In the ideal the dog will work off leash yet remain responsive to handler control, since in this way, as long as they remain in sight, the dog can give earlier warning and put the handler and the patrol further back from danger. This is difficult in that the handler must keep the dog within the desired distance and yet maintain silence so as not to warn an enemy.

An important point is that the olfactory potential of the scout dog is primarily used for scenting air borne odors or particles rather than the ground odor, that

is sniffing the ground to detect disturbances in vegetation or other scents on the surface rather than in the air. While tracking or ground scenting is appropriate in many police situations, including military police and tracking or trailing operations, the scout dog needs to have his head up and be focused ahead where he can alert at the earliest moment based on airborne scent, sound or sight. Sometimes both search or tracking dogs and scout dogs are deployed on the same mission in order to provide both functions, that is search out or follow an enemy through ground and local air scent and also detect the hidden enemy rather than approaching too closely not knowing of his presence.

The sight of the dog tends to be less effective than that of the handler, who because of his erect or semi erect position has a much better field of view; this is very much a team effort. The dog, while not color blind, has much less color sensitivity than a man, which means he is less capable of picking out stationary or partially hidden distant objects or adversaries. The man has better binocular vision, and thus better depth perception, which greatly enhances his ability to discern distant objects. In the dark, the canine eyesight is superior to the man but in general supplementary to the senses of hearing and smell.

Handler understanding of the acuity and limitations of the olfactory power are fundamental, he must always be aware of the wind direction and intensity, for when the wind is from behind the odor of the adversary is carried away in the opposite direction. Because of this the detection capability of the dog is enormously compromised, in a way comparable to operating partially blind. It is essential that the handler understand and be responsive to such issues: operating with the wind from your back oblivious to the consequences may be more dangerous than not having a dog at all because of the false sense of security. For maximum effectiveness and safety the leader of the patrol must make his deployment decisions based partially on the capability of the dog, it is always a substantial advantage to advance into a dangerous area with the wind in your face, bringing the scent to you and your dog, rather than from behind. Another consideration is that if the enemy has a dog then this tactic takes advantage of wind direction to conceal the advance as long as possible. (The Japanese had an extensive military canine program in WWII.) Practical circumstances often prevent a downwind approach, requiring especial caution on the part of the handler.

Airborne scent carries and disperses on the wind, which means that terrain, including hills, bodies of water and vegetation influence airflow and thus the distance and reliability at which the dog can alert to danger. The more the handler and patrol leader are aware of these factors, the more the dog can contribute to the safety and effectiveness of the patrol.

Although scout dogs are sometimes thought of as similar to police service dogs, the man aggression of the scout dog is secondary in a team where every human is heavily armed and alert to the need to respond. Sure if things get up close and critical it is good that the dog pitches in and contributes, and the dogs with the drive and intensity to be good scout dogs are likely to be aggressive in close. But direct aggression as in bite and hold is secondary for the primary mission of the scout dog.

That said, in many programs the scout dog is sometimes expected to be capable of service as a sentry or guard dog, able to protect a command or observation post against enemy infiltration, especially at night. This needs to be limited however, the dog in the field all day must be rested just as the soldiers must rest; expecting to get double duty from the dog by having someone else take him on guard duty at night could greatly reduce effectiveness in both roles. But of course in war every man and dog has to occasionally pinch hit in something a little bit outside of his comfort zone.

Explosive Detection Dogs

Although explosive or mine detection is today arguably the most important military canine application, this is a relatively recent development. There is little mention of such things in the literature prior to WWII, and although there were significant unsuccessful American efforts to develop and deploy mine detection dogs in that era detection would not come into its own until the twenty-first century.

WWII German use of buried, nonmetallic mines in North Africa, which could not be detected by existing electronic mine detectors, created a serious problem and led to the training and deployment of mine detection dogs. A unit including 100 trained dogs was deployed to the African campaign, arriving in Algeria in May of 1944. But the dogs proved unreliable and substantial casualties occurred as they were deployed. (Lemish, 1996) (Waller, 1958)

According to Lemish there were the usual problems of setting up a program with no experience base, that is no trained personnel, and canine acquisition and training programs in place. But the underlying problem was that the dogs were essentially taught to detect the odor of the material of the mine and the soil or ground disturbance by human beings when the mines were buried. This training was based on compulsion and avoidance, generally producing erratic and fearful response. The underlying problems were thus in the motivational approach, compulsion rather than reward, and not understanding that the focus of training should have been on the odor of the explosives themselves rather than the material of the mine or the disturbance to soil created by the burial. Those involved did not seem to comprehend that the dogs could have been much more effective at sniffed out the odor of the actual explosives had they been trained to do so. The unit was soon returned to America and deactivated, providing poor public relations for the war dogs in the European theater. (Lemish, 1996) The Marines also trained a small number of mine dogs, which were ineffective for these same reasons. (Putney, 2003) In general WWII attempts to produce mine detection dogs were regarded as failures.

U.S. Army training documents late in the Vietnam era indicate that the primary motivation for the explosives detection dog was to be food, and the concept was that any trained dog could be utilized by any correspondingly trained handler. (Phillips, 1971) German Shepherds and Labrador Retrievers were the preferred breeds, with

no mention of Belgian Shepherds or any sort of play object motivation such as use of a Kong or ball.

The aftermath of the 9/11 attack in 2001 and our subsequent military engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan would bring explosive detection dogs to the forefront, both in the military as a counter to the ubiquitous deployment of Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and in police and domestic security operations to deal with terrorist use of planted bombs. Although the traditional training methods as pioneered by men such as Most were historically adequate in scout, patrol and sentry applications, successful substance detection, both drugs and explosives, required a much more inductive or reward based training protocol. The more traditional aggression based applications, that is guard or patrol dog, were effective because the motivation, the fighting drive, came from within the dog; there is no need to reward a good dog for engaging the decoy with food or a ball. But in and of themselves drugs or explosives have no interest for a dog, the training protocol must therefore provide a separate reward, generally food or an object such as a ball or Kong.

In addition to the traditional breeds of herding origin, the German and Belgian shepherds, the military today employs other sorts of dog for purposes such as explosive or IED detection, notably Labrador Retrievers, that while powerful and robust are, because of long term breeding selection, much less volatile and much less intimidating to civilian populations.

In general the dual purpose dogs, that is Shepherds or Malinois, used for patrol and detection, are largely trained using prey or object drive, where the dog learns to indicate passively, usually by sitting quietly, in order to gain his reward of a tennis ball or Kong. The specialists such as the Labradors are often trained exclusively with food, sometimes to the extent that the only food they receive is in payment for finding the desired substance. It is to be understood that these are generalities, and that there is a great deal of diversity in training methods according to practical considerations in specific circumstances and the preferences of the people involved. The old training saying that there are many roads to Paris certainly is applicable here.

WWII

The consequence of Hitler's rise to power was rapid expansion of the existing covert preparation for war. One component of this was the establishment of a canine training facility at Frankfurt in 1934. The result was 50,000 dogs ready to go when the Polish invasion commenced in 1939. (Chapman, Police Dogs, 1990)

As in the Police applications, the American military also lagged European programs, with no formal canine program prior to the WWII. When the Japanese struck at Pearl Harbor dogs on hand in the military were only a few sled dogs in the north, which did form the nucleus of an critical rescue capability for downed flyers, as for instance in Greenland during transfer of military aircraft for service in the European theatre.

Early in 1942 the need for working dogs was an escalating priority, and the civilian, volunteer based Dogs for Defense program came into existence to fill the gap. Although training, begun on an amateur civilian basis, quickly was taken over by the military, Dogs for Defense was a primary supplier throughout the war. By the end of the war, 40,000 dogs had been offered to the program, but more than half were rejected immediately, with 18,000 being shipped to training and reception centers, where another 8000 failed preliminary health, size or temperament evaluations. Although the Navy and Marines initially procured some dogs directly from civilian donations, this was folded into the DFD program, which thus became the sole provider. On one level this represented a strong citizen commitment to the war and helped build public morale, but on the whole it would seem to have been a relatively inefficient means of supplying the necessary dogs. (Lemish, 1996)

The formal military program began on March 13, 1942 under the auspices of the Army Quartermaster Corps. The most urgent priority was the costal patrol operations of the Coast Guard, for there was great fear of a Japanese invasion and the landing of Japanese or German sabotage personnel, especially from submarines, which were actively patrolling both coasts. In June of 1942 four German saboteurs were landed from a submarine on Long Island and four more landed in Florida a few days later. Although there are no records of other landings, the beach sentry dogs were available for rescue efforts and did on occasion locate bodies from merchant marine ships which went down.

In the modern era there have been only sporadic programs to develop more offensive oriented canine programs, that is, train dogs to take direct physical action against the enemy. The most prominent of these in America was a program begun in October 1942 at the Cat Island War Dog Reception and Training Center, located in the Gulf of Mexico near the mouth of the Mississippi. Approximately 25 American soldiers of Japanese descent were selected to play the role of Japanese soldiers in the training, which included large dogs such as Irish Wolfhounds and Great Danes. This played out for about four months before the Army brass came to their senses and scrapped the program, although the Cat Island facility served as a



WW II Marine War Dogs

conventional training facility for the duration.

In addition to the Cat Island episode, there was a brief experimental program at Fort Belvoir in Virginia where dogs wearing a backpack with explosives and a timing device were to be trained for sending to enemy bunkers, unknowing suicide dogs. This program never got beyond the preliminary phase, which is probably just as well.

Although it is human nature to be critical or dismissive of such things in hindsight, in time of all consuming war every potential avenue of advantage needs to be explored. If no one ever looked into concepts that seemed obviously foolish or impractical in the end enormously important and effective innovations, such as repeating rifles or atomic weapons, would have been overlooked. At this time only an elite cadre of scientists on the vanguard of modern physics were aware of the enormous energy potential of atomic fusion: to the world at large the proposals for the atomic bomb were outlandish to say the very least. Several high ranking military officers are reported as flat out denying that it was possible.

The Army canine program formally commenced on July 16, 1942, under the auspices of the Quartermaster General. The first Army training center was established by the Quartermaster Remount Depot in August of 1942 at Front Royal, Virginia. In late 1942 additional centers were opened at Fort Robinson, Nebraska, Camp Rimini, Montana and San Carlos, California. Later in the war, as the focus was increasingly on the scout dog, all training was done at Fort Robinson.

Eventually a little over ten thousand dogs were trained by the Army and rendered valuable service around the globe, from the deserts of North Africa to jungles on Pacific islands. The following chart of WWII statistics is from the Army Quartermaster General's Office (Waller, 1958) :

| Type of Dog | Army | Coast Guard | Total |
|--------------------|-------------|--------------------|--------------|
| Sentry | 6,121 | 3,174 | 9,295 |
| Scout | 571 | 0 | 571 |
| Sled and pack | 263 | 0 | 268 |
| Messenger | 151 | 0 | 151 |
| Mine detection | 140 | 0 | 140 |

| Type of Dog | Number | Domestic | Overseas |
|--------------------|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Sentry | 9,295 | 8,396 | 899 |
| Scout | 571 | 135 | 436 |
| Sled & Pack | 268 | 0 | 268 |
| Messenger | 151 | 0 | 151 |
| Mine Detection | 140 | 0 | 140 |
| Total | 10,425 | 8,531 | 1,894 |

This is only part of the picture, since WWII Marine Corps canine operations in the South Pacific, commencing a little later, became extensive and on the whole more successful. A total of 1,047 dogs passed initial screening and were enlisted in the Marine program, with 465 eventually deploying overseas. Over the course of hostilities 29 canine Marines died in action and 5 went missing, 25 on Guam where dogs served on 500 patrols. (Putney, 2003)



WW II Coastguardsman with Walkie Talkie radio unit and Doberman.

Combat radio equipment was rapidly rendering the messenger dog obsolete, and although initially many messenger dogs were trained there was less and less use as radio equipment became more reliable. Some dogs were retrained in the field as scout or guard dogs.

numbers of trained dogs, primarily German Shepherds, at the commencement of hostilities. Some of these Japanese dogs, were captured and converted for use in our own programs. (Putney, 2003)

The Guadalcanal invasion conducted by the Marine Corps in August of 1942 was very difficult jungle warfare, and ongoing efforts to clear pockets of resistance in this environment met with high casualties. Although there were no existing canine units available, one result of this experience was the decision to launch an ambitious recruitment and training program to provide canine support for future invasions and particularly patrol in jungle environments.

This turned out to be very successful, and experience in the South Pacific and Vietnam has proven conflicts in jungle settings to be the arena where the dog is the most effective and useful. The jungle patrol is relatively quiet and cautious, the enemy is dangerous because he is silent and hidden. The scout dog was able to detect hidden Japanese troops at distances large enough to provide an effective warning. Although distances of 1000 yards, more than half of a mile, were reported this would be under unusually favorable circumstances, but one or two hundred

The first contingent of canine Marines trained with the Army at the Fort Robinson, Nebraska facility; because of this the first forty marine war dogs were Army supplied, mostly German Shepherds. Subsequent basic training during the rest of the war took place at the Camp Lejeune Marine facility in North Carolina.¹ More advanced training, on the way to Pacific deployment, took place at Camp Pendleton near San Diego.

At the end of the war, 232 dogs were shipped back in November of 1945 to be returned to their owners or remain with their handlers. Eventually, 491 canine veterans, from overseas and Stateside, were processed back into civilian life. This was done over a period of about a year at Camp Lejeune under Dr. Putney, author of a subsequent book on the marine war dog experience. In spite of dire predictions, this went smoothly, with virtually no subsequent problems in civilian life, although, sadly, a hand full of dogs had to be euthanized as too difficult to transition back.²

Although impressive numbers for a program that started from nothing, literally with donated dogs off the street, this was a relatively small program compared to that of the Germans and others. Even the Japanese had their ongoing prewar, large scale breeding and training programs and substantial

¹ This was in some respects a bad choice, as the majority of dogs trained developed heart worm and other parasite infestations associated with mosquito populations. This was much more difficult to prevent and treat in that era. (Putney, 2003)

² This brings into focus the shameful military policy of the Vietnam era and beyond, where policy was that dogs served for life, to be put down when they were no longer convenient for the military bureaucrats to deal with.

yards would be a reasonable expectation. Perhaps the greatest testimonial to the effectiveness of the scout dog is that, once training and deployment issues were refined by experience, they were much in demand by the troops actually going out to face the dangers of patrol in enemy infested jungle areas.

The Doberman Pincher Club of America immediately took up the cause and substantial numbers of Dobermans were provided for the duration. There are some misconceptions about this in that there were about as many German Shepherds as Dobermans used in the Marine program and also other breeds. These Dobermans were promoted under the banner Devil Dogs but this seems to have been largely external propaganda, the term does not appear in the definitive book on the Marine war dog experience by Marine Captain William Putney (Putney, 2003), a veterinarian who played a key role in the training program and deployed to the South Pacific where he was actively engaged in combat. Captain Putney is also well remembered for his efforts, in the mid-1990s, to move and preserve a canine cemetery as a memorial for these fallen heroes of the South Pacific, a shining example among many shameful episodes in the military's treatment of the dogs of war when their service came to an end. (Putney, 2003)



WW II Marine War Dogs

The primary Marine training center was Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, and deployment in the Pacific Theater commenced in June of 1943; the combat debut was Bougainville in the Solomon Islands shortly thereafter. Significant numbers of Army trained canines were also being deployed in the South Pacific and South East Asia in 1943, some serving with Marine units.

In a broad sense, the experience of the Second World War was that dogs are much more effective in the jungle warfare of the South Pacific than in more open terrain suitable to tank warfare as existed in Europe and North Africa. Lemish makes reference to "...the failure of the military dog program as a whole throughout the European campaign."¹ While this is harsh it is

nevertheless – based on a broad review of the history – a realistic assessment.

Contributing factors were the reactions of the dogs in the presence of artillery, partially a training and selection issue but also a fundamental limitation and the rapid pace of mechanized war. And some of the problems were due to the lack of experience and knowledge that would only come later. As an example, Lemish notes that a major problem with mine detection dogs was that no one knew that the dogs could detect through smell the presence of the chemical explosive and training efforts thus centered on the disturbed ground or the metal.

On the eastern front in WWII the Russians trained and deployed dogs as anti-tank weapons by acclimating them to a bomb laden pack, starving them and then

¹ (Lemish, 1996)p97

teaching them to seek out food under tanks, where the explosives were most effective because of the thin armor. This had its problems in that released dogs are unpredictable, can wind up in many undesirable places including back with the handler and under your own tanks. The threat was, however, serious enough that the Germans were aware of it and devised counter measures, that is, were alert to shoot loose dogs on the battlefield. In spite of the difficulties, such things have been contemplated more recently, by the Israeli military among others.

The fundamental lesson to take from our WWII experience is that while dogs can be extraordinarily useful and effective adjuncts to our service men in their duties, full benefit only comes from programs that invest wisely in acquisition and training of the dogs and handlers and focus resources and funds selectively. There will always be a need to identify areas where dogs are marginal or ineffective and direct resources elsewhere. But even this is not enough, for effective deployment requires that the general military leadership, the officers and noncommissioned officers, know enough about canine capabilities and especially limitations to apply them effectively. These same general common sense principles also of course apply to police deployment.

Toward the end of the war, there was a decision in the Marine Corps to abandon use of the Doberman Pinchers. (Lemish, 1996) This is the pivotal report by Marine Lt. William T. Taylor, commander of the Second War Dog Platoon:

"Although a few of the Dobermans performed in an excellent manner, it is considered that this breed is, in general, unsuited for combat duty due to its highly temperamental and nervous characteristics. They also failed to stand up as well as the other types under field conditions. On the whole, the Doberman proved to be more excitable and nervous than the other breeds under combat conditions, and required much time and effort on the part of his handler at all times in order to keep him properly calmed down and under control. Although admirably suited for certain types of security work, dogs of this breed are not desired as replacements for the 2d and 3d War Dog Platoons."

Lt. Taylor goes on:

"They [German Shepherds] stood up excellently under field conditions; and throughout their health average has been very high. Possibly the fact that this group were not so highly bred may have had some bearing on their more stable qualities and better stamina. All German Shepherds were available for front line duty at all times."

(Lemish, 1996)p129

Lemish goes on to comment:

"Taylor's report, accepted on face value, meant the beginning of the end for the Doberman Pinscher as a military working dog."

This needs to be kept in perspective, since we were at war with Germany and because of the general state of war in Europe all of these dogs were drawn from existing domestic stock, the dogs in American homes. In light of the effectiveness of more modern specialized breeding programs, what was accomplished by pulling ourselves up by our bootstraps was remarkable. On the other hand, these working breeds, that is the German Shepherds and Dobermans especially, were from American breeding only a few years removed from the original imports after WWI and in fact there was continuous importation, especially of widely used stud dogs, in that era. American and European lines were not nearly as divergent as they have become in recent years.

The Doberman community was intensively aggressive in promoting their breed, and through the Dogs for Defense program provided the lion's share, particularly for the Marine program. The most plausible explanation for the observed problems is

that these civilian enthusiasts, with no real military dog knowledge or experience, generally misunderstood the actual attributes necessary in war service, and selected for overtly aggressive dogs, both in breeding before the war and in recruiting candidates. It is true such dogs would have been more appropriate in static perimeter sentry duty, and many were to serve successfully in that role, which may have skewed initial selection toward more overtly aggressive, less stable dogs. While the guard or sentry dog only needed to relate to the handler, and overt aggression to others was generally appropriate, the Marines of the South Pacific were primarily in need of patrol dogs where timely warning of the presence of the foe was of the essence, and where the dog had to remain silent and under tight control in routine close contact to other Marines and civilians, in the general fog of war.

After the war the canine programs were greatly curtailed as part of a general disarmament in the brief lull before the commencement of the cold war. The Army dogs were in the immediate post war period under the operational control of the Quartermaster Corps remount depot in Fort Royale, Virginia, and beginning in 1951, the infantry at Fort Carson, Colorado. In this era the Army was purchasing their own dogs, exclusively German Shepherds, and the Marine program was no longer in existence.

Although there were some areas of disappointment, on the whole the American WWII military canine program was a remarkable achievement, based as it was on dogs taken directly out of American homes for men with little or no experience assigned to new canine units with no culture or established training methodology in place. They literally built a program from the ground up in a very few months.



Scout dog & handler in Korea

Korea and the 1950s

The Korean police action is the forgotten American war; reminiscing about the great generation of WWII being much more emotionally satisfying than remembering the brutal conflict in remote Korea, ending in stalemate rather than victory. But those who served there sacrificed and died too, including some of the dogs. This was a cold harsh climate rather than a jungle and after a quick North Korean advance, a spectacular American amphibious landing at Inchon and then massive Chinese forces coming across the border the conflict became relatively static on the 38th parallel. During the early stages of rapid mechanized warfare there were no American scout dogs

deployed. (Lemish, 1996)p153 The existing canine forces were totally inadequate and an extensive recruitment and training program was implemented. As the dogs became available emphasis was on night patrol and sentry duty. Approximately 1,500 dogs were deployed for the Korean conflict, many serving with distinction even if they are now almost forgotten.

