

THE UTILITY SOURCE



**NORTH AMERICAN VERSATILE HUNTING DOG ASSOCIATION
SAN DIEGO CHAPTER**

VOLUME 5 ISSUE 2

SEP. 2011

Presidents Message

September is here and our thoughts now turn from summer to fall. Fall means a lot of new activities for us all: School is back in session, vacations are over and of course hunting season starts! I am beginning to hear a lot of plans being made for fall hunting trips. I hope your training has paid off and you have a great time with your dog.

The club is still in full swing as the foxtails go away and the weather starts to cool off. We have training days scheduled for September 11th & October 1st. Then we head to Wister for a great weekend camping event. For those of you planning on testing at the Inland Empire or Southern Califor-



nia Tests, please plan on attending the training days. We are here to help and hope to get your dog as sharp as possible for your test. Let us know what we can do to

help.

The Invitational Test is coming up September 15-18th in Stubenville Ohio. I will be there with Regina along with Juan and Carlos Hernandez, Brett Marek and Tim Dalton (if his new baby allows). Also joining us is Gabby Awbrey doing some gunning and possibly running Tim's dog if he can't make it. We have all been working hard getting ready for the test. It's been a lot of fun training with you. Good luck to everyone!

See you on September 11th at High On Kennels

Ericka

IN THIS ISSUE:

Calendar, Versatile Breed	2
Fiesta Island Training Report	3,4,5
UT Test: Heel Portion Guidelines	6
Sep. 11th training day	7
Oct. 1st training day	8
From the Field and Beyond	9
Articles of Interest: Keep Your Dog	10
Articles of Interest: GSP History	11-16
Articles of Interest: Pheasant Tactics	17-18
Back Page	19

TREASURERS REPORT:

Beginning Balance:	\$3,621.17
Income:	\$35.00
Expenses:	-\$187.00
Ending Balance:	\$3,469.17

ASSETS:

Boat, Signs,
T-shirts, Hats, Heeling
Stakes, 2 Shotguns, First Aid
Kits, Zinger Winger

Please send your dues, new membership applications, etc. to:

Ed Gebelein
2237 Calle Opalo
San Clemente, CA. 92673

Single membership \$25 Family \$35



SEPTEMBER 2011

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Future Test Dates

So Cal chapter testing
sep.24-25

Inland Empire testing
Oct. 8th-9th

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
				1 Dove Opening Day	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 Training Day: High on Kennels	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24 So Cal Chapter Test
25 So Cal Chapter Test	26	27	28	29	30	1 Oct. Training Day: Prado

Versatile Breed: Bracco Italiano

The Bracco Italiano is one of only two native Italian Gundog breeds, the other being the Spinone, and they both belong to the Hunt, Point and Retrieve Group of dogs. The Bracco is a classic and ancient breed with



pean pointing breeds. The Bracco Italiano (BI) originated in Italy and it is believed in most circles to be a cross between either a Segugio Italiano (a coursing hound),

paintings and writings about it dating back to the fourth and fifth centuries B.C, and is considered an antecedent of many of today's' modern sporting dogs, more specifically Euro-

or sighthounds brought to Italy by Phoenician traders from Egypt, and the Asiatic Mastiff or Molossus.

AUGUST 13TH TRAINING DAY

We Met at 8 AM in the parking lot then moved on to the east side of fiesta island next to the channel, across from enchanted isle. From there, handler and dogs alike dispersed into either field work or water work.

In Attendance:

Handler:

- Mark Miller
- Kirt Gilliland
- Brian Mahoney
- Bob & Jackie Smith
- Richard Thomas
- Greg Weiss
- Ruth Weiss
- Matt Moore
- Jeff Derbes
- Ed Gebelein
- Gary Willhite
- Sylvia Hansen
- Ericka Dennis
- Randy Miller
- Gene Cobb
- Fred Holt
- Art Shurtleff

Dog:

- Tasha
- Jager
- Moose
- Greta & Heidi
- Sarge
- Bit
- Ava
- Rody
-
- Rocco
-
- Yoli
- Regina
- Sarge, Oly & Zorro
- Julie & Patty
- Pearl
- Feisty

