



AWDF, Stillborn American Elite

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Contents

Click to go to the page

<i>Euphoria</i>	1
<i>Reality</i>	2
<i>New Normal</i>	3
<i>Perspective</i>	4
<i>DVG</i>	4

Euphoria

The expulsion of USCA from the AWDF in October of 2018 and the subsequent prohibition of SV judges serving USCA trials by the FCI in December of 2019 created an aura of euphoria and vindication among those perceiving themselves as the emergent American elite, that is Anne Camper, Queen Anne herself, her minions, as in Chrissie Smith, the DVG, illicit German intruders, and the alternate, as in defunct, breeds, the seven dwarfs.

[Glossary](#) [Background](#) [The Other Breeds](#)

A brave and bright new era for the American working dog seemed imminent, free of onerous domination by evil German Shepard empires, particularly USCA. The FCI, self-declared Supreme Authority of the Canine World, had ridden into town, pinned on their tin star and cracked the whip to once and for all exert rightful authority, in particular asserting that all canine matters—judge appointments, registrations, breed standards and international assignments—were to be according to their pleasure and with their consent. A national club, such as SV or USCA, could perhaps be granted a bit of latitude, some options, in providing their pleasure: groveling was always necessary and appropriate but seldom sufficient to permit the carrying on of their own international breed affairs. Diligence in putting firmly back into place those arrogant enough to rise above their station was seen as a perhaps disagreeable but nevertheless necessary part of their supreme burden. No entity in the canine world was to be beyond their authority; there most certainly would be no toleration of breed specific aggregations, as in the WUSV, bypassing the grasping FCI bureaucrats by dealing directly with one another. The fact that the FCI is run by and for a gang of conniving second rate third world dilettantes in gross violation of European trade law did not seem to have mattered; clearly they perceived themselves as far beyond the reach of laws for mere mortals.

The crowning of the AWDF by FCI as the supreme authority of the Americans, at least as pertaining to working affairs, was in their minds clearly imminent. USCA seemed destined to crawl before them and lay prostrate, pleading for forgiveness in order to be granted the privilege of SV judges. After sufficient chastisement they were to be placed under the AWDF GSD "umbrella" conjured by little Jimmy Honda and four of his closest Hawaiian sport friends. They were destined, after rehabilitation to Mr. Honda's satisfaction, to pay dues according to their membership but have no direct representation, no seat at the bountiful AWDF/FCI table. A large reinstatement payment as penance for their many sins seemed likely and most appropriate. Revenge was to be sweet. That the AKC also had the illusion of supreme authority did not seem to matter, was a wrinkle that could somehow be ironed out later.

Reality

Or so the world seemed at the dawn of the year 2020. But it was delusion, a bubble destined to burst, for underlying, inexorable realities persisted which would inevitably reassert themselves. Queen Anne, her fifteen minutes spent, along with Lil Chrissie, Wildmoser, Hoadley and all the other conniving dilatants would fade into irrelevance.

But the real losers were to be the members of the AWDF breed clubs whose leaders had imprudently squandered a last slim hope of relevance, revealed themselves once and for all as poorly led, dysfunctional and irrelevant, destined, with the exception of the Malinois, to preside over a final slide into oblivion of once credible working breeds. Their legacy, which they themselves spawned, is to be eternal shame. [More](#)

These alternate breed clubs had long been living on borrowed time. The Bouvier web page was still touting a 2015 working championship, the Pit Bull site, unchanged for years, has gone dark. Jimmy Honda with his sham club was representing the German Shepherd. The Cane Corso club has been replaced by Annie Wildmoser's newly conjured fake club. In total they had been running perhaps ten trials a year, some only at an annual championship, others without anything in recent years. Even with the illicit, by FCI law, DVG trials the total was running under 50 a year as compared to 300 for USCA.

Having taken and shrugged off the FCI's best shot USCA remains strongly predominant in terms of history, membership, titles, trials, credibility and international stature. There is no denying that they would have seen a bit of a rough patch had the FCI ban on SV judges stood, but in spite of any adversity they would have eventually prevailed. It would have resulted in a smaller and bleaker American working dog scene, but they would have been the last and likely only one left standing.

Adversity can precipitate a live and prosper or die in humiliation crisis, and it can hang by a thread. When the FCI ban came down the SV bureaucrats immediately, without consulting Dr. Messler, threw in the towel of surrender, issued a directive shutting off SV judges as of January 1, 2020. Had Messler acquiesced it would have emasculated the WUSV, rendered them little more than an innocuous public relations ploy.