By the mid-1950s the Army was winding down in general and the canine operations were no exception. This was the era of the increasing tension with the Soviet Union and great expansion of the missile and air bases of the Strategic Air Command and the Nike anti-aircraft missile bases going up around the nation as a defense against Soviet air attack. There was great concern about potential sabotage

and the Air Force was seeking ever-increasing numbers of dogs for perimeter defense of these critical installations.

In the 1954 to 1957 time period, the Army Dog Training Center at Fort Carson was primarily used to train military working dogs for the Air Force. In 1957 this facility was closed down and operations transferred to the Air Force.

In October of 1958 the Air Force established the Sentry Dog Training Branch at Lackland Air Force Base near San Antonio, Texas. Although this was in the beginning a very small unit, with less than a dozen men, it would eventually evolve into an enormous facility encompassing more than 700 acres. The Lackland facility grew rapidly, and eventually, after the Vietnam War, would become the primary training facility for all military canine operations, other governmental operations such as the Secret Service and, after 9/11, the *Transportation Security Administration (TSA)*.

In 1964 the Air Force began a policy of securing and training its own dogs, rather than through the Army, further expanding operations at Lackland. This was an era of increasing tension, expanding police canine units and escalation in Vietnam. The biggest problem was procuring sufficient numbers of suitable dogs, and Air Force recruiting teams toured the country, setting up radio and TV advertising and buying dogs on the spot.



Scout dog & handler in Vietnam

Vietnam

The Vietnam experience was gut wrenching for the entire nation, most especially the military; and the canine operations were no exception. In the early years the focus was on propping up the Vietnamese military, sending in ever-increasing amounts of material and American advisors. In general the South Vietnamese government did not have adequate, broad based support from the population and commitment was the one thing we could not pack up in boxes and ship over at taxpayer expense. This was fundamentally guerilla warfare where the enemy held no ground, controlled

the time and place of engagement and disappeared at will back into the jungle or underground tunnel and cave networks.

In the early years significant numbers of dogs, many purchased in Germany and shipped directly to Vietnam, were provided with the expectation that American advisors would be able to conjure up an effective military canine operation, with the hope of creating a standalone capacity through ongoing breeding, training and deployment programs.

This turned out to be tragically unrealistic in every aspect, for the Vietnamese culture simply did not relate to the dog in the same way as do the Europeans and Americans: turning the often reluctant Vietnamese candidates into effective handlers, let alone trainers, was difficult, and creating a stand-alone infrastructure capable of an ongoing breeding and training was simply beyond the realm of reality. Even establishing an effective program for care of the dogs was problematic in a culture where many saw dogs as food, and, indeed, more than a few dogs did wind up being eaten and many more perished because of starvation or lack of simple care.

Vietnamese officers made serious blunders in deployment: according to Lemish it was not uncommon to deploy sentry and attack dogs into the field as scout dogs,

often with tragic results. Such dogs were entirely useless or more to the point a danger because of their training, that is, they were programmed to alert, bark and attack any stranger, which was appropriate on perimeter base security but a disaster looking for a place to happen on patrol, where the dogs needed to silently indicate unseen Viet Kong. (Lemish, 1996)p171

As the situation deteriorated and combat was taken over increasingly by Americans the canine units became much more numerous and effective. The military dogs served a number of distinct roles:

- Security of Air Force and army bases and other fixed installations.
- Scout dogs for patrol.
- Search or tracking dogs
- Tunnel detection and neutralization
- Mine detection.
- Drug and contraband detection

As the American presence expanded, the initial highest priority canine role was base security at places such as Cam Ranh Bay, Da Nang and Tan Son Nhut; names that became all too familiar on the evening news. Air Force sentry or guard dogs peaked at 467 dogs in 1967, and the Army had their own program peaking at about 300 dogs. The Marines and Navy also had smaller sentry dog units at Da Nang. Most if not all of these dogs were German Shepherds. (Lemish, 1996)

The sentry or guard dog training of the era focused on the creation of vicious and difficult to control dogs, perhaps appropriate for a single man and dog on the perimeter of a lonely ICBM facility in North Dakota but difficult to deal with on increasingly crowded bases with increasing interaction with others, such as veterinary personnel, new handlers and larger groups deployed to respond to a Viet Kong intrusion.

In 1968 the military responded by developing training and selection emphasizing better control, that is, producing dogs more akin to traditional police patrol dogs than dogs with single dimensional aggression. Such dogs were much more versatile, able to function unmuzzled and in some circumstances off leash in increasingly crowded areas in the presence of both friend and foe. The 1968 program at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland employed Washington Metro Police personnel to train the dogs, and more importantly open up a new world of sophisticated canine application to the military trainers. This, and similar Air Force experimental programs marked a turning point in military training, an era of more sophisticated training and deployment and better public relations. The patrol dog, that is a dog trained according to contemporary police methodology, replaced the sentry dog as the standard and most common military dog. (Lemish, 1996)p181

Over all, the security dogs in Vietnam were enormously effective and a serious impediment to Viet Kong base intrusion. Although there were the unavoidable casualties, to both handlers and dogs, training and deployment strategy became so effective that more sentry dogs were lost to heat related illness or snake bite than enemy action. (Lemish, 1996)p181

Secure base areas was well and good, but in order to win the war the need was to engage the enemy on his own ground, the jungles and villages. As in all guerilla warfare the Viet Kong held little ground, selected the time and place of engagement and disappeared at will back into the jungle or underground tunnel and cave networks, some within the confines of supposedly secure base areas. In order to respond to this, new tactics and strategies were needed. Ultimately, the best defense is a good offense, and as American infantry men and Marines were increasingly engaging the Viet Kong in the jungles, their home territory, the enemy's knowledge of his environment and ability to select the points of engagement placed our troops

in an increasingly hazardous environment. Several solutions emerged, especially the renewal of the scout dog program to provide security for our troops on patrol and specialist search or tracking dogs to seek out the enemy in his lair, especially his underground networks.

Thus the Army base at Ft. Benning, Georgia was designated to provide Vietnam era scout dog training, commencing in early 1965. In addition to the Army dogs, for the first time since WWII the Marines were preparing to deploy scout dogs: On July 3, 1965 the 1st Marine Scout Platoon also commenced training at Ft. Benning. (Aiello, 2012) The program kicked into high gear in September of 1965 in response to urgent requests from Vietnam for immediate deployment of scout dogs. In February of 1966 two Marine scout dog platoons, with fifty six dogs, all German Shepherds, deployed for the first time since WWII, near Da Nang.

In order to search out the enemy, the military implemented training programs to produce dogs that could follow or search for Viet Kong troops and other dogs specializing in locating the ever expanding network of tunnels. Bloodhounds were tried but quickly discarded, one reason being that they were vocal, with the likelihood of warning the intended targets. As the program evolved, most of the tracking dogs were Labrador Retrievers, who were found to be robust, resilient and very effective. Since these dogs were focused to a certain extent on ground scent, likely alternating between tracking and trailing in today's terminology, there was a significant risk of inadvertently engaging the object of the search, with seriously bad consequences. For this reason, the search teams often included a tracking / trailing dog and also scout dogs, which were trained to focus entirely on air scent, sight and sound so as to most reliably alert on the presence of an adversary at a distance large enough to maintain tactical control, that is effectively engage or retreat rather than blundering into an ambush.

Mines and all sorts of what today would be called improvised explosive devices – booby traps, trip wire explosive detonators, punji stakes, concealed pits and so forth – were ubiquitous and effective elements of the Viet Kong operation. Although the scout dogs might very well alert on such devices, a significant number of dogs were trained as mine or explosive device detection specialists. These were apparently most often German Shepherds or other traditional police breeds, as engagement with the enemy was a regular occurrence. These dogs and the tunnel detection dogs were originally trained as separate specialties, but in the realities of actual war service individual handlers and dogs often adapted to fulfill functions other than their original training.

Vietnam was an unpopular war and most Americans were not there voluntarily. This and other factors, such as easy availability and an increasingly open drug culture, led to a significant level of illicit drug use. Just as drug detection dogs have become part of drug suppression on the home front, there was considerable use of dogs in Vietnam to counter this activity. This seems to have evolved late in the war and been focused primarily on preventing large quantities of drugs going stateside with the returning troops.

Another consequence of conscripted troops was that, although volunteers were much preferred, many canine handlers were draftees arbitrarily assigned to canine training; handlers injuring their own dogs to avoid patrol duty was not unknown, since the handler of a sick or disabled dog normally remained at base rather than on patrol. Sending handlers of injured dogs out on the point, sans dog, seems to have discouraged this. (Lemish, 1996)

During the Vietnam War the Army unit at Fort Gordon, Georgia was primarily responsible for training scout dogs, combat tracker dogs, mine dogs, tunnel dog teams, and marijuana detector dog teams. Ultimately approximately 5,000 dogs were deployed, mostly as sentry or scout dogs. Since many handlers, especially the

draftees, went home after a year or two, most dogs, serving life sentences, had two or even more handlers. Thus over the course of the war, more than 9,000 handlers were used for the 5,000 dogs.

Credible estimates are that about 2,700 dogs were given to the South Vietnamese, of which 1,600 were euthanized and 281 were eventually listed as killed in action. These dogs could not win the war, but they made an enormous contribution to the effectiveness and safety of our ground troops; many American men returned because of these dogs.

Vietnam was not our finest hour in many ways, and the wind down after defeat rather than victory tends to be disorganized and ugly. These military dogs, heroes to so many, were for the military bureaucrats merely excess equipment to be disposed of locally in the most expeditious way. Although there was enough public reaction to goad the military into sending a token few back, in the end most of these dogs were to be abandoned and sacrificed by an incredibly callous military leadership in one of their most shameful and blackest hours, forever a stain on their honor.

Current policies are much more humane, but this is not credit to a better grade of military bean counter, but rather that direct internet and telephone contact between the troops and home would create an enormous backlash at the abandonment of a dog except in the most dire circumstances. Throughout history military bureaucracies have been able to do whatever they found convenient, satisfying or personally profitable, to their own as well as the enemy, and routinely lied about it on the grounds of security considerations. Indeed, military secrets often have more to do with shame and concealment of greed than actual security for the troops in the field. This was primarily because communication was meager, delayed and absolutely under their control. This is no longer true, and although there are some complexities on the whole we are better for it.

The Post Vietnam Era

In June 1973, as Vietnam wound down, the Defense Department made the decision to give the Air Force complete responsibility for canine procurement and training, which has carried forward to the present. Thus today the United States Air Force provides all procurement and training services for American military working dogs through their 37th Training Wing at Lackland AFB located at San Antonio, Texas. At the height of the Iraq and Afghanistan engagements Lackland was producing about 500 working dogs a year, some from their own Malinois breeding program. Reports of the total number of military dogs at any time vary, but about 2,700 seems to be the consensus. Since this means that on average the career of the individual would be a little over five and a half years, this seems to pass the common test. Reports on the actual number in Iraq and Afghanistan, primarily for search and explosive detection, also varied over time as circumstances changed; five to seven hundred are typical of reported estimates.

The Lackland operation supplies trained military working dogs for scout, patrol, drug and explosive detection, and other specialized mission functions for the Department of Defense. Other government agencies including the Transportation Security Administration also use Lackland as a primary source of trained dogs. Although primary procurement and training responsibility is with the Air Force, the other branches, that is, the Army, Marines and Navy, also have training personnel involved to support their specific needs and programs. Although many breeds have participated in the past, today only the German Shepherd, Belgian Malinois and Dutch Shepherd are accepted for patrol and sentry dog duty. Drug and explosive specialist dogs are sometimes other, less intimidating, breeds such as Beagles and Labrador Retrievers.

Military dogs were present in August of 1990 when American and associated forces drove Iraq out of the Kuwait oil fields, but played a minor role in the high tech operation involving air operations and wide ranging tank engagements. Although difficult to confirm, it is said that this was the first presence of the Malinois deployed with American forces, an accelerating trend even today.

Century Twenty One

The decade long American military engagement in Iraq and Afghanistan thrust our soldiers into a new kind of war, one in which they had all of the advantages in terms of weapons, infrastructure and technology but were nevertheless uniquely vulnerable, in many ways fighting blind in that the enemy, among and indistinguishable from the people, could choose his moment to strike. Multimillion dollar helicopters and elaborate armored vehicles, transported at enormous expense half way around the world, often proved inferior to explosive devices triggered by a twenty dollar radio controlled toy truck mechanism or a modified cell phone, activated at the decisive moment by an invisible foe who slipped away unseen from the blood splattered scene of devastation and death.

To meet these challenges more sophisticated canine training and deployment strategies evolved, most especially explosive detection dogs capable of seeking out the ubiquitous IED devices by the odor of their explosives, of indicating quickly, reliably and correctly without disturbance to the found objects. Also essential were dogs able to patrol and search streets and buildings under handler direction, often off lead, where civilians were more often than not more numerous than the enemy.

For the detection dogs especially this marked a paradigm transition in training doctrine and methodology in which prey or hunt drive – balls and Kongs – became the primary motivating factor. This necessitated stability, intense drive and dogged persistence since the war zone military search by its nature is a long and arduous task in enormously stressful and often disagreeable circumstances. (Some specialist dogs continue to be trained using food as the reward mechanism, but the same comments on intensity and persistence apply.)

Although the old style military training – pioneered a century earlier by men such as Colonel Most – remained as a foundation, more modern concepts of drive based training came to the forefront. In this program training tends to be increasingly through enhancement and encouragement of natural drives and instincts, as in the use of food and prey objects such as balls and Kongs, rather than compulsion. In acquiring young dogs breeding according to these natural propensities and drives became increasingly important, for such training demands that the drive be there and that it be intense and persistent under stress. Many dogs will play fetch for a few minutes on a sunny afternoon, but in war long hours of persistence and adverse conditions are the norm.

Thus the modern war dog is focused on the search and detection roles, that is patrol duty, clearing or searching city neighborhoods or building interiors and detecting hidden explosive devices. Such dogs can be most effective through the cooperative bond with a strong handler, an exemplary soldier as well as a capable dog man. Each half of the team brings a unique set of assets and capabilities to the team. The dog brings olfactory acuity, sharp hearing, night vision and close in aggressive potential far beyond that of a man. The handler contributes situational and tactical awareness and the more effective, above ground field of vision. The effectiveness of the team is thus multiplicative, so much more than the sum of the individuals.

Because this bond, this partnership, is so essential the ideal military canine experience would be an exclusive long term relationship with a single handler,

extending from initial training throughout the service life of the dog. This ideal is very seldom realized. Handlers in the normal course of events are routinely reassigned, promoted, incapacitated or reach the end of their enlistment. In such instances the dog, representing a substantial investment in acquisition cost and training, must usually transfer to a new handler. (An older dog nearing the end of his service life sometimes retires with the handler or his family.)

Transfer is generally readily accomplished so long as the need for time and resources dedicated to a training and bonding process is recognized. In a typical scenario, when a handler is rotated out at the end of a tour of duty and the need for the dog remains, in addition to the waste of resources it would be detrimental to readiness to not transfer the dog to a new handler, putting lives unnecessarily at risk.¹

Although historically new dogs and handlers often were trained together from the ground up, today the green dog is often trained by full time staff personnel to a relatively advanced level, at which point a novice or even experienced handler is introduced to complete training as a pair prior to deployment preparation and training. Just as the truck driver does not necessarily need to know how to overhaul a transmission, effective handlers are not necessarily, and do not need to be, competent ground up trainers. Civilian business entities often acquire and train pups and young dogs for subsequent sale to the military. When well run, such programs have advantages in that they evolve effective relationships with suppliers, often European, maintain consistent work to keep the better trainers on staff and can be called on to supplement training by military personnel in times of peak demand, as in war.

One of the reasons for dedicated trainers is that no matter how selective the program some dogs are inevitably found wanting and must be discarded part way through the training process. With experienced trainers such things can often be minimized or identified early in the process, thus discarding the dog with less waste of time and money. A novice handler and a green dog can make problem determination, whether to wash out the dog or the handler, difficult.

While military dogs must be under good control, and many are reasonably social and can mix with diverse people, others are not social and only safe because of handler situational awareness, discretion and discipline. This means that the dog, the handler and the mission must be appropriately matched, which is why the success of canine programs, police and military, depends on understanding of the intricacies of canine service at administrative and leadership levels.

Many aspects of war are ugly and fraught with unintended consequences, and for these reasons downplayed or done in secret. There is a general fear of dogs in many individuals and cultures, which can be and is exploited in order to intimidate or extract information.² This is sometimes condoned and sometimes goes on without

¹ During the war in Iraq there was a much-publicized incident where a female canine handler was injured and wanted her dog to be sent home with her to provide companionship and comfort, even though dogs were acquired and trained at great expense, in short supply and thus withdrawing the dog from service would seriously endanger other personnel. She sniffled a little bit, played the press card and got her way, and the politicians paraded her in Washington for their own propaganda purposes. But this was a selfish and irresponsible episode, potentially endangering her fellow soldiers still at hazard in a combat zone. War is a cruel and difficult business, and such decisions need to be left to the professional military and not played out in the press or through political patronage and manipulation.

² The primary purpose of the Malinois in the mission to take out Osama bin Laden is generally believed to have been intimidation of possible civilians outside the compound.

explicit authorization because it is understood that nobody is going to look for it; under the stress of war men will do what seems necessary to prevail or survive and deal with the consequences, if any, later. It would be seriously naïve to doubt that this sort of thing will exist as long as men go to war.



U.S. Marine Lance Cpls. James Blomstran and Ryan Gerrity, an improvised explosive device detection dog handler and fire team leader with Blomstran's dog Sage. Helmand province, Afghanistan, Photo Cpl. Reece Lodder.

Commentary

Vietnam was an American tragedy. We blindly blundered into a new kind of war where with great confidence, some would say arrogance, we sought to impose our concepts of how others should govern themselves, conduct their national affairs. We found ourselves losing a war where the enemy was among the people, wore no uniform and could strike and then fade into the background. We were brought down by hubris; the expectation that our vaunted industrial and military prowess enabled and justified the determination to rearrange the social order in regions of the world we did not begin to comprehend.

Most sadly of all we learned nothing, for forty years later we would do the exact same thing in Iraq in the aftermath of the 9/11 attack. As in Vietnam, in Iraq and Afghanistan the American military has had overwhelming superiority in terms of weapons and technology, yet was unable to prevail in the long term. The people of Afghanistan in particular have been fading into the countryside and mountains for centuries in the face of invasion and occupation, only to reappear when the Greeks, British, Russians or Americans finally just gave up and went home frustrated.

The Iraq and Afghan insurgents fight with patience, cunning and skill, one of their primary weapons being the IED or Improvised Explosive Device, which has been responsible for the majority of American casualties. The military dogs have been generally the most effective means of countering this threat, and rendered great service and helped to bring many of our people home alive and whole, not an

insignificant legacy is such difficult circumstances. But in a culture with vastly differing attitudes to dogs, it is questionable whether the military canine has had a positive role in winning minds and hearts rather than projecting the image of the arrogant American.

War is a business where young men, and now young women, perish, often for no perceivable purpose of national honor or gain, to atone for the failures of leadership and diplomacy of the old men who provoke and conduct war. Most would endorse our WWII crusade, but those who were maimed or perished serving in Korea, Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan must also be honored and remembered. Our war dogs have not won or lost any wars, but thousands of young American soldiers and Marines lived to return to families and complete their lives because of our canine soldiers – and their trainers and handlers – and we must thus honor them as well.

The war dog is a vast and complex subject and this can be only a brief introduction; those with deeper interest are well advised to acquire and study the exceptionally useful and well written books of Michael Lemish and Captain Putney. The Lemish book especially is indispensable for the serious student and scholar of American military canine applications, there is really nothing to compare to it. (Putney, 2003) (Lemish, 1996)

15

Emergence of the Breed

In the world of television, the Sunday comics and the movies men coexisted and interacted with dinosaurs, but in reality there were seventy million years between the passing of the last dinosaur and the first upright creature in any way resembling modern man. In a similar way these venues often depict primitive man as having canine companions, but the early evidence is sparse. The famous cave drawings in Europe, relatively recent, perhaps only 10,000 to 30,000 years old, show no dogs or domestic animals of any sort. Current scientific thinking is that the dog emerged from an intermediate, self-domesticated population or species at the earliest perhaps 13,000 years ago, which would mean that dogs did not exist prior to the beginnings of agriculture and village life, and that subsequent specialized canine populations, the first primitive breeds, evolved by natural selection, that is because men favored them in feeding or drove out or culled undesirable pups and young dogs rather than active human intervention in selecting which male bred the female.