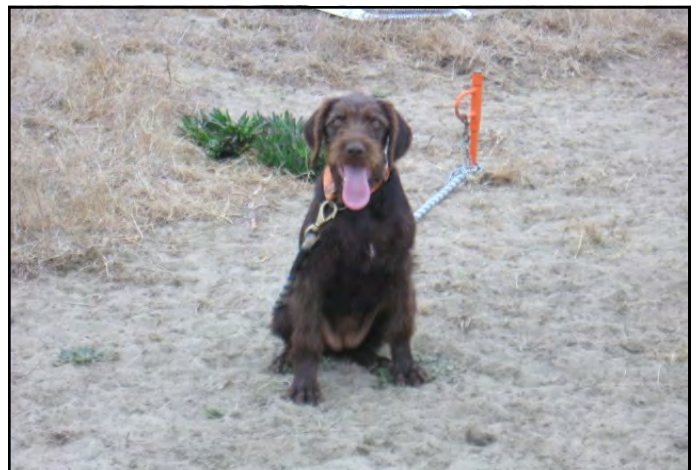


My Apologies if names are misspelled (especially the dogs)

MORE PICS FROM FIESTA ISLAND



MORE PICS FROM FIESTA ISLAND



Thanks to everyone who contributed Pics

New Guidelines from International Office

UT Heel Instructions/Guidelines

We have news about new instructions our Judges will be giving at the start of the UT Heel segment.

This came about during the 2011 Judge's Workshop with a good deal of discussion around what is expected of the dog/handler team during the HEEL portion of the UT Water series.

It seems instructions to the handler and what's been allowed has become somewhat inconsistent. Some felt corrections should be allowed before entering the Heeling stakes, but most did not feel this was appropriate.

The discussion during the Workshop resulted in a consensus of those present recommending NAVHDA adopt the following instructions and basis of judgment:

UT HEEL BEGINS WHEN THE HANDLER GIVES THE FIRST COMMAND AND ENDS AT THE BLIND

This and other key Workshop topics were passed on to all Judges and Apprentices through the Judge's Newsletter.

Following the Workshop, our Judging and Testing Committee discussed the suggestion and decided on one more step to be sure the majority of our total Judges felt the same about the guidelines. That step was taken in the form of a Newsletter/Follow up survey sent by email to all Judges. Those results were: 68.4% in favor of the wording, **UT HEEL BEGINS WHEN THE HANDLER GIVES THE FIRST COMMAND AND ENDS AT THE BLIND** and with 11.4% undecided, 20.2% opposed.

Based on all the above, our Judge and Testing Committee met by phone and agreed to recommend to the Executive Committee that NAVHDA Judges begin implementing these guidelines immediately, including the remainder of the Fall Testing season. The EC agreed by email this week.

So now our goal becomes informing everyone involved as soon as possible, and asking your help in passing along the agreed instructions for this portion of the test as follows:

UT HEEL BEGINS WHEN THE HANDLER GIVES THE FIRST COMMAND AND ENDS AT THE BLIND

Thanks for your help in implementing these guidelines going forward.

TRAINING DAY SEPTEMBER 11TH

High on Kennels

We will be meeting 8:00 AM Sep 11th @ High on Kennels in Santa Ysabel near lake henshaw.

High on Kennels

26920 Mesa Grande Rd

Santa Ysabel, ca. 92070

Training Days Schedule

- ◆ September 11th High on Kennels
- ◆ October 1st Prado
- ◆ November 19th-20th Wister and Finney Ramer Camping ,Training and Hunt
- ◆ December 4th Christmas Party (Location TBD)



All training site directions can be downloaded from the website: www.sandiegonavhda.com