But Messler did not falter, but rather immediately repudiated the surrender. WUSV member club leaders, led by Rodrigo Gonzalez, secretary general of *Real Club Espanol del Perro de Pastor Aleman*, the Spanish WUSV club, and Vadim Plotsker, USCA president, appealed to the Dortmund District Court in Germany on grounds of restraint of trade and in February prevailed, with a final definitive ruling in September. The FCI strangle hold had been broken and the WUSV had emerged united and energized, the table set for decades of prosperity. [Here, More](#)

The primary winner in this struggle has been USCA, which has come into its own, stepped to center stage in world canine affairs. As the founding, predominant and most vigorous American national entity they would have prevailed and endured in any event. But the emasculation of the FCI and the empowerment of the WUSV has marked the advent of a new era. The USCA bond with senior WUSV leadership, forged in the fire of crisis, once and for all precludes concern for conniving FCI bureaucrats, pathetic AWDF pretenders or anyone else. Their prominent role in the newly vigorous WUSV provides all the credentials they need, they stand vindicated, enabled and firmly established in the international German Shepherd community. This is much to the credit of Mr. Vadim Plotsker.



New Normal

The media babblers incessantly inquire as to when all of this is going to wind down, want to know when normal will resume. The losers want to make up and be friends. But the prevailing normal, things as they had been, is gone, squandered by the hubris, stupidity and avarice of Camper and the AWDF clubs. The AWDF is dead. It may take time for the carcass to bloat and rot away, but the vitality and utility have vanished.

The real question is what is to come.

USCA members, particularly those focused on training and trialing with scant notice of internet drama, will carry forward just as they always have without a ripple of concern. USCA as a whole has emerged vindicated, more robust, free of onerous AWDF entanglements and with a prominent place on the world stage. Future relationships with other American breed clubs or possible AWDF successors will be entirely at their own discretion and according to their own requirements. At this point they have very little reason for sympathy for the plight of other breeds or programs which must now lie in the bed they have made.

Anne Camper was repudiated by the AWMA, the working Malinois club, losing her presidential office in November to Ivan Balabanov, the original founder. In spite of recent turmoil this club has a solid future; there will be a bit of a rough patch as they clear out the remains of the Camper minions, but if Balabanov takes his office seriously and exerts leadership the future will be bright.

Camper did retain her AWDF office, but it was through absurd, even comic, changes to constitution and by-laws; she actually was able to vote for herself with the same weight as one of the member clubs. But it is a hollow victory, for AWDF is dead in the water. The member clubs have squandered their last small chance at redemption by not casting her out.

It is to be a much bleaker world for those with the other breeds. In previous years they could train with the local club they found most compatible and convenient and with any of the AWDF score books enter virtually any trial, local or national. Now not so much. DVG America score books will not be recognized by USCA, immediately precluding entry to six of seven American trials. This is not going to change.

The picture is less clear for the other clubs, if and for how long an AWDF book will be valid at USCA trials is an open question and any further harassment from the dying AWDF could well jeopardize even these privileges. As a practical matter training and trialing with a USCA club will for most become the practical and viable option, and USCA membership will be convenient and cost effective. The melancholy reality today is that there is very little practical benefit to be had from membership in most of the AWDF breed clubs.

There still seem to be a few deluded enough to think in terms of a return of USCA to the AWDF, that we can somehow turn the clock back and go on. But USCA has no need and would see very little point in a renewed affiliation. The original interest for USCA in a national American all-breed club was pressure from the SV to line up with the FCI way of doing things so as not to rock their boat. To say the very least, SV enthusiasm for kowtowing to the FCI is ancient history.

In the unlikely event of serious conversations nonnegotiable USCA prerequisites would most likely include:

- Banishment of Camper and all of her minions.
- Expulsion of the DVG, and a commitment to no recognition of DVG score books by any member.
- Voting on all matters that gave real weight to the relative size of each constituent club in terms of membership and particularly annual trial count.
- A rigorous qualification protocol for all judges, which could be nominated by the individual clubs but would be vetted by a higher level entity.

The chances of this coming to pass would seem to be exceedingly slim. The best shot I can see for breed clubs serious about relevance and survival would be going to Mr. Alloway to see if he could possibly be persuaded to resurrect his incipient new national organization. I am told that with enough catsup crow is not really all that bad.

As a small sign of the new reality you will take notice that the FCI logo has quietly evaporated from the AWDF and AWMA web sites, perhaps a word to the wise on new realities has come down from on high.

Perspective

Our American perspective on the WUSV/FCI conflict and international GSD affairs in general tends to focus on our own concerns, primarily the ongoing conflicts between USCA and the AWDF. What we tend to overlook is that working dog affairs are of vanishingly small importance in the world of the FCI insiders, who connive and maneuver to reap the imaginary glory and profits of their ongoing ornamental dog circus; our concerns are but a very small side show.