Scientific knowledge of the evolution of the human and canine partnership, the use of the domestic animal and the herding way of life and the spread of agriculture, has moved rapidly over the past several decades, and remains in a state of flux. The migration of the human race and the domestic canine to the Americas is a case in point, for the current view, based on extensive genetic and archeological analysis, is that the American Indians brought their dogs with them from Asia, that there never was any domestication from the wolf or coyote in America. (These genetic studies indicate that the dogs of the North American Indians virtually disappeared in a genetic and practical sense, that Indian breeds being marketed today were created from combinations of the dogs coming over with the European migrations.)

The time lines are complex, for solid evidence for the widespread existence of the domestic dog goes back no more than twelve to fifteen thousand years, the same general time period for the earliest Indians. Further research may well push either or both of these estimates further back into the past. This is not a real problem in that if the human migration to the Americas predated canine domestication it would simply mean that the dogs came in with subsequent migrations and spread across the continent. This would be similar to the situation in Australia, where the dingo was not present until thousands of years after the first men arrived.

Domestication

Primitive canine functions, the foundation of the partnership, included intrusion alert, guarding and hunting. As man evolved and adapted his dogs also evolved to take part in new ways of living, particularly the herding of semi-domesticated animals, sheep and goats likely being the first. Rather than men selecting mating pairs as is commonly the case today, the dogs for a long time most likely bred among themselves according to natural selection. Being continually on the move it would have been difficult to separate a bitch in season from the free running dogs, and direct human selection was probably dependent on more or less permanent settlement as pastoral existence converted over to agricultural life. Human involvement in selection could have been mostly by feeding and providing for those found useful and abandoning, culling or driving off those which were not. According to Coppinger (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001) this mode of propagation is even today still typical in regions from the Himalayas to the Pyrenees among sheep guardian dogs and herds continually on the move. Regional types, dogs adapted by structure,

character and trainability for the particular regional needs of farmers, stockmen and others, no doubt evolved and were perpetuated in many places and times according to local requirements and circumstances.

As man became more well established in crop tending and evolved more elaborate farms and villages, breeding selection, actual human determination of which male was to be bred to a bitch, choosing the best workers to procreate, would at some point gradually become common practice. In general breeding selections were according to the expectation of more effective working dogs, and the abstract concept of purity in breeding would have seemed strange and perhaps even outlandish, for a dog was what he did in his work, not who his ancestors were. Even today most real herdsmen, shepherds and large segments of the Dutch Police community, among many other examples of pragmatic decision making, make breeding selections in exactly this way. These evolving processes went on across the world for the better part of ten thousand years, perhaps more according to how one marks the beginning.

The Purebred Dog

During the latter portion of the nineteenth century, after 1850, Europeans and later Americans with leisure and means increasingly bred restricted pools of dogs for style and appearance to establish formal breeds and went on to create kennel clubs to maintain records of descent. Shepherds had maintained local and regional lines of dogs for centuries for use in their pastures, and such dogs in Germany for instance would most naturally have been thought of and described as German shepherd's dogs. But in this new world of kennel clubs, trophies and ribbons this was not to be enough. No, to be a German Shepherd Dog with capital letters there would need to be a number written down in a book, with a pretentious kennel name the dog would never know or respond to.

In time it came to pass that many dogs in the fields herding sheep or guarding cattle, as their ancestors had for generations and centuries, were not to be Collies or German Shepherd Dogs with the capital letters, and many formal Collies or German Shepherd Dogs with a number, a kennel name and baskets of ribbons, trophies and photographs in fashionable canine magazines would be out of place, perhaps terrified, in a world with actual, living sheep, cattle or threatening marauders of every species, man and beast.

This freshly minted canine nobility was given a novel name to reflect their newfound superiority; they were henceforth to be known as "purebred." And instead of casual references to known ancestors, of use in pragmatic breeding selection, these purebred dogs were to have a pedigree, often elaborately inscribed on fancy paper or parchment, with numbers and designations of champions and an embossed seal.

Each new breed in its own turn became the occasion for a new mythology, it somehow came to pass that these special dogs were in fact ancient and noble, had been there for generations and centuries, just waiting to be discovered by some nice European hobbyists and inscribed in an appropriate book of origins. And conferences of hobbyists would gather to pool their wisdom and create, write down and propagate a standard of excellence, a guide for future generations of breeders and judges, for this newly discovered ancient breed.

In the beginning, the founding stock was sought out and inscribed in a book of origins, to be the common ancestry for all time. Should a member of this race or breed happen to copulate with any other kind of dog, even related dogs of the same function, region and background, distant or perhaps not so distant cousins, the pups would be denied respectability with all of the intensity reserved for bastard human

beings produced without the blessing of a clerical ceremony for the unfortunate and misguided parents.

Certainly such dogs could not be purebred, and derogatory expressions such as mutt, mongrel and crossbreed came into use to convey the shame of their very existence. Registration became the new mantra for respectability, and the fundamental mission of every kennel club came to be propaganda enforcing this standard of propriety, ingraining the concept that until money was sent for registration, like an offering onto the gods, the new pup was not really what the responsible, respectable family wanted to have making puddles on the living room carpet.

Thus came to pass the canine breed in the formal, modern sense, emerging as a closed population of dogs employing breeding selection to establish commonality of appearance and competence in a specific function, such as the pointing of game birds or retrieving in the hunting breeds or patrol work in the police breeds. But, somehow, the focus on function, actual utility to mankind, was always lost in the process.

The Dog Show

The foundation of breed creation and ongoing evolution is the conformation show, the formal process of gathering together dogs for evaluation and rank ordering according to faithfulness to a hypothetical breed standard of excellence, so as to lend guidance to breeding selection. The creation process of each breed involves conjuring up a founding mythology, the participants generally emerging as breed authorities and often in control of conformation show selection in the formative years. These shows often produced written critiques of the individual dogs, generally printed in a magazine or journal and influential in the community at large.

Max von Stephanitz for the German Shepherd and Dr. Reul for the Belgian Shepherd are primary examples and illustrate differing outcomes. Von Stephanitz produced a large, influential and comprehensive book and was the dominant figure for forty years. Dr. Reul was influential over a much briefer time period, passing away in 1907, and the club he founded did not predominate in the long term. This was a contributing but not a predominant factor in the early popularity and commercial success of the German Shepherd relative to the Belgian Shepherds. The common thread is that the greatest influence of such men was through personal control of the influential conformation show process in the formative years, which was the mechanism by which they stamped their vision of the breed on the founding stock and thus the direction of the founding lines.

The conformation show was and is by its nature an inherently political process, a competition for prestige and the promotion of personal concepts of the ideal and the advancement of one's own breeding lines or preferences. Almost universally an unforeseen consequence has been the abandonment of the practical or working functionality of the breed, with prestige and breeding preference going to the conformation show winners with little regard for character or work. Very often this results in splitting the breed into increasingly divergent lines, those emphasizing appearance as evaluated in the show ring and those selected for increasing competence in the functional role of the breed. The lines selected according to conformation tended to become ornamental in the sense of emphasis on extremes of physique, rendering the dogs physically less and less capable of the breed function.

Kennel clubs have emerged as bloated bureaucratic propaganda machines, gone to great length to encourage widespread pet ownership and participation in the hobby of dog showing, spending weekends fluffing and puffing on the grooming tables in hope that their gait and bait performance will result in the magic, dramatic

pointing of the finger, encouraging them to write even more checks for professional handlers, dog show entries and elaborate magazine ads so the other judges will come to know where the correct finger points.

In evolving into a sport, an end in itself, the dog show has become a process of taking type to extreme, as we have seen in the steeply sloping top lines, extreme rear angulation and slinking gait in the German Shepherd or the monstrosities paraded as Bulldogs which can hardly waddle up to the food dish. Closer to my home, the process has also overtaken the Bouvier des Flandres, with the emphasis on short backs, wide shoulders and deep chests, accentuated with ever longer and softer hair to sculpt the massive appearance, dogs which can hardly stumble around the ring without stepping on themselves.

In time the dog show became the preeminent arena of quality; on appointed days, usually a weekend, large elements of the show dog community arise early to fluff and groom their dogs, often with elaborate coiffures, and make their way to the appointed ring where the judge, a man or woman with correct manners, social position and political connections, would commence the elaborate ceremony of stacking, baiting and gaiting the dogs, ultimately leading to the dramatic moment when the judge, with a well-practiced flourish, points the finger at the winning dogs, taking them a step closer to greatness in the fantasy world of the show dog. So much money, so much time, so much emotion, all in the hope that at the end of the day the judge will give your dog the finger. In time, particularly in America, this often became too demanding for mere mortals, and a class of professional handlers emerged to ensure the correctness of the ceremony, and to ensure that the judge would recognize the importance of the dog at the end of their lead. Nowhere in the process is there any real concern with the actual functionality of a breed, the ability to herd, search or protect, or with physical characteristics such as stamina, power and agility, or moral attributes of courage, trainability and desire for the human working partnership.

In the beginning the emphasis was on the dogs of the more upwardly mobile, the emerging middle and commercial classes, or those with such aspirations, particularly the hunting dogs. In Belgium, most of the early magazine articles, even for the working herding dogs, such as the Malinois and the Bouviers, were in a magazine called *Chase et Peche*, or in English *Hunting and Fishing*.

A little later, about the turn of the twentieth century, other men, often a little less genteel and socially prominent, began to seek out the dogs of the country side, the farmer's and herder's dogs, in order to establish their own breeds. Veterinarians, perhaps the best-educated and most literate men routinely out and about in the farm country, were often prominent in leadership roles.

Herding trials were successfully popularized in the British Isles, and remain so today. A small number of herding trials held in Belgium and other areas in the late 1800s proved much less popular. Beginning about 1900 the emphasis on the continent was increasingly on the police dog trial, particularly in Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany. From the very beginning there was tension among the advocates of the police breeds between the upwardly mobile who tended to seek acceptance and a place in the higher-class show dog world and those who regarded the working trial as the primary arena of excellence. This fundamental conflict, this difference in values, is at the heart of the strife and anger that characterizes the world of the working breeds even to this day.

In the English-speaking world there were no serious working trials other than herding, and the obedience competition emerged even later, well after the first world war. In time many or most conformation shows allocated rings on the periphery where dogs not evaluated as of show potential, pet quality, were trained for dreary obedience events.

But there was trouble in this paradise. The thirst for fashion and novelty in the show ring led to extremes, to pudgy little Bulldogs that can hardly walk, and have to be delivered by caesarean section, collies with heads so long and narrow that eyesight is affected and where room for a functional brain hardly exists. Natural attributes of character, irrelevant or deleterious in the show ring, decline; and soft, compliant dogs, even in breeds created and valued for the aggressive potential, are diluted for convenience in keeping a kennel full of breeding stock to produce pups for sale to pet homes.

The demands of ever more extreme, even grotesque, style took control of the process. In every breed more and more bitches were bred to fewer and fewer elite show ring winners, no one quite grasping that a closed gene pool can only become smaller and smaller, a process that in the natural order of things genetic sameness will in time punish. The concept of the closed gene pool, the essence of the purebred dog, is a novel genetic experiment less than two centuries old, a mere moment on the time scale of evolution. This experiment is failing.

Over the years, as the futility and pointlessness of it all became increasingly apparent, the motivation, the reason for these sand castles in the sky, remained elusive. Perhaps because this generation was the first to live in cities, away from the land, they grew out of touch. The children of the farmer, of the village and the smaller towns grew up familiar with animals as the source of sustenance and a way of life, where horses and oxen were transportation and dogs had a real function on the farm and in the community. In this era most men needed to train horses and dogs, and deal with cattle, sheep or swine, to make a living and support a family. Such people would be practical about animals, and the concept of breeding their Collie dogs with narrow heads and their bulldogs as grotesque monstrosities would have made no more sense than driving their sheep over a cliff. As city life emerged and the employed middle class came to have leisure and resources, the creation of canine monstrosities, strange as it may seem, somehow came to seem like a reasonable and fashionable hobby.

If there were a god, would he laugh, or would he cry?

16 Evolution, Genetics and Medical Screening

Subsequent to the Second World War modern agriculture and animal husbandry underwent a revolution driven by twentieth century science and emerging biological technology such as stored semen, radiographic examination, science based breeding selection and the application of evolutionary and genetic principles to create advances such as higher grain yields, more rapidly maturing livestock and increased milk production in dairy herds. On a smaller and somewhat delayed scale these principles and this technology began to be applied to canine breeding, largely in response to genetic defects, particularly dysplastic hips. These emerging defects were to a significant extent the consequence of increasingly close breeding in the process of breed creation and particularly the obsessive pursuit of extremes in type and uniformity.

Modern evolution and genetics is a complex and subtle science, but one increasingly important for breeders in light of emerging biological technology, which is the reason for the brief survey presented here.

Genetic Inheritance

Charles Darwin revolutionized our understanding of life and biology just as surely as Albert Einstein revolutionized modern physics. Both of these great men, through concepts contrary to the reigning conventional wisdom and worldview, brought order out of chaos, opened up entirely new vistas of human knowledge. As always, some men clung to the old ways, but over time experimental results such as the observation that the gravity of the sun does indeed bend the path of passing light and the emergence of the double helix structure of DNA with the work of Crick and Watson as a biological mechanism for the evolutionary process, and thousands of other scientific advances, have verified the validity of these fundamental scientific paradigm shifts.

Those who cling to old beliefs, think the Earth is less than five thousand years old for instance, are just as intellectually crippled as those who believe that the Earth is flat. The Earth is indeed a sphere, curved, just as Einstein showed that space and time are themselves variant, curved. These profound scientific advances have important consequences for the canine world. Men such as Lorenz have shown that behavior propensities are driven by evolutionary processes just as are physical attributes, and understanding these mechanisms is a step toward better breeding selection and training methodology.

Genetic inheritance is the driving force of evolution, the means by which ever more complex and sophisticated creatures have evolved over time. Change at the most basic level comes through random genetic mutations, most of which are by simple probability deleterious and immediately disappear because the individual dies or is incapable of maturing to breeding age and procreating. (Just as a random change to a computer program would most likely be a fatal defect rather than a new and desirable feature.)

Some genetic attributes are incipient defects, present in the genetic code but not exhibited in the phenotype, the outward physical structure, of the individual. They remain latent in the gene pool until by chance an unfortunate individual inherits the

wrong combination of genes and external or phenotypical attributes appear. In the case of poor hip socket formation, for example, these individuals are likely to be less able to hunt and survive and thus procreate, and the incidence of the defect is thus in the wild population, though always present, limited by natural selection, survival of the fittest in its most primitive and effective form.

The original concept of evolution, and one still widely perceived, is that change and speciation was gradual, came about through small, reinforcing genetic change, and essentially uniform over time. But current thinking in evolutionary biology, beginning with the concept of punctuated equilibrium in the 1970s, is that change does not typically come about gradually through small changes in broad populations, but rather much more quickly in small isolated groups. These evolving theories, concepts such as punctuated equilibrium, have important consequences for the understanding of the process of breed creation and preservation.

In simple terms, perhaps overly simple terms, dramatic change requires the isolation of a small breeding population under strong evolutionary pressure. In nature this can be physical or regional separation. Breed creation is a similar process in which isolation is the consequence of the intervention of man through explicit breeding choice, where evolutionary pressure is created by selecting among a small, genetically isolated group according to a preordained set of desired physical and moral criteria.

In nature it is likely that many or most isolated populations under stress fail to adapt, simply vanish, are unable to change quickly enough to experience the necessary genetic changes to survive new circumstances. In breed creation, mankind interferes in the sense of extending the process, of keeping the intermediate stages alive and breeding, which is one of several reasons why breeds can be established relatively quickly, in a few generations.

By definition, the small foundation group for the incipient breed creates something analogous to a line breeding program, and the out cross, by virtue of the isolation, is essentially impossible. In order to succeed, the new breed or species needs to become large enough, rapidly enough to in time create the out cross possibility within the gene pool and thus reestablish sufficient genetic diversity for ongoing breeding while still maintaining new type and character attributes. A vigorous, vital breed is difficult to maintain because it is a delicate balance between tight enough to maintain type and functionality while at the same time providing sufficient genetic diversity for vigor and the containment of inherent genetic defects.

There is a difference between the species and the breed. A species was historically by definition a group of animals which can only successfully breed within the group, that is, produce fertile offspring. Thus once a new species exists it is on its own with no possibility of back crossing for diversity. But a breed is different, for it is an artificial grouping within a species, in our case the canine, and thus has the possibility and sometimes the necessity for the back cross component in the ongoing breeding process.

But in the modern view the concept of the species is more complex and subject to interpretation and academic debate. Some have considered dogs and wolves as a single species because they can interbreed and produce fertile offspring, as can dogs and jackals. Others regard them as separate species because differing geographical range, social patterns and breeding dynamics render cross breedings very unusual and the cross bred population marginal and tending to die out quickly. Current thinking tends to support this latter view. New circumstances, however, can upset this balance. Coyotes and the northern grey wolf were for millions of years separate species, yet because mankind has so disrupted the North American landscape they now breed together and produce ongoing cross bred populations in south eastern Canada.

Because of these genetic dynamics within a species or breed there will always be latent genetic defects in any population. In the natural order of things those defects which are detrimental to survival are minimized by natural selection; those genetic features which are beneficial in that they lead to increased competitive effectiveness are evolutionary developments. Thus all gene pools have a floating set of genetic defects which from time to time, by pure chance, produce an individual destined to die very young, often as a fetus before pregnancy is even established, or produce individuals which are born but suffer serious defects and thus lead short, unsuccessful lives. Short is the key point here, for it precludes procreation and thus serves to prevent further propagation of the deleterious gene.

There is a down side to man stepping in and breeding dogs in closed genetic pools: artificially interfering with this process so as to allow the dog not viable in nature to survive and be bred short circuits the natural purification mechanism. Breeding dogs where medical intervention has prevented an early death, or where the breeding dogs are so distorted so as not to be viable on their own in nature, allows many serious genetic defects, once under natural selection control and limitation, to expand without effective limit.

Consider hip dysplasia. In the wild canine population and the hundreds of generations as practical working dogs the incidence of phenotypical manifestation, that is, actual, observable physical defect, was effectively controlled by selection of the fit for procreation through breeding. But show dogs that live out lives in kennels after a brief conformation competition career, where they become champions and thus desirable breeding animals, are an example of this. They have become certified as breeding worthy before the effects of the genetically defective hips or other serious defects reveal themselves as observable problems. Animals most likely to have been eliminated by competition in a natural setting become instead primary breeding resources, thus forwarding and concentrating their genetic defects.

Among human beings procreation has been ongoing for millennia under the influence of biological and social drives, needs and customs. Primitive hunter-gatherer bands evolved societal structures where the younger males or females were exchanged among neighboring bands, and incest taboos strongly discouraged breeding among the closely related. This was not unique, for similar social forces encouraged genetic diversity among the wolf packs from which the dog was to emerge and most other wild animal populations.

Where custom or happenstance leads to small, closed human genetic pools, where inbreeding occurs over generations, serious genetic problems do emerge. The royal families of Europe are an example, where the bleeding disease in the Russian aristocracy and the general lack of brightness among English royalty are manifestations of the general tightness. Religious sects with persistent inbreeding and the breaking down of incest taboos in isolated rural populations demonstrate the deleterious consequences of sharply reduced genetic diversity.

In European society it was the princes and princesses, the sons and daughters of the kings and queens, which were most obviously subject to genetic disease. The very narrow gene pool of the aristocracy was and is the causative factor. They had the services of the best medical experts, and it did nothing for them. This population is dying out, or more accurately being dissipated into the general population, which is not a bad thing.

Throughout history man selected for breeding those dogs who served their purpose, which meant relatively mature dogs which had passed the real world test of physical fitness by demonstrating their ability over time in the hunt, in herding service or in the physical protection of the band, tribe or farming community. Natural diversity and human aided natural selection, a broad pool of genetic resources, maintained physical fitness as well as the necessary moral and working character

attributes. Simple, practical choices among mature, proven dogs based on functionality effectively limited genetic defects.

In the years before the turn of the twentieth century, the later 1800s, the concept of the purebred dog with a closed gene pool, the conformation show as the primary breeding selection process and kennel club registration as the primary badge of value and legitimacy, profoundly changed the age old partnership between man and dog.

Instead of large regional breeding pools for local agricultural and hunting needs, with a sporadic injection of lines from remote regions as dogs on occasion were sought out from greater distances, the closed gene pool with constantly narrowing bloodlines emerged as the normal selection process. But this violates all of the principles of nature, replicates on a formal and enforced basis the practices which among human beings and other animals have always, eventually, led to widespread and entrenched genetic degradation.

From the perspective of a century of experience, only the most obtuse could fail to see that the purebred dog concept is based on the hubris of the elite, that ingrained arrogance has created a system preordained to collapse in a genetic sense just as surely as the ongoing incest of the European royal class led to its physical, moral and intellectual decline. The result has been breeding among an ever-narrowing pool of dogs based on fashion and appearance rather than practical working capability, truly functional structure and traditional values.

The consequence of the innate desire of each generation of breeders and judges to stamp a personal mark on a breed as the new desired physique has become more and more bizarre, creating grotesque caricatures of the normal canine. Manifestations of this include the incredibly narrow Collie skull, the extreme angulation of the American German Shepherd show ring and, perhaps the most grotesque of all, the English Bulldog.

These brief paragraphs constitute but an amateur oversimplification of an exceedingly complex subject. The reader is well advised to obtain and seriously study other material, especially the Coppinger book (Coppinger & Coppinger, 2001) and the Bragg article. (Bragg, 1996) Jeffery Bragg has produced perhaps the best overall review of the consequences of medical screening and kennel club registration practices in a number of lengthy articles, which should be required reading for anyone with a serious interest in dog breeding.

Medical Screening

It began with hip dysplasia. In the 1950's and 60's the canine community could no longer ignore the proliferation of crippled young dogs and sought to remedy the problem through use of radiographic hip examinations as a screening mechanism for breeding. The concept was quite simple: since the defective hip socket configuration and the consequent proliferation of crippled dogs was primarily the result of genetic inheritance, the proposed solution was to eliminate from the breeding population dogs exhibiting external symptoms and also those whose hips were deemed faulty through the use of X-ray examination.

This program has had a significant element of success. The certification of breeding stock as free from dysplasia, by agencies such as the Orthopedic Foundation of America (OFA) and various European programs, gradually became the standard of breeder responsibility. This was on the whole a good thing, for there has been statistical evidence and general observation of a broad improvement in the hip status of many breeds.

As time moved forward and other defects began to emerge the success of hip screening gradually led to a proliferation of further tests breeders were under

increasing pressure to embrace. In the Bouvier des Flandres, for instance, numerous problems emerged beyond dysplastic hips. These included heart ailments such as sub aortic stenosis, serious eye problems leading to blindness, thyroid problems and gastric torsion. The Doberman became a walking disaster with wobbler syndrome and von Willebrand's disease leading a pack of horror stories.

But this needs to be kept in perspective. Not all breeds are seriously afflicted and some breeds are problematic primarily in intensively competitive show lines. As a prime example, the Malinois has never been prominent in the show ring, and there are flourishing and significantly independent working Malinois communities in Belgium, the Netherlands and France which provides substantial diversity. This does not imply that there are not dysplastic Malinois and outbreaks of other genetic flaws, for these things always exist, but in such a geographically separated and diverse gene pool long term consequences are minimal. Specific kennels or breeding lines with an emerging problem become less popular as people gravitate to other sources and breeders bring in new dogs or seek outside stud services. Which is, of course, how it is supposed to work.

Working breeders in general are less prone to incessantly breeding multiple bitches to the latest winner because they tend to breed less often and be more selective in choosing a stud dog. Trial wins are a team effort; it is the best dogs and handlers which are in the hunt, so the best dog for breeding is not necessarily the winning dog on the trial field. Dogs which have not had a particularly stellar trial career are often, nevertheless, used fairly widely at stud by those believing that they possess qualities, such as inherent hardness and aggression, that are not necessarily rewarded appropriately in the points. Individual trial wins are subject to happenstance such as drawing a difficult track or a slight miss step by a decoy. In general an older but still actively breeding male with impressive sons and daughters on trial fields is often preferable to the younger dog with wins which might prove to be a flash in the pan.

The working breeder needs to produce dogs which will reliably function at a high level for several years, an entire working career, after maturity, which tends to bring insipient genetic defects into the open. They tend to be more leery of unproven breeding stock because too many years can pass and too much training time can be expended before defects become apparent in the progeny.

The show dog on the other hand can obtain a championship at a relatively young age and with a couple of early major wins go on to an extensive breeding career without ever demonstrating stamina, drive or agility. Such a dog only need work a few minutes, gait a few of times around the ring, and can often be conditioned or drugged for the brief time necessary. With such brief exposure to public scrutiny serious genetic defects are much more easily concealed or ignored. Genetic tests provide some transparency in the case of prominent defects but are less likely to reveal the more unusual problems that extensive work training and trial participation would likely reveal. It is of course possible to substitute a different dog in a medical test, especially if there is not a solid basis for identification such as a microchip, but in the working trial it is generally more difficult to put in a ringer because it is a public event, and serious defects are likely to show up in rigorous exercises such as the scaling wall or long jump.

German Shepherd show lines in Europe are vulnerable in terms of character and structure, and have their share or more of genetic defects. Because of the prestige and dominance of SV show lines, scrupulously maintained by German judges, other nations do not in general have independent lines which could provide diversity. Working lines are more favorably situated, that is largely independent working communities exist in a number of nations such as the Czech Republic, Belgium and the Netherlands, and much of the old East German blood is being maintained.

The most problematic working breeds are those that are relatively small in numbers and primarily conformation show driven, without in depth working lines, such as the Doberman Pincher and the Bouvier des Flandres. In these popular, intensively inbred breeds and lines medical screening became increasingly fashionable, a way to buy notoriety, importance and the aura of righteousness with relatively little personal effort or risk of dirty hands. One could buy young dogs from among the show winners, or better yet engage a professional handler to buy and show dogs, subject them to testing and establish a breeding program. In the Bouvier world there emerged such extensive screening that it became fashionable to boast of a "five star" dog, one who had passed five leading screening tests. This and an essentially meaningless conformation championship tend to be proffered as hallmarks of quality; never mind that the dog might waddle like a windup toy and would just lapse into dumb passive resistance were anyone foolish enough to try and train him for the work of his breed.

But this is not working well and questions persist after all of these years and all of this testing. Why, after several thousand years of ongoing breeding without medical screening, are we seeing all of these genetic problems and doing all of this testing? Are we really producing better dogs? Or are we in avoidance, putting out brush fires while dissipating the heritage of the founders? Other than providing a revenue stream for the veterinary community and the medical service establishment, what exactly is being accomplished? Perhaps the time has come to step back and make a new evaluation.

There are compelling reasons to believe that the underlying problem is the ever-shrinking gene pool, exacerbated by slavishly breeding tighter and tighter to fashionable dog show winners, leading to breeds sadly deficient in the functional character and robust physique that were their original purpose. The result has been the emergence of a never-ending series of genetic defects and generations of fragile dogs exaggerated in type and lacking in vigor, robust good health and reasonable longevity. The underlying problem is that each new genetic test eliminates dogs from breeding consideration, further contracting the common genetic resources to be available in future generations.

It is true that testing for subclinical genetic defects, those not obvious in the young dog, provides useful information in breeding selection. But in the broader picture, within the context of a closed and contracting gene pool, blindly excluding all dogs testing positive for any of multiple known defects has the potential to so severely contract the gene pool that the breed faces extinction. Combined with incessant breeding to transiently popular show winners, this can eventually push the breed below genetic critical mass.

In Denial

Over several decades significant elements of the canine community has been drawn into increasingly elaborate screening programs primarily because it is the path of least resistance; an easy way out from under proliferating genetic defects much less intellectually challenging than the effort to understand the biological dynamics of breeding and evolution. The conventional wisdom has become that through ever more sophisticated testing, and perhaps ultimately artificial gene manipulation, the need for genetic diversity can be discarded as old fashioned along with the fireplace for heat and the candle for light. The futility of this can be seen in breeds such as the Doberman Pincher which have been backed into a genetic corner, face practical extinction. It is only a matter of time.

The essence of the problem is that the success of screening in diminishing hip dysplasia set a precedent, and each new screening program further diminishes the gene pool, the aggregate breed genetic resources. In order for this to function in the

long term it would be necessary to replenish this diversity by bringing in outside blood, either from outliers within the breed or from outside. But breeders are loath to do so because winning in the ring comes through breeding ever more tightly to narrowing winning lines, and because the process of bringing in outside resources produces benefits only in the long term while next year's wins are the driving force in breeding, especially for the increasingly predominant short term breeder. The complexities of the registration process and particularly peer social pressure weigh against wider breeding in a world where "purebred" is the foundation mythology. Bringing in outside genetic resources runs counter to the culture, is seen as an admission of guilt, of betraying the heritage.

Thus each newly emerging defect, such as proliferating heart and eye problems, leads to the creation of new screening programs which are promoted as convenient ways of avoiding the consequences of blindly breeding winners to winners. Remember that breeders were dragged kicking and screaming into the age of science when increasing pressure forced routine hip examinations. Once their hand was forced they began to see certified this and certified that as useful promotional mechanisms. Those deficient in understanding of biological principles, ancestral lines and practical breeding selection could simply spend the money for the currently fashionable set of tests to buy credibility, posture as responsible breeders. A great deal of effort and propaganda goes into shaming those who resist useless and meaningless testing and breed in ways established and validated over the centuries, that is relying on diversity and breeding older animals which have been proven in their work. This tends to bring forth latent faults and thus exclude the affected animals, especially the males.

As a point of reference, consider that most human beings have children without passing a five star genetic testing program and the human race does manage to go reproducing itself with minimal incidence of serious genetic defects. Why is this? Do we care more about our dogs than our children? The fact is that over thousands of years we evolved social and cultural mechanisms that encourage sufficient diversity in breeding selection, which effectively minimizes the occurrence of recessive defects. It is true that in unusual circumstances particular ethnic or national groups, because of long-term genetic isolation, develop characteristic, widespread genetic defects. The solution to such problems is generally social, opening up the group to more diverse people to secure more diversity, but sometimes medical screening tests have a role to play.

Over the generations and centuries dogs were bred in very much the same way, with many social and practical mechanisms for genetic diversity. It was the advent of the formal breed and the enormous focus on inbreeding to establish artificial type which is the cause of the serious genetic defects in our purebred dogs today. Rather than more and more elaborate screening to avoid the natural consequences of incest, we need to breed our dogs with similar mechanisms to encourage genetic diversity, broader genetic pools. This is the exact opposite of what we so often do, breed very tightly, especially on a strongly inbred male line.

More diversity requires that in addition to encouraging more open breeding practices and discouraging massive use of momentarily fashionable stud dogs the need for occasional inclusion of dogs outside the studbook needs to be recognized, encouraged and provided for in the registration process. For this to happen there needs to be an above board mechanism and supportive culture for bringing in outside dogs.

Because of the nature of our free enterprise economic system an inherent aspect of the problem is that genetic testing programs represent income streams and profit to every element of the veterinary care industry, and it is not in their individual, interest to question the ultimate efficacy and collateral damage in terms of the

diminishing gene pool. The pharmaceutical houses, laboratories, certification agencies and veterinary clinics all are in business to make a profit, and must be in order to be viable. From a strictly business point of view, a reliable revenue stream can hardly be seen as a bad thing, and inherently fragile and vulnerable populations of dogs produce more revenue than populations of vigorous, resilient, healthy dogs.

This is not some sort of conspiracy theory or meant to cast doubt on the integrity and sincere concern of our veterinary community; these are on the whole honest, hardworking, well-intentioned professionals. But they are and must be business people too, and if there is a demand for a new heart or eye testing and certification procedure they are of necessity going to need to provide the service, regardless of its actual long-term efficacy, lest their clientele go elsewhere.

This is not a novel situation, for consider that our pharmaceutical houses routinely spend twice as much money on promoting drugs for problems people are not even aware of as on research and development. Money rather than any abstract desire to improve the human condition always drives the process on the corporate scale. This is the foundation, the essence, of our capitalist system, and if one or a few individuals are too squeamish to squeeze the money out capitalism demands that they be replaced by those willing to serve and prosper.

Each time a new genetic problem emerges the free market responds by developing a screening test, an appropriate foundation with a blue ribbon committee, and the start a whole new revenue stream. The problem is that the purebred system is the ultimate cause of the problem and that more screening programs are only band aids, do not promote or enable real long term solutions, that is, significantly widening breed genetic diversity through the introduction of outside breeding stock. More and more genetic testing is not the answer, and we cannot blame the veterinary establishment, for if breeders did not jump on every passing bandwagon then nobody would be building bandwagons; big business does what makes money, not what is good, desirable or moral from a societal point of view.

In the ideal perhaps the breed clubs and especially the national clubs should provide leadership, but in order to face up to the problem the AKC and the FCI would have to come to terms with the reality that the underlying problem is that their house is built on a false foundation, the closed breeding population, and the inherently flawed nature of the purebred dog paradigm. This is unlikely to happen.

In the Bouvier des Flandres world, as an example, there emerged in the 1990s a plague of the heart defect known as sub aortic stenosis (SAS) and serious eye problems along with the traditional garden-variety problems such as dysplastic hips. The source of this was perfectly obvious to those willing to see; it was driven by the influx and close breeding on the Dutch show line imports in the later 1980s and early 90s and also the closely bred Belgian lines previously popular. Not that these dogs were all bad, but they were already tightly bred and the American breeders, especially in California and the west coast, bred to them blindly and ever more tightly, like another gift of the Euro gods, the keys to the best in show ring.

The reaction to burgeoning blindness and heart failure was yet another round of denial, followed by the usual crusade to make increasingly elaborate and expensive medical screening the mark of the responsible breeder. This was basically an ostrich head in the sand reaction, because the root cause of the problem was the shrinking gene pool. In essence, a few breeders with large financial, emotional and breeding stock investments in these over bred Dutch show lines were trying to pull everybody else into the mud so they would not feel so lonely and dirty.

Many serious working breeders do little or no testing, confident that a five-year-old dog with a Dutch Police (KNPV) certificate or similar title needs no further proof of vitality and health. While I certainly believe that we should make use of science and medical tests as a rational part of an overall program, that approach has served

well for hundreds of years, and we need to realize that more diversity in lines, the open gene pool, meaning mechanisms of legitimately breeding outside lines back into the closed breed studbooks, reliance on working and character tests for fully mature dogs as primary elements of breeding selection and especially breeding the males as more mature dogs at an older age are the keys to ongoing breeding lines with the health and vigor we all seek in our dogs.

The enormous twentieth century scientific advances and the resulting technology, that is, radiographic examination to reveal bone structure, ultrasonic sound to view soft tissue, chemical and biological tests to reveal the presence of disease at early stages, revolutionized human medicine and veterinary practice. These are good things, and failure to use these tools in favor of historical ways of doing things would be irrational; we would still be hunting with chipped stones if this had been the prevailing mindset of mankind.

But technology brings forth problems and dilemmas as well as benefits, and perceived benefits taken to extremes bring forth unexpected consequences and collateral damage. Just as the automobile and the internal combustion engine are producing environmental and economic problems of enormous magnitude that we need to address as a society, medical diagnostic technology can be used in pervasive selection programs which only exacerbate the reduction in the gene pool and at some point introduce more problems than they can resolve. There are all sorts of things floating around in the genetic backgrounds of the various breeds, and if we could test for all of them, which we may in the future be able to do, eliminating every dog with any problem would simply eliminate all dogs and bring the breed to an end.

These scientific and engineering advances are the foundation for medical screening in the breeding of dogs, and most serious breeders will from time to time test for such conditions as thyroid deficiency and in other circumstances where there is evidence or reason for concern. The screening for hip dysplasia has in general led to an overall improvement in many lines and should be ongoing.

But the emergence of the conformation dominated national and international registry bodies based on the breed as a group of progenitors with a closed studbook has resulted in increasingly limited genetic diversity. This has been seriously deleterious to the dogs we live with, as evidenced by the persistent and increasing incidence in many breeds of defects with proven or suspected genetic cause.

The concept of the purebred dog with an entirely closed breeding population, with genetic diversity incessantly lost due to breeding to a few show winning males, selected without regard to working suitability either physically or in terms of character attributes, is failing.

Spiral to Oblivion?

If diminishing genetic diversity, increasing susceptibility to debilitating genetic defects and fragile dogs lacking in vitality and vigor is the problem, what is the solution?

In general a broad based genetic diversity with emphasis on breeding stock demonstrating essential physical and moral attributes is the basis of a viable ongoing program. Physical attributes must mean more than just appearance and structure, must consist of actual demonstrations of power, agility and endurance. Such tests must involve obstacles such as scaling walls, high jumps and pits; running and trotting significant distances and energetically engaging the decoy over a long enough time to reveal inherent structural and metabolic weakness. Character evaluation must be serious training to a significant certification level; a dog which has been prepared for the KNPV or Schutzhund III level, given an honest and

rigorous trial, is unlikely to have serious hidden flaws, either in physique or character. Preparation for such examinations generally takes much more than a year, and this long duration, ongoing testing and evaluation is the essence of the process. There simply are no short cuts.

Mankind bred dogs in this way for generations and centuries before diagnostic medical procedures came into existence. Such tests provide useful new tools and capabilities, but cannot replace the time honored process of breeding dogs according to demonstrated working capability. The combination of a conformation appraisal and a set of diagnostic tests to identify worthy breeding candidates, the process in many nations and breeds today, has proven to be inadequate, inevitably leading to degeneration.

Furthermore, it is essential to note and account for variation in circumstance and outlook according to breed. This is especially true among the various national working communities with their more diverse competitive venues and working cultures. Large segments of the working dog population are vigorous and prosperous with substantial diversity both in terms of currently ongoing breeding lines and strong, independent national heritages. Conformation lines tend to be more homogeneous and thus more interrelated and susceptible, as exemplified by the strong SV influence and control over German Shepherd conformation affairs worldwide, with the notable exceptions of the North American AKC and CKC conformation lines, which are a world unto themselves.

The Belgian Malinois is the prime example of a strong ongoing program with vigor and vitality, primarily because over the twentieth century there was relatively little conformation show interference with working culture and lines. While as in any other breed the Malinois is subject to the periodic emergence of genetic defects, there are several distinct national populations with their own culture, breeding stock and sport programs. These independent working communities – that is the Dutch KNPV lines, the Belgian NVBK lines and the French Ring lines – each constitute diverse and robust gene pools and serve as mutual genetic reserves. Other breeders and trainers in these nations, as well as Germany and America, carry on lines of increasingly successful dogs for IPO competition and represent a further diversity and a deeper genetic reserve. Other breeds, specifically the German Shepherd, exist in much larger numbers on the international scale. But a much larger percentage of Malinois are bred for real working character while on the other hand the vast majority of German Shepherds are bred in companion or show lines of no real use as genetic resources.

The show segment of Malinois breeding has never had the popularity, numbers or political influence to exert control over working lines, and this issue was essentially resolved within Belgium through the creation of the NVBK in 1963, taking the essential Belgium Malinois lines out of the hands of the FCI oriented show community. Although there are, and always will be, periodic outbreaks of genetic problems, there is at the moment little apparent potential for a serious genetic diversity crisis in the Malinois.

The German Shepherd working lines, for all of the problems of recent years, are still large in number, historically deep and somewhat diverse. These resources include the Czech lines, the old East German lines, remnant working lines in Germany itself, breeders in Holland and Belgium and other small but persisting pockets of dedicated breeders and trainers with their own faithfully nurtured lines. The German Shepherd working heritage is in serious trouble on several fronts, but for the moment at least, looking at the worldwide situation, genetic diversity is not especially high on the problem list. The essential problem is that the vast majority of German Shepherds worldwide are useless for their work and thus a millstone around the neck rather than a viable genetic reserve.

Even in breeds blessed with substantial diversity genetic screening is perfectly valid, a useful tool in an ongoing breeding program. When defects become evident in specific lines, as they will from time to time, the use of testing to identify and eliminate from breeding those dogs with sub clinical defects, that is, dogs with the potential to pass on the problem but normal in appearance and function, is useful and appropriate, an important means of more quickly and completely weeding out the defective dogs.

While the working shepherd lines, the German and Belgian, are relatively diverse in a genetic sense, the problems come in the show lines, such as those predominant in the SV Sieger Show, and the smaller, second tier working breeds, such as the Doberman Pincher and the Bouvier des Flandres.

The Doberman is today a relatively small breed in Germany, with for instance only 612 VDH registrations in 2011, primarily show dogs. Doberman working lines are sparse and the breed as a whole is generally inbred and subject to a long list of genetic problems such as wobbler syndrome, von Willebrand's disease and endemic heart failure. Serious Doberman people understand that a resurrection could not be a recovery, that the resources are not there; a full-scale reconstruction, perhaps bringing in extensive Beauceron or Rottweiler breeding resources, would be essential for meaningful progress. This does not seem likely.

The Bouvier des Flandres is on its last legs as a serious breed. The show lines have endemic inbreeding problems and multiple serious genetic defects. Bouvier working lines – sad for me to say – consist of remnants, are almost certainly beyond recovery. A few of the older, hard-core breeders and trainers persist, taking what comfort they can in going down with their ship.