Nations with a single German Shepherd club affiliated with both the FCI and WUSV tend to be relatively quiescent. There are of course the normal conflicts between the SV breeding protocols and the breeding requirements, or lack thereof, of the national registry. The United States, with both USCA and the GSDCA affiliated with the WUSV, after a forty year period with ongoing conflict today tend to cooperate and play nice. The primary reasons for this are the growing predominance of USCA and that neither GSDCA, focused on their traditional American lines, nor USCA, focused on training and trials, are seriously committed to the German style ornamental show dog ring. They have evolved a stable joint program for the annual WUSV IPO championship qualification trial and find that with this resolved there are no serious areas of conflict. While this may not be ideal for the purist of any stripe, live and let live, at least for the moment, seems to be working.

In general the FCI/WUSV conflict is concerned with show dog affairs, that is control of the various national conformation venues, particularly in nations with multiple and competing national German Shepherd clubs. The most serious conflicts have been in nations, such as Mexico and Spain, where the national FCI affiliated kennel club has expelled long standing WUSV clubs in order to set up their own more or less private GSD clubs, often going on to holding their own fake Sieger shows.

This complex and convoluted saga is covered in detail [Here](#).

DVG

The DVG has a long and convoluted history on the American dog sport scene, going back to 1975 when the Germans 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 experienced difficulty and its association with the DVG authorities in Germany came to an acrimonious end in 1979 with most of the clubs migrating to the newly formed USCA.

A little later, in the early 1980s, there was a second coming; as a result of strife a Florida group split off from USCA to establish LV/DVG America as an American affiliated geographic region (Landesverband) of the DVG in Germany. 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 and Tom Rose, experiencing severe differences with the USCA leadership. DVG presence 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. Although the DVG is a relatively large organization providing diverse training opportunities the number of IPO trainers, including those in America, is according to their web page about 2000, making them, Americans and Germans together, about half the size of USCA.

Forty years ago when all of this was going down it was a different world. None of us even knew how to spell FCI and there was no sense of a world order with established traditions, conventional protocols and definitive regulations. It seems entirely plausible that none of the FCI bureaucrats knew or would have much cared what the DVG working folks were doing in far of America.

But the legal and traditional principle of respect for national sovereignty, no organization wielding direct authority in foreign lands, was there and had been well established. When I was first in the Netherlands in 1984 the SV had been setting up local clubs, to the consternation of the Raad van Beheer, and it was being thrashed out in the Dutch courts. The SV seems to have gotten the message and became more rigorous in observing existing protocol and working with the Dutch through their national GSD club and the WUSV.

There is a perhaps subtle but nevertheless important principle here. USCA is an independent American organization which in time became affiliated with the WUSV, with leadership and administration in American hands. Ultimate authority rests with the American officers, who could conceivably break with the WUSV in the unlikely event of irreconcilable differences.

DVG America on the other hand was established as a German regional group (Landesverband) of DVG Germany intruding on American soil directly under the hegemony of the German officers. Ultimate real authority resides in Germany; in the event of differences the Germans would exert their will directly on their own subservient American based Landesverband. This is contrary to tradition, custom, the law and plain common sense. It has been tolerated because of an American aversion to rocking the boat and connivance and manipulation within the DVG and VDH, centering on Crista Bremmer.

The only way out of the DVG would be for those dissatisfied to establish a new all-breed national organization run by and for Americans. In today's reality they would be most wise to do so, for this would make them a natural candidate for a future American umbrella organization taking the place of the AWDF.

Today DVG America is in trouble. The long term adversarial, and recently increasingly acrimonious, interaction between the SV and the VDH, particularly the DVG people such as Christa Bremmer, is going to render the resumption of the live and let live attitude toward blatantly illegal American

presence of the DVG. Never is a very long time, but the likelihood of USCA resuming recognition of American DVG score books and judges would seem to be vanishingly small.

Jim Engel, Marengo, Copyright January, 2021

Background and Reference

Web presence:

[Schutzhund America](#)

[Ongoing FCI / WUSV Strife](#)

Reference:

[Glossary](#)

[Working Dog Organizations: Structure and Ongoing Conflict](#)

Articles of interest:

[Supreme Authority of the Canine World](#)

[House of von Stephanitz](#)

[AWDF, Stillborn American Elite](#)

[Emergence of a new Canine World Order](#)

[American Consequences of the WUSV Vindication](#)

[The Way Forward](#)

[Meltdown in America](#)

Much more historical detail can be found in my police dog book:

[**The Police Dog: Evolution, History and Service**](#)