Seriously troubled lines and breeds, such as the Doberman, have very little likelihood of being revived through testing and selection; when the breeding pool is below critical mass reconstruction from outside sources is the only viable alternative. But in reality this is practically and politically difficult because the people involved cling to their mythology and because kennel club culture and structure create enormous obstructions. Some breeds, such as the English Bull dog, are beyond redemption, need to become extinct.

An illustrative example of the need for a more pragmatic approach to breeding is the Dalmatian. Unfortunately in the 1970s and 80s all purebred Dalmatians had a recessive gene which produced high uric acid levels, which in turn cause an extremely high incidence of debilitating urinary tract blockages. Since the gene was universal selective breeding within the existing base as a solution was not an option.¹ (Nash, 1990)

Yet there is a perfectly viable solution to this problem. In 1973 Dr. Robert Schaible began a "Dalmatian-Pointer Backcross Project," in which a Dalmatian was bred to a single English Pointer, producing in a few generations dogs which looked like Dalmatians, acted like Dalmatians and for all practical purposes were Dalmatians, yet substantially free of genetic high uric acid levels. But in the eyes of the AKC, British KC and the various breed clubs these dogs are not purebred, are in their eyes low class mongrels to be held in contempt by all respectable people. After forty years of denial the Dalmatian community finally began to relent in the 2011 era, after inflicting pain and suffering on generations of dogs and people in the absurd cause of purity.

¹ The Dalmatian is also subjected to serious levels of congenital deafness, which can theoretically be remedied by selection within the breed.

This is unconscionable. An ongoing program for breeding a population of dogs for common type, structure, appearance, character and working propensities is a time honored and noble undertaking, a satisfying and useful human achievement. But somehow we deny, at least in our own minds, that these breeds are always created by crossing selected individual dogs, often with substantially different characteristics, to produce the desired result and in time consistently reproduce the desired type. Breeding populations need to be open to occasional, closely controlled and monitored outside matings to introduce diversity, thus maintaining genetic viability and vigor.

Historically the practical means of introducing outside genetic resources has often been the use of a desirable male and then the falsification of the registration, using the name and identity of an existing male within the breed. This is not especially uncommon, and often well known to the insiders. But the introduction of DNA testing is making this difficult or impossible, an instance of the negative consequences of a scientific advance. Rather than using such testing for the benefit of breeding stock, the AKC and other registries will use it to put teeth and consequence into an irrational paradigm.

There have been sporadic attempts to address these issues, but shoveling sand against the tide has proven difficult. In the German Shepherd world, Dr. Helmut Raiser, for a brief period national Breed Warden of the SV, the German national breed club, has taken the stand that lock step selection based on hip X-rays has weakened character in the German Shepherd Dog and proposed that selective introduction of Malinois blood could be part of a better overall approach. It cannot be a surprise to anyone that the German show breeders soon conjured up a way to remove Dr. Raiser from his office and go back to with business as usual. Others from time to time speak out, but the establishment is deeply entrenched and invested in their system.

But there are chinks in the armor, a glimmer of hope in the rapidly declining registrations in both Europe and America. AKC registration totals have fallen by 63 percent over 15 years, and other registries have experienced similar reductions. These dramatic reductions have been especially pronounced in the larger and more aggressive breeds, especially the German Shepherd. As discussed in the next chapter, the ongoing collapse in the AKC and FCI creates vulnerability, but also perhaps the opportunity for better paradigms to emerge.

While line breeding is the foundation of animal husbandry, the process by which breeds are established and maintained, it is generally accepted that the periodic out cross to maintain diversity and vigor is fundamental to the process. The fact that the closed gene pool and the focus on breeding to a very small number of show winning dogs has in many instances made the true out cross impossible, thus preordaining the fragility, lack of vigor and proliferation of genetic faults that we see before us today.

The ideal situation would be a number of concurrently evolving breeding lines, with ongoing interchange among them, to provide the necessary genetic diversity. The Malinois is in many ways a good approximation of this. The problem is that the exhibition breeders, and to a lesser extent the working breeders, tend to go blindly back to the same winning lines since that is what is seen as the road to recognition, personal status and puppy sales.

Although not widely used today, in Belgium there is an established, formal process to introduce outside lines. One can show his dog to two conformation judges and, upon receipt of good or very good ratings receive provisional papers. (Unfortunately, there is no requirement of a character evaluation.) The offspring of such dogs also receive provisional papers, but in the third generation they convert to full registration. This rational system should be the norm everywhere.

As historical background, this started in pre WWII Belgium where there were multiple registries competing for acceptance. Being reluctant to acknowledge the existence of another registry, this was a face saving way of incorporating existing dogs. In many instances lines developed by working trainers who had ignored registration for economic or social reasons were valuable assets that needed to be included. Also, until relatively recently the French & Belgian registrations were not compatible, that is it could be difficult to import dogs. As an example, in the early 1950's the president of the Belgian Bouvier des Flandres club, Felix Verbanck, was able to acquire a French Bouvier and register it in Belgium, and then forward the dog to the founding American breeder. This was necessary because at that time it was not possible to register directly a French dog in America. In general the Belgian and other European breeders, other than a few people with working lines, are not engaged in this sort of thing, but the tools are there.

The fundamental problem is not the use of medical procedures to determine the latent potential for defects in the progeny, for it would be foolish to ignore this technology, but rather the propensity to use it blindly to eliminate dogs without any thought of the overall consequences. From the beginning the OFA emphasized that breeding decisions should be based on a large picture and broad consideration of consequences, that breeding decisions should be made on the bases of diversity and the gradual reduction of risk rather than blind elimination. The breeding of mildly dysplastic dogs should be viewed as an undesirable but sometimes necessary expedient based on the overall quality of the expected progeny and the aggregate contribution to potential diversity.

Medical screening can primarily be useful and successful as an ancillary practice in an overall breeding program driven by selecting breeding animals from among those who have demonstrated proficiency in the particular purpose of their breed at a relatively mature age. In such a program serious problems such as heart defects, severe dysplasia and juvenile blindness most often become apparent and eliminate the dog from breeding. A four or five year old dog qualifying for a KNPV certificate simply cannot be hiding much, is with high probability a physically good specimen. But when dogs are qualified in the show ring and bred relatively young the breeders can and do conceal physical defects because the dogs never have to publicly scale walls, search in the woods or pull down a man on a bicycle.

Medical screening is truly a double-edged sword. On the one hand it provides a tool to assist in a gradual remediation of widespread genetic problems. But on the other hand it has been used as an excuse for ignoring the real problems before us today, that is, the closed studbooks, the breeding based on conformation rather than function and the shrinking gene pools. But applied blindly, by excluding all dogs testing positive for newly perceived genetic defects in a closed gene pool, medical screening can only further tighten the noose in an ever-tightening spiral to oblivion.

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 downside 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 trial 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, 1911.¹ 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

¹ 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 nation's 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 real 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 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.¹ 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. Lest 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.² 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.

¹ 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.

² 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 |
| Assets released from restrictions | 316 | 27 |
| TOTAL REVENUES | \$68,988 | \$72,991 |

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 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 ATTS¹ 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 bench 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.

¹ Founded by Alfons Ertelt in 1977. Ertelt was also a NASA founder.

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 actively 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 sloping 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.¹ 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 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 Register 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

¹ 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.

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. In seeking parity with existing powers they were relentless in building military and industrial potential and in 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 generally 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 SV¹ 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.

Over most of the twentieth century losing two catastrophic wars and persistent push back from the FCI and its affiliated national clubs generally thwarted SV ambitions for international control and power in Europe as well as America. They had

¹ *Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde*, the German Shepherd Club in Germany.

always believed themselves entitled to control of German Shepherd affairs, and their real agenda was 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,¹ 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 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

¹ World Union of German Shepherd Clubs

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 under the domination 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.¹ 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

¹ 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.

dog cabal, in effect *SV Show Dog Distribution America, GmbH*. More and more emphasis on German style conformation shows, and ever more embarrassing performances in the protection tests prior to these shows, as seen widely on the internet, seriously eroded the credibility of the breed and of USCA. It became abundantly clear that the Schutzhund titles on many or most show line Shepherds were 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.

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 during 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 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.¹ 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 involved 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 AKC establishment. This became an increasing threat to the ongoing credibility of the GSDCA. These manipulations were intended to keep control of American affairs, that is portraying USCA as 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

¹ 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.

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 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 slow to comprehend it, for the GSDCA all of this ultimately turned into their worst nightmare. Ultimately the German dominated WDA conformation shows – and the conformation events forced on USCA by the SV – put the dagger in the heart of the 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 has had far reaching consequences, for historically it has been a serious impediment to the emergence of a vigorous self-sustaining and independent police dog breeding and training culture in America. This has helped prevent the emergence of a clear leadership structure which could deal with government entities across the board, as for instance exists in the Netherlands where the KNPV has very close cooperation and formal ties with the amateur training community. The consequence is the emergence of the Malinois as the increasingly predominant police breed in America.

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 and practically the authority for all American affairs. They were inherently hostile because they were afraid of everything USCA represented, particularly the fostering of overt aggression. 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, 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

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| AWDF Member Clubs & size As of 2014 | |
| Federation of American Bulldog | 22 |
| Wording 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 |

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 Pincher 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.

A primary reason for creation of the AWDF was to resolve the conflict within USCA, which began and functionally was an all-breed organization but had become, almost through the back door, a German Shepherd breed club through its entanglements with the SV. The AWDF was intended to 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 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. This turned out to be an unrecoverable error; for the pet owners and show breeders soon had control and drove working enthusiasts out, usually to other breeds.

Recruiting membership not previously committed to serious work meant conformation shows and fun events such as lure coursing for the pet owners and the inclusion of AKC style obedience. The problem was that rather than being converted to Schutzhund these conformation 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 much 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.¹ 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

¹ 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.

In 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.¹ 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 been the Malinois, which prospered in later years partially because of weak FCI affiliated organizations, their primary origins and support structures being in the KNPV and NVBK, beyond FCI influence.

Within America a 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 the 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

¹ 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 Alsations 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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Irreconcilable Differences

In our American working dog awakening we looked to Europe for dogs, leadership, knowledge and the helping hand up; and this was right and good for it was in Europe – Belgium, Germany, northern France, the Netherlands – where the transformation took place, where a millennium of evolving herding dog service was transformed into our police breeds and working dog culture. It is because of the foresight of men such as Konrad Most and Max von Stephanitz in Germany and Ernest van Wesemael and Adolphe Reul in Belgium that we have the police, service and military dogs of today, which has taken the canine partnership to new levels, made police service a vibrant reality.

But there was a concealed flaw in our crusade. Little did we know in the 1970s and 80s, as our idealistic quest gathered momentum, that a new generation of leadership in Germany had feet of clay, that even then betrayal was lurking in high places. The SV leadership, these heirs of von Stephanitz, these Germans on our pedestal, even then were abandoning his credo "form must follow function" in favor of their own new credo: "beauty is what we say it is and good enough rather than excellence is to be the new standard for work." And, implicitly, when good enough became difficult they were always prepared to further weaken expectations rather than breed stronger and more willing German Shepherds.

While the show dog enthusiast – the exhibitionist – is a politician and a manipulator to the very core of his soul, the sport or police trainer is typically in denial, wants to train his dog and remain oblivious to the world at large. This cannot end well, for grasping politicians control and define the sport field as well as the show ring, and the consequence is the watering down of all trials and all breeds. The driving force behind this is always the FCI or the AKC and their affiliated breed clubs. It is not a coincidence that the most conspicuously prospering working lines are the Malinois under the KNPV in Holland and the NVBK in Belgium, both independent organizations by and for serious dog trainers and breeders. Beyond the long standing predominance in the various national ring sport and police trials, the Malinois is more and more dominant at the major IPO championships, anywhere there is open competition, forcing the German Shepherds to retreat to their private venues, such as the SV national IPO championship and the various WUSV events.

Furthermore, the robust character of the second rank of working breeds, those beyond the German Shepherd and the Malinois, is being incessantly trivialized and eroded as a direct consequence of national organizations in the hands of the canine exhibitionists and politicians. These once noble breeds – these Dobermans, Riesenschnauzers and Rottweilers – are becoming pathetic caricatures of the visions of their founders. Even the German Shepherd is preserved more by enormous numbers than responsible leadership and breeding, for most of the German show lines share the mediocrity of the lesser breeds. If you doubt any of this, go to an AKC show and watch the German Shepherds slink around the ring; and if you think that Europe is immune, go to Germany and witness an SV conformation show, or watch the insipid preliminary protection exercises on the internet.

These conflicts and compromises – between serious trainers and conformation hobbyists, police service intensity and companion dog softness, foundation working dog ideals and commercial exploitation – have been ongoing for a century, almost from the beginning. Ultimately, these are irreconcilable differences; the police dog culture will prosper to the extent that real control over breeding selection, trial

procedures (especially judging expectations) and registration requirements passes into the hands of a community of police level trainers and breeders in active cooperation with police agencies. Permanent separation from existing purebred organizations, most especially those under FCI and AKC auspices, is essential for ongoing viability. The winds of change are there, FCI and AKC annual registrations are plummeting and the Malinois more and more is the IPO winner and the police dog of choice.

Political manipulation is at the core of conformation exhibition, every judge is essentially a political mediator, because that is what is necessary to obtain a license and more to the point judging assignments. The SV conformation judge is a broker, trading placements and doing favors in the expectation of future benefit. In America professional handlers are important not because of skill in presentation, but because they are political players and manipulators, trading money, favors and influence for the ribbons and tin cups of value only to those whose lives are so empty that such trinkets take on meaning. Political control of the conformation show process goes hand in hand with control of the registering entities, and play and show dog control of these organizations is how the Schutzhund trial has been emasculated, pussified, with ever shorter courage tests, the removal of the attack on the handler and a scoring system that has gone from focus on the courage test to the point where a dog, at the championship level, can fail to engage on the long bite and still only lose three points and thus rate excellent, obtain the coveted V rating.

Complacency is how breeds such as the Doberman Pincher and Bouvier des Flandres are being pushed over the edge with European bans on ear cropping and tail docking. By allowing national and international organizations run by and for pet dog marketers – Cocker Spaniel and Poodle exhibitionists – control over our working trial rules and administration is how we come to have so much emphasis on subservience that a dog touching a sleeve at the wrong moment is to be dismissed rather than given a minor point deduction. If we leave the rules to the politicians and dog sellers, we cannot complain about the consequences.

The Euro Cabal

During the latter portion of the twentieth century the SV, the German Shepherd community in the homeland, was increasingly dominated and transformed by a cabal of new men focused on ever more fashionable external appearance, with a concurrent, gradual, incessant loss of focus on the working origins of the breed. The consequence was the cleavage of the breed into increasingly grotesque show lines and working lines less and less competitive in the real world. Collateral damage has been the ongoing weakening of the Schutzhund trial, rebranded and trivialized as IPO.

Perhaps the ultimate example is the Martin brothers, Walter of the *von der Wienerau* kennel and Herman whose kennel was *vom Arminius*. Walter was the guiding light, the architect of this new German Shepherd, the banana back dog, and Herman was SV president from 1984 until 1994, only two years before the passing of both brothers within weeks in the fall of 1996.

Incest and nepotism was endemic at the top, for when Walter's dogs became Sieger it was Herman in his role of SV president who was making the selections and handing out the trophies, when he was not actually selecting his own dogs, as in these Sieger selections:

| | | |
|-------------|-----------------------|------------|
| 1986 & 1987 | Quando von Arminius | SZ 1547134 |
| 1992 | Zamb von der Wienerau | SZ 1696277 |
| 1996 | Visum von Arminius | SZ 1789549 |

Like the passing parade of a king without pants, with no one having the courage to point out nakedness but one small, innocent boy, the Shepherd community, especially the fawning American conformation dilettantes, incessantly glorified and deified these self-serving bureaucrats who had inherited the mantle of von Stephanitz and used it for their own aggrandizement.

From the early years the test of work, the Schutzhund trial, evolved as the foundation of the German Shepherd Dog. But in the latter years of the twentieth century, slowly, subtly at first but with ever gathering momentum, the Schutzhund trial was incessantly made less demanding for an increasingly predominant conformation oriented segment of the breeding community. The process was insidious, subtle in the beginning; pressure on judges to be a little bit lenient, on the helpers to moderate their intensity, to go easy on a weak dog because of his promise for the show ring. In the eighties the export market, especially the American market, for titled dogs put a significant cash value on mediocre titled dogs, even dogs with false certificates, creating another group with an economic interest in a diluted trial. The rules were repeatedly modified, decreasing courage test distances, making the scoring less demanding, introducing the padded stick and entirely eliminating the attack on the handler. Thus both the letter and the spirit of the law were incessantly debased.

Historically the SV system depended on an overall sense of integrity and peer pressure to maintain standards of correctness and rigidity in the judging community. SV officials could and did monitor the performance of judges and maintain standards. Over time, as the upper levels of SV administration became more and more show oriented and corrupt, there was an ever-diminishing tendency to maintain standards. When the leading conformation kennels are those of the SV president and his brother, our old friends the Martin boys, the tendency to lower standards becomes blatant.

The final plea of von Stephanitz had been "Take this trouble for me: Make sure my shepherd dog remains a working dog, for I have struggled all my life long for that aim." But these arrogant, self-serving men, this evil cabal, has diluted the working requirements and culture. Under their stewardship this noble breed has been split asunder, into their commercial conformation dogs and the working lines upholding the heritage of the breed in police service and on trial fields around the world. Even now the working lines are yet again dividing, for play sport and real police level work.

Thus over the past thirty years control of Shepherd affairs in Germany has gradually fallen into the hands of an elite group of show breeders, who have increasingly dominated the SV and its leadership positions. This trend has not been without resistance and there has been increasing strife within the Shepherd community. Working advocates such as Dr. Helmut Raiser have struggled to fight back, gone to the membership to seek club office, winning office, and then being sabotaged by the entrenched show line establishment. Raiser had significant support, enough to elect him as national breed warden of the SV which meant that he would judge the females at the Sieger Show. This struck terror and panic into the heart of the SV elite, which found a way, legal or illegal, to remove him from his office. When you begin striking out at your own serious trouble is on the horizon.

As in the Catholic church, the person at the top has traditionally held office for life and been able to project and conserve power into the future by those he puts in the position to succeed him. In both organizations this extreme concentration of power allowed for sustained growth and consistent policy over time, was in some ways necessary for survival and prosperity in a difficult social and political setting. But power does corrupt, and both organizations are evolving into top-heavy bureaucracies increasingly irrelevant to those at the bottom. Inexorably the Malinois

has crept into the working role historically the forte of the German Shepherd, dominating the international IPO competitions and more and more prominent in the military and police forces. When the Defense Department in the United States began a breeding program for military dogs it chose the Malinois rather than the German Shepherd.

German Annual Registration Trends

| Breed | 2011 | 1997 |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| GSD | 13,339 | 29,824 |
| Boxer | 1,579 | 2,659 |
| Great Dane | 1,336 | 1,853 |
| Rottweiler | 1,414 | 3,168 |
| G Schnauzer | 1,151 | 1,998 |
| Hovawart | 1,152 | 1,479 |
| Airedale | 890 | 1,423 |
| Dobermann | 616 | 1,577 |
| Malinois | 494 | 385 |

See complete table with all years in the appendices.

Much of the resistance has been passive, men breeding their working dogs in the old ways for the old reasons, still valid, still in the spirit of von Stephanitz. Enclaves of the original heritage held out in the old East German Democratic Republic, the Czech Republic and among elements of the Belgian and Dutch breeders and trainers; a few good men everywhere hold fast. Numerically the Shepherd in Germany is in free fall, registrations falling by half in a decade, and the SV bureaucrats and office holders are floundering, for their comfortable jobs and prestigious offices are at stake.

This discussion has focused on the German Shepherd for good reason: the huge numerical predominance of this breed in Germany and around

the world. German registrations for 2011 were 13,339, which was an order of magnitude larger than any other working breed, and the predominance on the trial fields is even more overwhelming. (See the table for more complete data.)

The sheer power of the SV in Germany and its influence around the world through the WUSV, the export of breeding stock and the foreign service of SV Schutzhund and conformation judges is from an historical perspective without compare. Today this power, this prestige and this influence is waning, both in numbers and in moral authority, for the corruption, arrogance and hubris at the top of the SV is increasingly blatant. It is as if Judas had staged a coup and installed himself as pope in the place of Peter.

As the quality and availability of the West German Shepherds declined in the 1980s, and as worldwide demand grew incessantly, attention shifted to other, more robust and traditional, sources of Shepherds, primarily in East Germany and a little later in the Czech Republic. Times were hard in both of these nations still behind the Iron Curtain, and western currency, especially the American dollar, spoke with a loud voice.

Twenty or thirty years ago there was talk of the SV breaking away from the FCI and leading the world's Shepherd clubs, through the WUSV, on their own course. At that time there was more difference between the Schutzhund and IPO trials and the world union was strong. This opportunity was allowed to pass, probably because of fear on the part of the national clubs that it would interfere with the profitable export market, especially the lucrative American market; outsiders in Germany and elsewhere would have leapt at the chance to make new clubs and yammer about dissident clubs; and the AKC would no doubt have supported the new FCI affiliated play shepherd clubs. In retrospect this was perhaps never in the cards because the SV leadership even then wanted to separate themselves from Schutzhund and police service and focus on the pet and show dog market.

The Rest of Europe

As the Germans reemerged from the devastation of war and reestablished their national programs, the desire to promote their canine cultural and commercial interests in neighboring nations resumed, with emphasis on links directly to the

German bureaucracy, to an extent bypassing the national clubs in the neighboring nations. This had the tendency to produce conflict and exacerbate resentment as the canine establishments in nations such as the Netherlands began to push back against direct SV intrusions in their internal affairs, through the FCI and in the courts.

A half century of war interspersed with adversarial peace had created deep-seated resentments and hostility in the peoples of Holland, France and especially Belgium, many of whom suffered grievously under German occupation. Germans had of course also suffered, but their homeland was never occupied in WWI and in WWII they were not occupied under the wartime conditions of forced conscripted labor and enormous civilian oppression and suffering as they had inflicted on the Belgians and Dutch. Post war allied occupation of Germany never even began to approach the brutality, exploitation and inhumanity of Nazi occupation. Belgium especially suffered and Belgian breeds, police programs and training venues were cast into obscurity for a generation, some never to recover.

These other nations, adversaries in war for most of a century, historically had a much different training regimen and culture, focused in the protection work on their full body suits, making the entire man the target for the dog rather than an offered arm. The creation of IPO as an international version of Schutzhund was a Trojan horse, a means of projecting German influence, power and authority to the rest of the world. Although IPO had been in marginal existence for a relatively long time, as with all things German there was resistance and resentment on several levels. KNPV and Ring trainers were the elite of their nations, and had little interest in another round of subservience to the Germans. But even in these nations the German breeds were enormously popular, and the German Shepherd establishment especially was able to project influence and some control even into the internal affairs of these recent military adversaries. IPO was and is as much a political gambit as a canine sport.

Historically IPO and Schutzhund emerged from different cultures for different reasons. Schutzhund, taking on its current form after WWII, had evolved primarily as a breeding eligibility assessment. The function of the judge, explicitly and implicitly, was to evaluate the intangibles as well as add up the points. In the protection phase he could award up to ten points for courage and hardness, entirely according to his own opinion, and throughout the entire process he had and was expected to exercise real latitude to reward demeanor and enthusiasm as well as the letter of the rules, to look for the real dog as well as the apparent. The IPO was more of a sport, the role of the judge more to count up the points rather than trying to discern and reward or penalize the underlying nature of the dog. This disparity in role was relative, was a continuum between strictly point counting on one end and incorporating a subjective evaluation of the nature and value of the dog. Schutzhund put more emphasis on being a staunch breed suitability test and the more show and companion dog oriented IPO emphasized obedience control and precision.

Over the years philosophical and practical distinction between the SV Schutzhund program and the FCI IPO abated as the SV, in reaction to political correctness pressure and plummeting registration numbers, became increasingly show oriented and exhibited diminishing commitment to police dog character in favor of appealing to a softer civilian market. IPO and Schutzhund grew increasingly closer together as differences in rules and procedures were eliminated and the Schutzhund judge no longer had the ten points for courage and hardness to award. From the serious trainer's point of view this has been an incessant and continual lowering of standards, seeking a lowest common denominator to accommodate show line breeders and play trainers who do not want to deal with hard-core dogs and hard-core people. Increasingly the SV wanted the Schutzhund trial to be easy for the show dogs to pass and to accommodate commodity level dogs appealing to pet owners and play trainers.

As the SV came increasingly into line with the spirit and reality of the FCI mainstream, became just another show dog organization, the convergence of IPO and Schutzhund was an ongoing process of dilution: the A frame replacing the traditional wall, the padded stick replacing the bamboo stick, ever-shorter courage tests, the elimination of the attack on the handler, increasing emphasis on subservience in the obedience.

The removal of the attack on the handler from the Schutzhund I protection routine is a perfect case in point. What was the reason for this? Because no matter how much pressure they put on the decoy to ease off weak dogs were increasingly failing the exercise. The process, the original concept, was that the trial should reveal the weaknesses and the breeders would take steps to resolve problems through breeding and training. As increasing emphasis on conformation and pet sales evolved, the tendency was to weaken the rules to accommodate softer dogs rather than reemphasizing serious working character in breeding selection.

Germany and Belgium had from the beginning been prominent in working dog affairs as pioneers in police dog deployment and as the nations of origin of the predominant police breeds. The Germans, especially the German Shepherd advocates, were aggressive promoters of their breeds, training methods and national canine culture. Von Stephanitz in particular had been much more than a breeder or club leader; he was a promotional and marketing genius of the first magnitude.

The irony is that it was the Belgians who were the pioneers, and it was Belgian rather than German Shepherds that American police departments in cities such as New York and Detroit were importing in the decade beginning in 1900. But this was obliterated by the German invasion and occupation of 1914, and it would be most of a century before these Belgian dogs, trainers and breeders would again begin to gain international attention. Although the breeds were nominally Belgian, the Belgians who created and nurtured them were culturally and linguistically Dutch. In this Flemish countryside the Dutch border hardly matters, and the Dutch trainers and breeders took up the cause, were enormously successful in breeding, training and deploying these Malinois, and in lesser numbers Bouviers, through their community of active civilian and police trainers. Although the Dutch have primarily been involved with the Belgian breeds, their Dutch Shepherd is now gaining traction as a slightly larger and more massive alternative, in a way a middle ground between the Malinois and the German Shepherd.

The key to Dutch success has been the close civilian and police cooperation, from the trainers on up through the ranks to the administrators of police agencies and the KNPV, often the same men. This is in contrast to the general tendency of the SV to marginalize the partnership with the police and military in favor of pursuing the show dog illusion and the popular civilian or pet market. The underlying difference is that the Malinois has not ever been especially popular as a companion or show dog and thus not been cursed with strong kennel club affiliated national breed clubs and their incessant pressure to water down the character to pander to a popular market or the propensity to breed for the grotesque extremes of the conformation show ring. Show dogs have never been an overpowering revenue source; there are no Americans, Japanese or Chinese standing just outside European Malinois show rings ready to write a check for half a million dollars or even more for a "winner."

America

Beginning with the surge of German Shepherd popularity in America in the 1920s and the promotional program for the Doberman Pincher slightly later, leading up to the much-publicized participation with the Marine Corps in the South Pacific, police and protection dogs were universally perceived in terms of these German breeds. In the aftermath of WWII military canine activity nearly ceased, with the Marine Corps

dropping their program entirely until the Vietnam era. In the early 1950s the last known police canine program of the era, in New York, was abandoned as the radio equipped squad car became the routine for police patrol. American dog training consisted of AKC obedience and tracking, a lot of hunting dog activity and a small number of personal protection or guard dog trainers, regarded as slightly suspect by the mainstream canine community. The 1950s were a lost decade.

As police programs began to reemerge and the first interest in Schutzhund began to awaken in the later 1960s these German breeds and training regimens were so well entrenched and so pervasive that few people in America were even aware that there were other breeds and traditions in other nations.

For all of these historical reasons, the first period of the modern American working dog era, from the 1960s through the 1990s, was about German breeds, training methods and deployment strategies. The first hints of change came in the mid to later 1980s when a small wave of French Ring enthusiasm surfaced. In spite of a certain amount of publicity and activity in the canine world, this had only modest long-term impact; the American Ringers were destined to quarrel incessantly without ever gaining any real traction. Halfhearted efforts to transplant KNPV to America, the Mondio Ring offshoot and numerous home grown programs such as PSA diluted energies; it seemed like the same 200 people continually going from one great new thing to the another. The French, lacking a national breed to promote, training venues perceived as relevant to police service and any apparent flare for public relations in the American environment were destined to remain irrelevant, as were the American ring-training enthusiasts.

But real change was coming, for a couple of emerging trends began to make inroads on this German monopoly. By the early 1980s a few pioneers were taking notice that it was possible to purchase KNPV certified Malinois in Holland for very reasonable prices, which could then be resold in America with a significant profit. Police administrators are by their nature tradition oriented and conservative; acceptance of an unknown breed from a nontraditional source was slow, and some of the imports were of marginal or worse quality and could be difficult for the typical American police trainer or handler to deal with. But in spite of some poor dogs and training issues the good dogs were very good and acceptance gradually increased until the Malinois emerged as a serious factor in American police service.

The second major factor was a gradually increasing cadre of Malinois pioneers in Europe crossing over into IPO and Schutzhund competition. In Germany kennels such as *von Löwenfels* of Peter Engel (no relation) were beginning to produce Malinois making a splash on Schutzhund fields, in America as well as Europe. There were problems, for IPO participation required an FCI registration, which often had to be conjured up with a little creative paper work. The Malinois star was nevertheless on the rise.

January 1, 2012 was the day Schutzhund as a standalone German program ceased to exist, and was replaced by IPO under FCI administration and regulation. This was a turning point in several ways. On one level it was a brave new world of opportunity, celebrated as a unified level playing field on which to build for the future. On another level it marked a great German political victory, for their program and culture prevailed over the full suit based national venues, so many years of tradition, in France, Belgium and the Netherlands.

Less understood or celebrated, but perhaps most significantly, January 1, 2012 was the day complete control of FCI working dog affairs passed, probably forever, out of the hands of working dog people. The consequences are ominous, for Europe is awash in passivism, green party extremes and an ever-expanding spirit of government intrusion into every detail of life. Even giving a ten-year-old boy a Boy Scout pocketknife on his birthday, a rite of passage in middle America, has become

illegal in many places, and seen as a perversion in the more politically correct circles. Ear cropping and tail docking were banned, but the other breeds let it pass. Laws restricting prong collars, radio collars, testing dogs with the padded stick and banning many breeds with a fighting background became more and more pervasive. Much of this spirit pervades the general show and pet dog community and every bump in the road will be the occasion for further restriction, further pussification of the working dog culture.

The gradual demise of Schutzhund in favor of the more pet and companion oriented IPO program, the reduction in emphasis on German Shepherds suitable for police and military service, was in response to societal changes, an evolution toward an ever more pacifist, regulated, emasculated social order taking hold in Europe. There is a certain element of irony in the fact that this time period also marked the emerging era of increasing demand for serious police and military dogs, particularly in the wake of the September 11th atrocity and the prolonged Middle East engagements. These urban conflicts and guerilla war engagements in rural and remote areas created an enormous demand for military patrol dogs at a time of ever increasing demand for police patrol dogs in America and elsewhere, especially in response to out of control drug distribution on the streets of America. Diminishing supply and escalating demand can mean only one thing, the opportunity for new sources of serious dogs to come to the forefront. The new era for the Malinois was at hand.

The increasing presence and prestige of the Malinois, as the consequence of the ongoing dilution of the German Shepherd and the enormous increase in demand for serious dogs post 9/11, is an ongoing trend. The modern heart, the driving force, of this Malinois surge comes not only from Belgium but also from Dutch police training fields. In the 1980s the Belgian Malinois was virtually unknown in America and particularly in American police service; today it is in the process of replacing the German Shepherd as first choice for serious trainers.

This is the culmination of a long and arduous journey, from the pioneering days in Ghent, and a tribute to the perseverance of these Flemish people from among which the Malinois arose, who endured so much in a century that saw their nation at the epicenter of two world wars, neither of their making. Perhaps a moment of reflection on the courage and tenacity of these few men in this small nation, forgotten for most of a century, would not be inappropriate.

A Shrinking World

Beginning in the early 1920s wealthy Americans sought prominence and status by importing winning show dogs, German Shepherds particularly but also other breeds. John Gans was an example, importing many prominent German Shepherd show winners or their progeny for his Hoheluft kennel in New York, such as Pfeffer von Bern. These were not necessarily naïve Americans being sold over rated dogs, although that went on, but often the best dogs in Germany in the prime of their life. Pfeffer von Bern was actually taken back to Germany to become Sieger in 1937, something almost beyond imagination today.

But dogs were not the most important thing Gans brought over, for he hired German born Ernst Loeb to be his kennel manager and secure the best dogs available in Germany. Loeb, eventually in the importing and handling business for himself, was enormously influential for many years, until well after WWII. In this entire era the dog world, primarily show dogs, was dominated by those with access to serious money or canny enough to take advantage of stud dogs imported by others. The direct purchase and import of European dogs was difficult for the typical working class enthusiast, and would be so until well into the 1970s. Prior to this time the vast majority of imports were show line dogs, with very little contact between

working line European trainers, mostly working class themselves, and American amateurs who were just beginning to have a serious interest in the training and application of police style dogs.

When I first went to Europe in the early 1980s it was a new and mildly exotic experience, for until this time Americans had found it relatively difficult to afford casual European travel, expensive in terms of both time and money. Prior to reasonably priced air transport, which gradually became available in the 1960s and 70s, a European tour was by ship and thus a matter of weeks or months, beyond the reach of a working man of modest means with a job and a need to provide a living for his family. The internet was a quarter century in the future, telephone calls were expensive, and even if you had the money you did not have the personal relationships, know who to call. The better European trainers, on the whole working class men themselves, had little contact with or conception of American canine affairs and were not especially English speaking; significant importation of dogs based on working credentials and character was in the future. The American who had actually been to Europe became an instant authority figure in his breed, and European visitors, even those with relatively sparse knowledge or experience, were regarded as all knowing experts.

Although importing dogs for conformation exhibition and breeding was an ongoing process, except during the war years, the working character was taken for granted. It was implicitly assumed that every German Shepherd or Doberman was an incipient police dog; all it would require would be a little training to let loose the internal beast. In reality, nobody actually had any comprehensive idea of what exactly such a dog should be capable of, what the requisite character attributes were, how to identify the suitable dog to train and how breeding selection related to all of this. American police service and especially commercial guard dog services were primitive, there were no military dogs until the WWII programs, quickly abandoned after the war, and there was no ongoing high-level amateur training. We were like novices with a complex digital camera set up in automatic mode, some things were accessible, but the ultimate capability was in general beyond our experience or comprehension. There was no perception of any need or reason to test and select for character, dogs were proven in the show ring, or so we thought. And of course, because of all of this, European dogs of deficient or questionable character, gun shy for instance, became prime candidates for a one-way trip to America, which meant that our domestic breeding resources were always suspect.

Starting in the early 1960s the AKC oriented American German Shepherd show dog world, previously dominated by imports, turned inward. The import went out of fashion virtually overnight and the entire American breeding community, like lemmings over the cliff, began breeding incredibly tight on the new wonder dog, the recently crowned Grand Victor Lance of Fran-Jo and his ever more inbred progeny. This dog became the prototype for the new American shepherd, extreme in angulation, slope of top line and side gait. The entire AKC oriented Shepherd world just turned on a dime down a side road and never looked back.

Just as the AKC Shepherd people were turning their backs on Europe, an entirely new sort of dog, the Schutzhund style working dog, was beginning to emerge in America. The sixties and seventies were times of great change. There was unfulfilled curiosity and desire in America and Europe and air travel became increasingly affordable for the more affluent working man. This meant that a couple of Schutzhund clubs could pool finances and fly a German Schutzhund judge or trainer over for a week or more to hold trials and training sessions. These judges became vital links for those seeking dogs of European lines, and while some were focused on self-importance and even profit on the whole they were honest, well-intentioned men primarily interested in advancing the sport and the breed. This also meant that the man of ordinary means could go to Europe and see for himself, and perhaps

purchase a good dog. The emergence of the internet in the 1990s was the final stage in the transformation of the canine world into one big neighborhood.

Evolving Trends

In Europe, the Belgian Malinois is in ascendance. This breed and this police dog heritage, which emerged in Ghent in 1899 only to be crushed by the German invasion and occupation of 1914, after a century wandering in the wilderness, is rising from the ashes, emerging as the predominant worldwide police breed. An important causative factor in this resurgence is that the Malinois has been virtually free of show breeder control and influence, and that they flourish outside of grasping and suffocating FCI control. The year 1963, when the men of the NVBK summoned the courage to break free, may well ultimately be seen as the turning point for the overall working and police dog movement. The three primary Malinois cultures – that is the KNPV lines, the NVBK lines and the French Ring lines – are relatively diverse and serve as mutual reserve genetic pools.

Although the working German Shepherd community is in the midst of a crushing identity crisis, caught between the SV led show dog establishment and the Malinois surge on the sport fields and police rosters of the world, a long and noble history and enormous worldwide numbers provide a cushion, the possibility of redemption. In the broad picture, the rise of the Malinois over the past thirty years has been the blessing in disguise, for the competition may be the only thing that can give the German Shepherd working community the courage to rise up in the spirit of 1963 and take their fate into their own hands. The German Shepherd working lines, for all of the problems of recent years, are still numerous, historically deep and diverse. These resources of integrity and courage, human and canine, include the Czech lines, the old East German lines, remnant working lines in Germany itself, breeders in Holland and Belgium and other small but persisting pockets of excellence, resolve and courage.

In America, beginning prior to the First World War, when a very small number of American police personnel were making inquiries to Belgium and England and importing dogs, the North American protection oriented working dog movement has been dependent on European breeders, trainers and organizations for dogs, training methodology and deployment strategy. Progress was slow and erratic, for police, military, sport and civilian protection programs have struggled largely in isolation rather than in synergistic cooperation and mutual support as exists in much of Europe. This was of course natural and necessary, for it was these Europeans who were creating the protection breeds and building the infrastructure, certification and deployment strategies under which they have prospered, made fundamental contributions to many European police and military programs.

As Americans became aware of the quality of the better European working lines in the 1970s and 80s, and the sophistication of the breeding, training and police deployment practices, we gradually came to comprehend and respect the German Schutzhund trainers, and a little later the police trainers and breeders in the Netherlands and the NVBK community in Belgium. All of this was well and good, and it was quite natural to see these people on a pedestal of our own making.

There were, however, down side consequences of this pedestal building. First, the money Americans and others were spending began to change the fabric of the European working dog world, gradually made dog brokering more attractive and more profitable. In Germany Schutzhund titled dogs became an export commodity, and a support structure of accommodating judges and brokers, used dog salesmen, came into place. Another example was a commercialization of the Dutch police community, where increasingly dogs were trained with an eye on the export market. This tended to produce a profit driven motivation for quick and superficial training,

the minimum to slide through for the certificate and thus another lucrative sale. If the dog was marginal, it did not matter so much, for it would never be seen again, and many Americans were not canny enough to tell the difference anyway. As a consequence more care was required in the purchase of a titled dog, which was not a serious problem for most Dutchmen with personal contacts but a very important consideration for an American or other foreigner interested in a sight unseen acquisition, which put even more importance on the reliability of the broker providing the dog.

The Belgians and the French were much less engaged, mostly because their numbers are small, although the Belgians in the NBSB have made belated but generally ineffective attempts to gain an American presence. The French Ring community has had a sporadic interaction with the American enthusiasts, and exported Ring line Malinois have gradually become more common on American sport fields, where novices with another breed often end up seeking out a Malinois. This has resulted in virtually no real involvement with or effect on American police canine practice.

Although Americans caught up in enthusiasm for Schutzhund and the police breeds over the past decades have rightly come to regard Europe as the foundation of police service in terms of breeds, training methodology and deployment strategy, they have in general failed to fully appreciate that even in Europe this culture is increasingly separate from the mainstream FCI oriented world of companion and show dogs, which is primarily concerned about conformation shows, pet sales, secure jobs for bureaucrats and the opportunity to play expert by engaging in the political maneuvering necessary to become a conformation judge. In the FCI scheme of things, support of police level character is only a public relations ploy, giving lip service primarily to enable companion dog customers the pretense, the illusion, of owning a real police dog.

This distinction is most evident in the Netherlands, where the KNPV requires no registration and police departments are much more concerned about performance than breed identification. The *Raad van Beheer*, the Dutch equivalent to the AKC, has generally been indifferent to working dogs, but has implemented the FCI IPO program, which has had increasing popularity since the 1970s. In Belgium the hard-core ring trainers broke away from the national FCI club to form the NVBK in 1963. In both Belgium and Holland the IPO program has grown in popularity since the 1970s, drawing some support away from the full protection suit oriented national programs. The necessity of registration papers for IPO competition has been a complication, and there has been a significant amount of falsification of papers to overcome this. The advent of low cost DNA testing technology capable of sorting this out makes future trends increasingly difficult to foresee.

The emergence and enormous immediate popularity of the German Shepherd, and the personal commitment of Max von Stephanitz to working character, as exemplified by his emphasis on herding and police working titles, made this breed the ultimate police dog in the mind of the public worldwide. This was much more than rhetoric and public relations, these dogs were in the forefront of military and police service internationally after the crushing of the incipient Belgian foundation, the only potential contender, in WWI. But the chasm under the façade was there almost from the beginning; by the early 1920s the division into working and show lines was well established. (Humphrey & Warner, 1934) Over the years there was periodic variation in focus in the German show lines, to some extent according to the influence of the SV president in office. In the post WWII period there was an emphasis on hip dysplasia, resulting in the endurance test (AD) for breeding and formal radiographic examination requirements. Tightened requirements for Schutzhund titles for conformation show placement and breeding took place in this era, and a brief protection examination immediately prior to the Sieger Show was

instituted. Toward the end of the twentieth century there was a widening separation between working and show lines and while the Schutzhund title continued to be required judging standards for show line dogs were significantly weakened and sometimes falsified. Even in Germany, the separation of the German Shepherd into virtually two breeds is today well advanced.

The aggregate result is that worldwide the police and military dogs have become increasingly separated from the mainstream purebred canine world in terms of breeding, training and particularly people. Recent years have seen an increasing number of Malinois based on Dutch and Belgian lines, almost entirely separate from FCI influence, a small but increasing number of Dutch Shepherds and working line German Shepherds, with emphasis on the East German and Czech lines. If the increasing preference for the Malinois persists as a long-term trend the police and military will in effect come to have virtually their own distinct breed, with much less civilian involvement. The fact that the Malinois is so similar in general appearance to the early German Shepherds seems to have prevented a surge in popularity among the general public similar to that of the Doberman or Rottweiler, both of which were propelled to the top in popularity largely because of a strikingly new, bold appearance and the German promotional genius. This lack of civilian popularity would seem to have been a blessing in disguise, for neither the Doberman nor the Rottweiler have gone beyond image to significant numbers in actual police or military service.

The other breeds which historically played a role in police service over the years – such as the Doberman Pincher, Giant Schnauzer, Bouvier des Flandres and Rottweiler – have ceased to be relevant as practical police breeds, and are unlikely ever again to serve in significant numbers.

Until about 1980 Schutzhund was directly under the control of the German working dog community through the SV rather than national or international all breed control; rules and judging standards were in general maintained at a high level. IPO was in these earlier years much more of a peripheral, amateur sport oriented program in nations such as France and Belgium where the elite dogs were on ring sport fields. The convergence of the rules and the recent elimination of Schutzhund has been much more in line with the IPO heritage, and represented an important reduction in the influence of the more serious, police oriented training community. Instead of evolving to emphasize enhanced performance in practical aspects for police service, such as longer distance engagements, call outs on remote pursuits and search exercises demanding initiative from the dog and relating to practical police operations, the program has been evolving into tracking obedience, trick obedience and protection obedience where exercises and especially judging expectations irrelevant to actual police service are increasingly the essence of the trial.

Much of the success of the police dog in Europe has been the consequence of cooperation between the police canine community and civilian trainers and breeders, making good dogs of varying levels of training from green pup to certified police dog available at relatively reasonable prices, as exemplified by the Dutch KNPV program. The gradual evolution of Schutzhund into IPO has exacerbated the separation between police and FCI/SV breeding and training, a trend that has gone hand in hand with the emergence of the Malinois as the preeminent police dog. In America, for historical reasons, this spirit of cooperation and community failed to materialize. Police handlers, trainers and administrators in general have very little contact with the European oriented sport programs such as IPO or Ring, and virtually all of it informal, that is individual police trainers or handlers participating on their own time in sport training activities. In contrast to the open KNPV trials in Holland, American police trials and organizations are generally closed to civilians, and police participation in civilian organizations is minimal and unofficial.

While European traditions have prospered based on a flourishing domestic breeding and training culture, America has been dependent on European dogs, often obtained through brokers. The cost of the middleman and transport across an ocean has been significant, but the broker evolved as the pragmatic solution. Police agencies have and sometimes still do send over experienced trainers to purchase dogs, but this is a great expense in terms of time and travel, and even the best police trainer has difficulty in knowing the rapidly varying European lines, where the appropriate dogs are and what the current price structure is. For the police administrator a reputable broker can be the practical choice, provide good dogs as needed at a price reflecting the cost of the service but on the whole reasonable.

In an ongoing relationship the better brokers come to understand the type of dog likely to succeed in a particular department, as there can be significant difference in the appropriate intensity of the dogs according to the experience of department trainers and handlers. The experienced broker can line up dogs according to departmental needs and expectations and stand behind his product, that is, replace dogs which do not work out, even in the occasional instance where the problem might be more the situation than the dog. There are of course dishonest and incompetent people entering the dog brokering business, and the established people do not have to cut corners to make the sale; it is as always a matter of buyer beware.

There are important intangible disadvantages to the imported dogs beyond the cost of overseas transport and the services of the broker. When you buy a dog from Europe all you get is a dog – police handlers and trainers do not gain access to the knowledge and experience of the breeders and trainers, which could contribute so much to effective utilization. If there were local breeding and training communities to supply young dogs the potential police trainers and handlers would have the advantage of seeing the dogs in action with the original trainers, and better understand the breeding, selection and training processes. An active community of amateur trainers would mean that a significant number of police officers would have relevant training experience from civilian life, as young protection sport trainers in many instances tend to gravitate to police service.

Evolution of an effective, indigenous quasi-amateur police dog training and breeding community in America, comparable to the European experience, seems unlikely at this point in time. A small cadre of Schutzhund enthusiasts has gained little real traction over forty years, particularly since there has been virtually no interaction or synergy with the emerging police dog community. It would be very difficult to create a national training and breeding culture as a matter of top down policy, nobody knows how to formulate legislation mandating enthusiasm for local training clubs and instructing that police departments become willing and comfortable in participating. The Europe where this all began a hundred years ago was vastly different from today because of emerging middle and working class economic prosperity, exemplified by common automobile ownership, television and the internet, have transformed the fabric of society. This cannot and will not just replicate itself in America; to whatever extent we are to succeed in establishing more effective police canine utilization it must come through the evolution of commercial and training traditions and department programs adapted to American circumstances and needs; if we are to do it at all we will have to develop our own way. If effective traditions fail to evolve then usage of police dogs will stagnate or wither, as it has at various times in the past.

It is entirely possible that we are approaching a tipping point, where the century old European culture of amateur and semiprofessional breeding and training as the basis of police service canines becomes obsolete and fades from existence worldwide. Little else in modern society is on such an altruistic basis; the basic tenants of capitalism and free enterprise give little expectation that such activity

should persist over time. The truly amateur Schutzhund club in America, never very numerous or prosperous, is increasingly giving way to another model, one based on the business of a professional trainer providing dogs, training and guidance to clients, much as the golf course professional provides instruction to amateur golfers. Indeed, almost from the beginning the American Schutzhund movement was based as much in commerce as the amateur spirit, the purchase of a trained and titled dog was very often the path to becoming a player, an important person. For many it was a professional opportunity, the American entrepreneurial spirit trumping the European pride in the amateur status, the sense of doing something in life beyond money. In the larger view, American entrepreneurial opportunism has infected Europe much more effectively than the European amateur spirit has taken root in America.

Prior to the American Civil War manufactured goods were produced by individual craftsman in small shops. Firearms and watches, among the most complex items in common use then, were made one at a time, with the parts carefully adjusted to compensate for variations in the manufacturing process. The quality of the product was the direct result of the skill, passion and pride of the craftsman. The Industrial Revolution was largely a process of building products on a large scale by putting enough precision in the individual components to make them interchangeable; the skill of the watchmaker or gunsmith gradually gave way to the efficiency of the production line. Today virtually everything is mass-produced, and it is unimaginable that a single craftsman could build a modern automobile, camera or firearm beginning with the raw materials. For untold centuries the small farmer prospered according to his skill in breeding, training and working his horses or other draft animals, but because of mechanization, particularly the tractor, this has given way to larger and larger farms. The farmer was akin to the craftsman in that his success was to a large extent the result of his skill in acquiring, training and using his horses, and this did not easily scale up to several teams, limiting the size of the family farm. The advent of the tractor, and the demise of the horse, took away a fundamental limit on farm size, for tractors and related implements can become larger and more powerful almost without limit and thus enable one or a few men to farm enormous tracts.

The police patrol dog is one of the very few remaining essential commodities primarily produced by the skill, passion and pride of individual men, small-scale breeders and trainers. For well over a century this has worked well in most of Europe because from the beginning there was a community of such men, and because many police handlers were involved in amateur sport activities. But this has been a serious impediment to the growth of American service, because our police agencies have had to pull themselves up by their bootstraps at all levels, especially in knowing how to find and select dogs and train handlers. Our police administrators have typically been men who balance budgets and set up programs to acquire needed resources from reliable, cost effective suppliers. They are used to purchasing things such as squad cars and radios from competing vendors with well-established reputations, knowledgeable salesman and catalogs listing available products and innumerable options. But when the decision is made to acquire new or replacement patrol dogs there are no catalogs with neat lists of standard models, allowing the selection of a specific sort of dog, or ordering an arbitrary number of identical dogs, for every dog is different in ways that are difficult for the non-involved administrator to grasp and integrate into the purchase decision process.

To a significant extent the brokers and importers have helped to bridge this gap, provided the knowledge and connections to match up available dogs with suitable positions, but importing one dog at a time is inherently an expensive approach. Many brokers also produce litters and sell dogs varying in age and training, but the problem remains that these are derivative operations; the real breeding programs –

the years and generations of experience – remain in Europe. American distributors generally lack the depth of breeding knowledge and hands on training experience that is the long-term basis of a successful breeding program.

General dissatisfaction with this mode of operation is evident from the various breeding programs established from time to time by diverse government agencies, with varying degrees of success. Two current examples are the Royal Canadian Mounted Police breeding Czech line German Shepherds and the American military with their ongoing Malinois breeding program at Lackland Air Force Base. The key problem is the socialization and development of the young dogs; they cannot just be kept clean and well fed in kennel runs until two years of age, for each one requires individual human contact in order to develop a fully functional working dog character. The American program in Texas farms out the Malinois pups into volunteer homes for the critical early months, but depending on local volunteers does not scale well, that is puts significant limitations on the number of young dogs in the pipe line at any specific time.

The most difficult aspect of predicting the future of the police dog is the ongoing evolution of American society, especially our legal system. The police canine surge in America has largely been the result of our ongoing, all-consuming war on drugs. American incarceration rates are almost twice those of any other nation in the world, including Communist China, the primary reason being people imprisoned for drug offences, many relatively minor. It seems unlikely that we can go on spending more money on California's penal system than the educational system; it is simply not sustainable. Increasing numbers of Americans are coming to believe that just as it was impossible to prevent the widespread consumption of alcohol as we attempted through prohibition, it is also impossible to eliminate or even contain recreational drug usage.

The legalization and regulation of recreational drugs would have dramatic impact on American police operations, especially canine units which evolved primarily as an integral part of our war on drugs. Ever tightening budgets would cause police agency restructuring, with difficult to predict consequences for canine deployment. The substantial money from confiscation of automobiles and other drug traffic paraphernalia that today flows into police operational budgets would dry up. Police canine deployment would likely shrink to that justifiable by other services, such as building searches, explosive detection and crime scene service.

Over the past century there has been enormous expansion and evolution in police canine service. Twentieth century technology – vehicle based police patrol, modern firearms, ubiquitous communication (voice and digital), and computer networks linking agencies nationally and internationally – has transformed police service, especially canine applications. The police dog evolved as the partner of the isolated foot patrol officer on tough city streets, often without a firearm, who came to rely on his dog to indicate the presence of the potential adversary or criminal and provide physical intimidation and a fighting partner in a violent confrontation. In spite of incredible advances in technology, the dog has remained indispensable, but his role has evolved to put much more focus on substance detection and directed search. In spite of decades of research, no modern instrument has the detection and discriminatory power to identify hidden drugs or explosive material, and no practical alternatives for building or area searches have evolved or appear on the horizon.

Although evolving social conditions and deployment tactics – and amazing advances in communications, vehicles and weapons – have revolutionized police service the canine role has continually evolved and expanded. This noble service would seem destined to persist into the foreseeable future, continually evolving in response to changing real world circumstances, but ultimately based on the unique

blending of human and canine nature that has been the basis of the partnership between man and dog since the advent of civilization.

Appendices:

Konrad Most

I am a bit reluctant to engage in designating particular individuals as the "Father" of this or that, but if there is to be a Father of the police dog it must certainly be either Ernest van Wesemael, founder of the Ghent program, or Konrad Most. Forced to a choice between the two, my opinion would be Most because of the depth of his contribution and because he was hands on and academic as compared to van Wesemael, who was primarily an administrator rather than an innovator in training.

Most, born in 1878, had a long and active career. From the Biographical Note in the English translation of his book:

"Colonel Most was one of the world's most experienced and distinguished authorities on all types of dog training and a pioneer in the study of dog psychology. He started training Service dogs in 1906 while serving as Police Commissioner at the Royal Prussian Police Headquarters, Saarbrücken. For the next eight years he gave instruction to the Constabulary on the training and management of police dogs for all purposes by methods evolved by himself. In 1912 he was appointed Principal of the newly formed State Breeding and Training Establishment for police dogs at Berlin and carried out much original research in training dogs for Service personnel and for the tracking of criminals. At the outbreak of war in 1914, Konrad Most was attached to the Staff of Field Marshall von Hindenburg, Commander-in-Chief in the East, to organize and direct the use of Army dogs on the Eastern Front, and the following year was put in charge of the organization of all canine services on both the Eastern and Western Fronts. In recognition of his war service he was, in 1919, awarded a testimonial by the Prussian War Ministry inscribed: "To Capt. Most, creator of the Canine Service in the World War of 1914-1918." From 1919 to 1937 he was head of the Canine Research Department of the Army High Command, and during that period also acted as advisor to the Government of Finland on the organization of the Finnish Canine Services. He played a leading part in the formation of the Canine Research Society and of the German Society for Animal Psychology, both founded in 1931, and in 1938 was elected Honorary Life Member of both Bodies in recognition of his work on their behalf.

"From 1944 to 1947 Colonel Most was head of the Experimental Department of the Tutorial and Experimental Institute for Armed Forces' Dogs and Technical Principal of the North German Dog Farm, a center for the training of working dogs, their handlers, and the trainers of dogs for the blind. In 1951 he became closely associated with courses held in the Rhine Palatinate for the instruction of sportsmen in the training and management of hunting and tracking dogs for the purpose of improving their performances in the field.

"In 1954 – the year of his death, aged 76 – Colonel Most was awarded an Honorary Doctorate of the Justus-Liebig Technical College, Giessen, Hesse, near Frankfurt-am-Main. His manual *Training Dogs, A Manual*, first written in 1910, is the recognized standard work on the subject throughout Europe."

Most bred Dobermans under the kennel name *von der Sarr* in the town of Saarbrücken, west of Stuttgart on the French border. Although the photos in the English edition of the book, taken by the English publisher, are German Shepherds, the photos on the original German edition included numerous Dobermans, and there is a profile of a Doberman on the cover.

Registration Statistics

Probably because of my professional training as an engineer, I am never quite satisfied with pictures and words, but rather need the numbers, the statistics, to solidify understanding. In the canine world, this means, on a country-by-country basis, how many pups are being whelped, which is usually taken to mean the number of registrations. There are, however, subtleties to this, for many dogs, indeed many very important dogs, are never actually registered in any studbook. Also, most nations at one time or another have competing registering entities, which means that a dog may be registered by one or the other, with both or with neither. Sometimes all of the pups are registered and named by the breeder, the usual European practice, but under the AKC the breeder only indicates the number of pups with litter registration, leaving it up to the purchaser to select the name and register the dog, which of course brings to the AKC that most desired of all things, the money. (It is said only half in jest that the AKC is in the business of selling made up numbers costing nothing for good hard cash.) It is speculated that some breeders overstate the number, so that they can have extra forms, "just in case." This of course tends to inflate the numbers.

Prior to the internet age yearly registration statistics were published in the various national and breed journals and other publications. Years ago *Dog World* magazine printed complete AKC statistics yearly, and sometimes had multiyear tables for comparison. Gathering this information together, especially if the desire is for many breeds, becomes a bit of a chore.

The internet age greatly simplified this, and although there is not a great deal of historical data in convenient formats, most major national entities such as the AKC and the various European FCI national clubs put yearly stats up on the internet, often for ten or more years in the past. Historically, the problem of gathering the statistics was that they were in many different places and formats, meaning that while the data was generally public getting it in the desire format could be a bit of a chore. There was no real reluctance to release the data routinely.

Beginning in about 2008 the AKC bureaucrats became increasingly hysterical and secretive. Rather than the actual numbers, they began to release only rankings, the actual numbers becoming virtual secrets of shame subject to the great head in the sands trick. Today the numbers are only released, one senses reluctantly, to the various national breed clubs.

These registration statistical tables are gathered from various public sources, mostly web sites of the particular kennel club. Great care must be exercised in interpreting registration information, as many dogs are not registered or registered with a competing registry. Under the AKC for instance, each litter registration comes with the appropriate registration forms, but unless the breeder or owner fills out the Dutch Police community, registration is unimportant, a dog is what he does on the field regardless of his background and thus generations of highly regarded dogs can exist without any paper trail other than the working trial certificates.

Malinois figures are particularly deceptive, for many KNPV dogs are without registration and NVBK dogs cannot easily be AKC registered. Numbers of non-registered dogs are of course very difficult to estimate. (In the area of 1000 new KNPV titles are awarded annually, mostly Malinois and/or mixes.)

American

The AKC ceased publication of annual registration statistics after 2006.

AKC Registrations for 2006:

| Breed | |
|------------------------|--------|
| German Shepherd | 43,575 |
| Boxers | 35,388 |
| Rottweilers | 14,709 |
| Doberman Pinschers | 11,546 |
| Collies | 4,711 |
| Bloodhounds | 3,343 |
| Airedale Terriers | 2,243 |
| Border Collies | 2,181 |
| Giant Schnauzers | 855 |
| Bouvier des Flandres | 808 |
| Belgian Malinois | 716 |
| Belgian Tervuren | 434 |
| Anatolian Shepherd | 380 |
| Briards | 284 |
| Belgian Sheepdogs | 266 |
| Black Russian Terriers | 143 |

| Year | GSD | Rottweiler | Doberman |
|------|---------|------------|----------|
| 1970 | 109,198 | 428 | 18,636 |
| 1978 | 61,783 | 2,439 | 81,964 |
| 1989 | 58,422 | 51,291 | |
| 1990 | 59,556 | 60,471 | |
| 1996 | 79,076 | 89,867 | |
| 2006 | 43,575 | 14,709 | 11,546 |
| 2007 | 43,376 | 14,211 | |

| | 1978 | 1977 | 1976 | 1975 | 1974 | 1973 | 1972 | 1971 | 1970 |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|---------|---------|---------|
| Dobermans | 81,964 | 79,254 | 73,615 | 57,336 | 45,110 | 34,169 | 27,767 | 23,413 | 18,636 |
| GSD | 61,783 | 67,072 | 74,723 | 76,235 | 86,014 | 90,907 | 101,399 | 111,355 | 109,198 |
| Labrador Ret | 43,500 | 41,275 | 39,929 | 36,565 | 36,689 | 33,575 | 32,251 | 30,170 | 25,667 |
| Golden Ret | 34,249 | 30,263 | 27,612 | 22,636 | 20,933 | 17,635 | 15,476 | 13,589 | 11,437 |
| Great Danes | 16,600 | 17,892 | 19,869 | 19,255 | 20,319 | 19,314 | 18,339 | 16,349 | 13,180 |
| Boxers | 13,248 | 12,951 | 13,057 | 12,063 | 12,552 | 12,319 | 12,002 | 12,617 | 11,483 |
| Airedale | 6,601 | 6,745 | 6,835 | 6,532 | 7,088 | 6,687 | 6,974 | 6,976 | 6,325 |
| Rottweilers | 2,439 | 1,878 | 1,406 | 952 | 883 | 840 | 563 | 508 | 428 |
| Bloodhounds | 1,586 | 1,578 | 1,446 | 1,334 | 1,337 | 1,252 | 1,231 | 1,041 | 839 |
| Bouvier | 1,301 | 1,204 | 1,053 | 834 | 735 | 585 | 511 | 367 | 348 |

German Annual Registrations

| Breed | 2017 | 2016 | 2015 | 2014 | 2013 | 2012 |
|--------------|------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| GSD | 9766 | 10202 | 10523 | 10470 | 11092 | 12786 |
| Boxer | 1559 | 1600 | 1614 | 1386 | 1637 | 1563 |
| Great Dane | 1095 | 1192 | 1245 | 1336 | 1445 | 1444 |
| Rottweiler | 1561 | 1633 | 1524 | 1566 | 1543 | 1409 |
| G Schnauzer | 847 | 1128 | 849 | 761 | 931 | 1003 |
| Hovawart | 836 | 927 | 818 | 863 | 858 | 1152 |
| Airedale | 753 | 784 | 821 | 792 | 814 | 764 |
| Dobermann | 491 | 583 | 478 | 635 | 597 | 604 |
| Malinois | 652 | 680 | 589 | 615 | 650 | 619 |

| Breed | 2011 | 2010 | 2009 | 2008 | 2007 | 2006 | 2005 | 2004 |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| GSD | 13,339 | 14,501 | 15,870 | 16,854 | 16,868 | 16,908 | 18,278 | 19,874 |
| Boxer | 1,579 | 1,783 | 1,681 | 1,735 | 1,864 | 1,722 | 1,836 | 1,669 |
| Great Dane | 1,336 | 1,488 | 1,609 | 1,699 | 1,905 | 1,685 | 1,807 | 1,890 |
| Rottweiler | 1,414 | 1,586 | 1,696 | 1,876 | 1,741 | 1,528 | 1,559 | 1,493 |
| G Schnauzer | 1,151 | 970 | 1,100 | 1,185 | 1,299 | 1,165 | 1,258 | 1,333 |
| Hovawart | 1,152 | 1,231 | 1,155 | 1,208 | 1,277 | 1,146 | 1,190 | 1,076 |
| Airedale | 890 | 997 | 930 | 958 | 1,080 | 1,054 | 1,206 | 1,208 |
| Dobermann | 616 | 802 | 704 | 773 | 580 | 757 | 750 | 804 |
| Malinois | 494 | 570 | 522 | 505 | 456 | 700 | 580 | 644 |

| Breed | 2003 | 2002 | 2001 | 2000 | 1999 | 1998 | 1997 |
|--------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| GSD | 19,882 | 20,352 | 21,372 | 20,872 | 23,839 | 27,834 | 29,824 |
| Boxer | 1,690 | 1,704 | 1,600 | 1,966 | 2,106 | 2,594 | 2,659 |
| Great Dane | 1,771 | 1,800 | 1,574 | 1,641 | 1,701 | 1,630 | 1,853 |
| Rottweiler | 1,511 | 1,488 | 1,431 | 1,501 | 2,192 | 2,716 | 3,168 |
| G Schnauzer | 1,222 | 1,190 | 1,161 | 1,137 | 1,171 | 1,494 | 1,998 |
| Hovawart | 1,286 | 1,069 | 1,098 | 1,289 | 1,293 | 1,479 | 1,479 |
| Airedale | 1,089 | 1,115 | 1,065 | 1,056 | 1,150 | 1,235 | 1,423 |
| Dobermann | 784 | 734 | 712 | 864 | 860 | 1,312 | 1,577 |
| Malinois | 446 | 490 | 428 | 397 | 440 | 421 | 385 |

| Year | GSD | Doberman | Year | GSD | Doberman |
|-------------|------------|-----------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|
| 2017 | 9766 | 491 | 2004 | 19,874 | 644 |
| 2016 | 10,202 | 583 | 2003 | 19,882 | 446 |
| 2015 | 10,523 | 478 | 2002 | 20,352 | 490 |
| 2014 | 10,470 | 635 | 2001 | 21,372 | 428 |
| 2013 | 11,092 | 650 | 2000 | 20,872 | 397 |
| 2012 | 12,786 | 619 | 1999 | 23,839 | 440 |
| 2011 | 13,339 | 494 | 1998 | 27,834 | 421 |
| 2010 | 14,501 | 570 | 1997 | 29,824 | 385 |
| 2009 | 15,870 | 522 | 1996 | 30,802 | |
| 2008 | 16,854 | 505 | 1995 | 29,805 | |
| 2007 | 16,868 | 456 | 1994 | 28,730 | |
| 2006 | 16,908 | 700 | 1993 | 27,648 | |
| 2005 | 18,278 | 580 | 1992 | 28,000 | |

French Registrations

| | 2010 | 2007 | 1970 |
|----------------------|-------|-------|------|
| German Shepherd | 11265 | 11025 | 9020 |
| Rottweiler | 1928 | 4150 | 1 |
| Malinois | 5726 | 4084 | 1270 |
| Beauceron | 2797 | 3231 | 622 |
| Boxer | 2137 | 2270 | 1128 |
| Tervueren | 1421 | 1232 | 441 |
| Doberman | 920 | 1120 | 840 |
| Briard | 428 | 672 | 317 |
| Groenendael | 682 | 611 | 636 |
| Bouvier des Flandres | 438 | 388 | 276 |
| Airedale | 232 | 308 | 160 |
| Giant Schnauzer | 192 | 303 | 46 |
| Hovawart | 242 | 263 | |
| Picardie Shepherd | 160 | 224 | 82 |
| Laekenois | 28 | 19 | 2 |

In France all Ring competitors must be registered with the national system, so the Malinois numbers are directly comparable to other working breeds.

Belgian Registrations

Breed ranking & average yearly registrations (1990-2001)

| | | |
|----|----------------------|-------|
| 1 | German Shepherd | 2,465 |
| 2 | Belgian Shepherd | 1,857 |
| 3 | Golden Retriever | 1,009 |
| 4 | Bouvier des Flandres | 965 |
| 5 | Labrador Retriever | 844 |
| 6 | Dobermann | 832 |
| 7 | Rottweiler | 820 |
| 8 | Bernese Mount. Dog | 743 |
| 9 | Boxer | 697 |
| 10 | Great Dane | 547 |
| 11 | Teckel | 519 |
| 12 | Beauceron | 484 |
| 13 | Briard | 414 |

Breed ranking and registrations in 2001

| | |
|----|-------|
| 1 | 2,032 |
| 2 | 1,774 |
| 3 | 1,031 |
| 6 | 764 |
| 4 | 910 |
| 11 | 505 |
| 10 | 512 |
| 5 | 793 |
| 7 | 690 |
| 14 | 353 |
| 12 | 457 |
| 13 | 410 |
| 21 | 256 |

The Belgian Shepherd numbers include the four varieties.

Many working Malinois lines are NVBK registered and thus would not be included unless dual registered.

| 2009 Belgian Registrations | | 2010 Belgian Registrations | |
|-----------------------------------|------|-----------------------------------|------|
| German Shepherd | 1363 | German Shepherd | 1608 |
| Berger Belge Malinois | 977 | Berger Belge Malinois | 1108 |
| Berner Sennenhund | 601 | Border Collie | 943 |
| Border Collie | 595 | Golden Retriever | 854 |
| Golden Retriever | 563 | Berner Sennenhund | 708 |
| Labrador Retriever | 544 | Labrador Retriever | 656 |
| Bulldog | 379 | Bulldog | 487 |
| Rottweiler | 367 | Bouledogue français | 486 |
| Bouvier des Flandres | 338 | Rottweiler | 455 |
| Great Dane | 289 | Great Dane | 415 |
| Berger de Beauce | 245 | American Staf Terrier | 332 |
| Berger Belge Tervueren | 243 | Bouvier des Flandres | 296 |
| American Staffordshire Terrier | 235 | Chihuahua Pelo largo | 292 |
| Australian Shepherd Dog | 191 | Berger Belge Tervueren | 291 |
| Dogue de Bordeaux | 162 | Chihuahua Pelo corto | 264 |
| Boxer | 150 | Whippet | 261 |
| Dobermann | 127 | Nova Scotia Duck Tolling Ret | 249 |
| Shetland Sheepdog | 123 | Cavalier King Char Spaniel | 249 |
| Collie Rough | 116 | Australian Shepherd Dog | 243 |
| Berger Belge Groenendael | 112 | Boxer | 237 |
| Berger de Brie | 103 | Dachshund | 230 |
| Airedale Terrier | 86 | Berger de Beauce | 223 |
| | | Newfoundland | 210 |
| | | Leonberger | 202 |
| | | Berger Blanc Suisse | 195 |
| | | Dobermann | 186 |
| | | Berger de Brie | 179 |

Netherlands Registrations

| | | 2004 | 2009 | 2011 |
|----|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 1 | Labrador Retriever | 5,107 | 3491 | 3529 |
| 2 | Duitse Herdershond - GSD | 3,461 | 2341 | 2131 |
| 3 | Golden Retriever | 2,137 | 1852 | 1806 |
| 4 | Berner Sennenhond | 1,774 | 1469 | 1518 |
| 5 | Boxer | 1,141 | 1052 | 877 |
| 6 | Cavalier King Char Spaniel | 1,069 | 976 | 730 |
| 7 | Engelse Bulldog | 946 | 921 | 780 |
| 8 | Border Collie | 887 | 838 | 898 |
| 9 | Staffordshire Bull Terrier | 877 | 1287 | 1325 |
| 10 | Bouvier des Flandres | 840 | 559 | 420 |
| 11 | Engelse Cocker Spaniel | 810 | 732 | 687 |
| 12 | Dachshund | 805 | 744 | 805 |
| 13 | Cairn Terrier | 689 | 319 | 376 |
| 14 | Duitse Dog | 670 | 496 | 470 |
| 15 | West Highland White Terrier | 662 | 394 | 317 |
| 16 | Belgische Herder, Mechelse | 644 | 505 | 463 |
| 17 | Jack Russell Terrier | 630 | 386 | 422 |
| 18 | Chihuahua | 606 | 437 | 1365 |
| 19 | Franse Bulldog | 583 | 770 | 988 |
| 20 | Dwerg Dashond, Ruwhaar | 578 | 539 | 630 |
| 21 | Flatcoated Retriever | 576 | 823 | 487 |
| 22 | White Swiss Shepherd Dog | 555 | 483 | |
| 23 | Bordeaux Dog | 548 | 498 | 511 |
| 24 | Rhodesian Ridgeback | 536 | 541 | 794 |
| 25 | Dwergschnauzer | 526 | 512 | 417 |
| | TOTAL | 49763 | 43887 | 43226 |

NHSB/Dutch Pedigree Book 2011

| Breed | Pups | Import | Total |
|--------------------------------------|------|--------|-------|
| Belgische Herdershond, Groenendaeler | 172 | 9 | 181 |
| Belgische Herdershond, Laekense | 96 | 2 | 98 |
| Belgische Herdershond, Mechelse | 425 | 38 | 463 |
| Belgische Herdershond, Tervuerense | 264 | 7 | 271 |

These are NHSB or Dutch Kennel Club records, many Malinois and Malinois cross breeds competing in KNPV police trials are not registered and thus not included.

Dutch 2011 Registrations, puppies & imports

| | |
|---------------------------------|------|
| Labrador Retriever | 3529 |
| German Shepherd | 2131 |
| Golden Retriever | 1806 |
| Berner Sennenhond | 1518 |
| Chihuahua | 1365 |
| Staffordshire Bull Terrier | 1325 |
| Franse Bulldog | 988 |
| Border Collie | 898 |
| Boxer | 877 |
| Dachshund | 805 |
| Rhodesian Ridgeback | 794 |
| Engelse Bulldog | 780 |
| Cavalier King Charles Spaniel | 730 |
| Engelse Cocker Spaniel | 687 |
| Dwergdashond, ruwhaar | 630 |
| Zwitserse Witte Herdershond | 582 |
| Stabyhoun | 512 |
| Bordeaux Dog | 511 |
| Flatcoated Retriever | 487 |
| Newfoundlander | 472 |
| Duitse Dog, alle kleuren | 470 |
| Belgische Herdershond, Mechelse | 463 |
| Rottweiler | 454 |
| American Staffordshire Terrier | 453 |
| Beagle | 444 |
| Shih Tzu | 425 |
| Cane Corso | 422 |
| Jack Russell Terrier | 422 |
| Bouvier des Flandres | 420 |
| Bullmastiff | 417 |
| Belgische Herder, Tervuerense | 271 |

Some breeds omitted beyond this point:

| | |
|---------------------------------|-----|
| Belgische Herder, Groenendaeler | 181 |
| Airedale Terrier | 156 |
| Hovawart | 155 |
| Dobermann | 152 |
| Bearded Collie | 146 |
| Duitse Staande Hond Korthaar | 145 |
| Briard | 144 |
| Hollandse Herdershond, korthaar | 144 |
| Sint Bernard, kort- en langhaar | 130 |
| Beauceron | 85 |
| Hollandse Herdershond, langhaar | 85 |
| Riesenschnauzer | 71 |

Glossary

American Organizations

| | |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AKC | American Kennel Club |
| ATTS | <i>American Temperament Test Society</i> (Practically nonexistent today.) |
| AWDF | American Working Dog Federation |
| CKC | Canadian Kennel Club |
| PSA | Protection Sports Association - American trial giving organization. |
| USCA | <i>United Schutzhund Clubs of America</i> (a German Shepherd Club) |
| WDA | Working Dog Association, German Shepherd organization affiliated with the GSDCA |
| GSDCA | German Shepherd Dog Club of America (AKC Affiliated) |
| NAWBA | North American Working Bouvier Association |
| NASA | North American Working Dog Association (No longer in existence) |

European Organizations

| | |
|------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| FCI | <i>Federation Cynologique Internationale</i> , International Canine Federation, the predominant canine administrative organization throughout the world with the exception of England, Canada and the United States |
| SRSH | <i>Societe Royale Saint-Hubert</i> Belgian national canine organization, FCI affiliated |
| KCB | <i>Kennel Club Belge</i> , Belgian national canine organization, not FCI affiliated |
| SCC | <i>Societe Central Canine</i> , French national canine registration organization. |
| NVBK | <i>Nationaal Verbond der Belgische Kynologen</i> Belgian non-FCI National Ring Trial & Registration Organization |
| FNCB | <i>Fédération Nationale des Cynophiles Belges</i> French name for NVBK |
| KNPV | <i>Koninklijke Nederlandse Politiehond Vereniging</i> Royal Dutch Police Dog Association |
| SV | <i>Verein fur Deutsche Schaferhunde</i> , German Shepherd Club in the German motherland. |
| WUSV | World Union of German Shepherd Clubs |
| VDH | <i>Verband fur das Deutsche Hundewesen</i> German kennel club, equivalent to the AKC |
| DVG | <i>Deutscher Verband der Gebrauchshundsportvereine</i> German Schutzhund Sports Association for Police & Protection Dogs |
| ADRK | Rottweiler Club in Germany |

North American Titles

Usually there is both an AKC and a CKC version.

| | |
|-----|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| CD | Companion Dog, an obedience title |
| CDX | Companion Dog Excellent |
| UD | Utility Dog |
| TD | Tracking Dog |
| OFA | <i>Orthopedic Foundation for Animals</i> , hip evaluation |

European Titles

| | |
|-------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| CQN | Certificate of Natural Qualities – Belgian working test, prerequisite for the Belgian Championship |
| KNPV | <i>Koninklijke Nederlandse Politiehond Vereniging</i> Royal Dutch Police Dog Association "met lof" means with honors. |
| IPO | <i>Internationale Prüfungsordnung</i> FCI version of Schutzhund. |
| SchH | Schutzhund |
| CACIB | <i>Certificat de' aptitude au championnat international de beaute</i> FCI conformation show point designation. |
| CACIT | <i>Certificat de' aptitude au championnat international de travail</i> FCI Certificate of achievement of championship in work |

European Registration Books

| | |
|-------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| LOSH | Livre de Origines Saint-Hubert Belgian studbook, |
| ALSH | Annexe au livre de Saint-Hubert Supplementary or provisional Studbook of Saint-Hubert |
| NHSB | Nederlands Hondenstamboek Netherlands: studbook of Raad van Beheer. |
| DSaZB | The German Registration designation |

Dutch Hip Condition Ratings

These appear on the Dutch pedigrees and KNPV certificates:

| | |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------|
| HD- | Negative evaluation, that is free of dysplasia. |
| HD/Tc | Intermediate between negative and light positive. |
| HD+- | Light positive. |
| HD+ | Positive evaluation for hip dysplasia |

Raad van Beheer Dutch equivalent of the American Kennel Club.

German Terminology

| | |
|------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| HGH | Herdengebrauchshund (Herding Dog) |
| PH | Polizei Hund (Police Dog) seen on older GSD pedigrees |
| KrH | Kriegshund (War dog) |
| FH | Fahrtenhund (Tracking Dog) |
| DH | Diensthund (Service dog) |
| PDH | Polizei Dienst Hund (Working Police dog) |
| PSP | Polizeischutzhundprüfung (Police protection dog) |
| SV | Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde, the German GSD mother club. |
| BSP | Bundessiegerprüfung - GSD German National IPO Championship |
| BSZS | Bundessieger-Zuchtschau World Championship, yearly GSD |
| ZPr | Zuchtpruefung breed survey, recommendation for breeding |

| | |
|-------------|-----------------------------------|
| Angekoert | Recommended for breeding |
| Rüden | Male dog |
| Hündinen | Female dog |
| Bundesieger | Annual IPO or Schutzhund Champion |
| Körung | SV Breed survey. |

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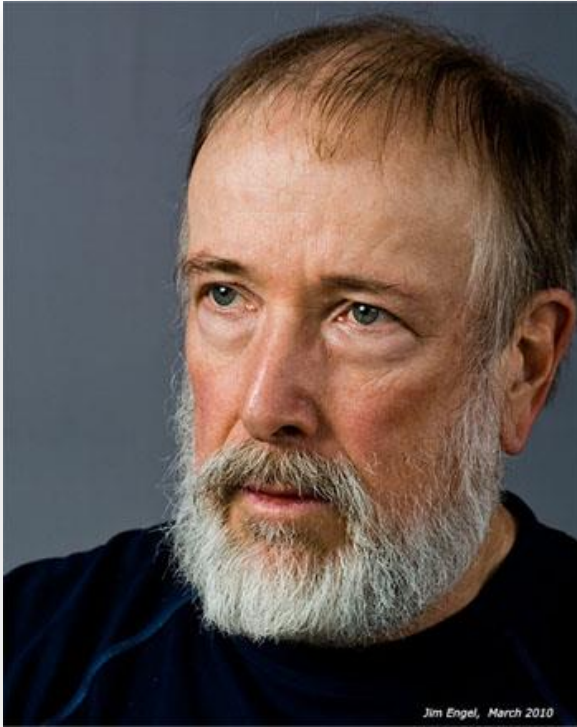
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About the Author



I suppose my canine world persona goes back to the days of my monthly *Dog Sports* magazine column, in the later 1980s. Not everybody loved me, but even those who did not turned to my column first to see what it was that they were going to be angry about. Context is important here, before the internet all one really had access to was the *Schutzhund USA* magazine every couple of months and *Dog Sports*, so a monthly column got you a whole lot of attention. Quite a few articles also appeared in *Dog World*.

Now I know all of this is going to sound a whole lot like bragging, so to keep it real let us start out with what I am not. For one thing, I am not a top-level protection dog training helper; simply started too late and was never strong enough or quick enough to aspire to excellence. Did some club level training, worked a trial or two years ago but was always ready

to hand the sleeve over to a better guy.

Nor am I an especially big deal trainer or handler; was always an amateur with a full time career, which tends to limit the number of dogs you wind up working; worked with too many real experts not to know my limitations. But we still did manage to take home the trophies, and all of my dogs were owner trained, many born on the floor of our kitchen or whelping room.

A great deal of time was spent in Europe, in the Netherlands training with a KNPV trainer and judge, and in Belgium. In Belgium there was a little bit of work in the old style Ring jacket, just barely enough to know I was out of my element; but certainly a learning experience. I have traveled far to see the best, the Cup of France in French Ring, the champion of Belgian Ring in a regular trial, many KNPV trials, IPO and Schutzhund many times in the Netherlands and Germany.

Professionally, I hold an MS in Electrical Engineering from Purdue University and spent many years in the communications industry with Motorola, primarily with police and public safety radio systems. Had some fun, did major technical presentations as far away as Australia and picked up a few patents along the way.

I have trained four Bouviers to Schutzhund III, three of which also became AKC champions of record and one achieved the advanced FH level in tracking. I was North American working champion for my breed four times and reserve champion several more. I have taken a dog to compete in the Bouvier Championships in the

Netherlands. We have shown dogs at the Schutzhund III level from California to Maine, from Florida to Canada and in Europe. I have competed in USCA regional championships.

Many dogs from our breeding have Schutzhund titles, other working titles including Bouvier working champion and held numerous AKC conformation championships. My old Leah was Schutzhund III, Bouvier working champion, AKC conformation champion and the top group-winning female in the AKC show ring in 1984.

Our Bouvier book was the American breed book of the year and is still the standard of comparison worldwide. It sold many thousands of copies throughout the world. I have conducted training seminars for Bouvier groups from Oregon to Florida; instructed beginning obedience classes in a club situation; and sometimes consult on problem dogs in my breed. There were various political offices over the years; I was for instance the founding and longtime secretary of the AWDF, the *American Working Dog Federation*.

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