TRAINING DAY OCTOBER 1ST

Prado Recreation Dog Park

We will be meeting 8:00 AM Oct. 1st @ Prado Recreation Dog Park

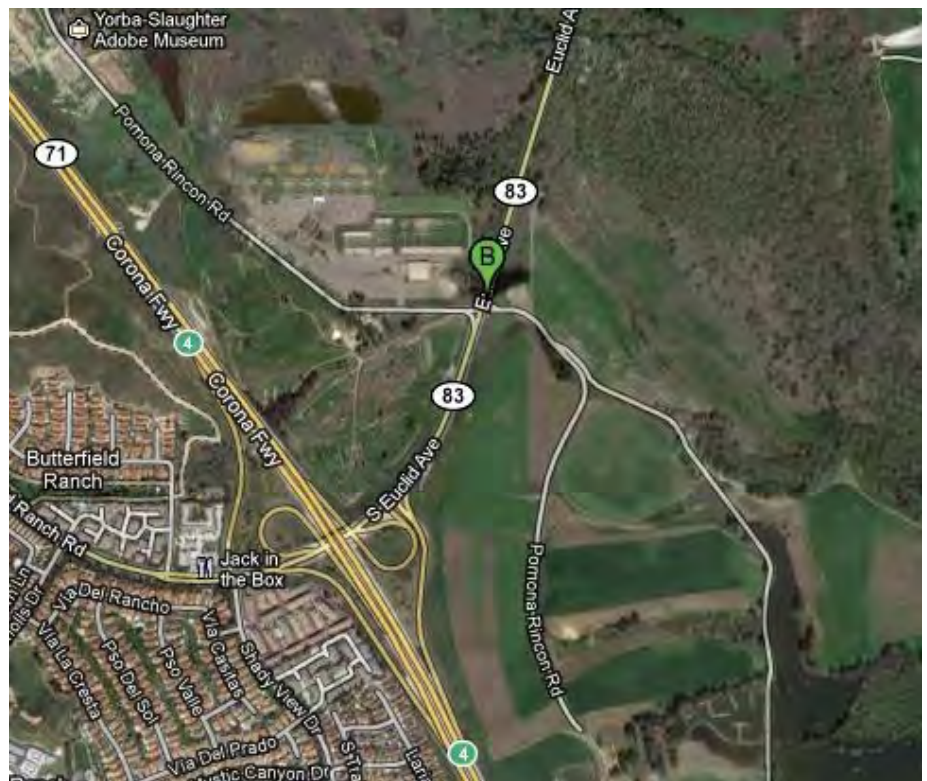
Prado Recreation Dog Park

17505 Euclid Ave.

Chino, CA. 91708

Training Days Schedule

- ◆ September 11th High on Kennels
- ◆ October 1st Prado
- ◆ November 19th-20th Wister and Finney Ramer Camping ,Training and Hunt
- ◆ December 4th Christmas Party (Location TBD)



All training site directions can be downloaded from the website: www.sandiegonavhda.com

FROM THE FIELD AND BEYOND

Alex Hermsen sends this pic of a grocery store in Grootfontein, Namibia.

Does your local Albertsons have one these on the wall?



ARTICLES OF INTEREST:

10 Tips For Keeping Your Dog Cool



by Jerry Thoms • August 10, 2011 • Gun Dog Magazine

- 1.** Always carry plenty of dog water in your vehicle and in your hunting vest, no matter what the apparent temperature. Haul water in one-gallon jugs and five-gallon cans for on the road and in a smaller, portable container for in the field. Also carry several pounds of ice in a chest-type cooler for emergency canine cool down.
- 2.** Never assume that natural supplies of water (cattle dugouts, ponds, or creeks) will be in the field (in hot weather these sources can dry up) or that the water found in these places is good (in dry spells, toxic farm chemicals can concentrate there or poisonous algae can grow there).
- 3.** Get water into and onto a gun dog at every opportunity. Wet down all dogs before, during, and after an exercise or training session. And of course, follow this same procedure on a hunt.
- 4.** When the breeze seems cool on your face, assume that on the ground where your dog is the temperature may be much hotter with little air circulation. So, keep your hot gun dog well hydrated on the inside and outside all day.
- 5.** When the weather is hot, hunt, exercise, and train your gun dog early or late in the day to avoid high temperatures. Usually the hunting is better than anyhow and your dog will always perform better in cooler conditions.
- 6.** Recognize the signs of canine heat stress, such as excessive panting, glazed eyes, ignoring commands, staggering, and falling down without an ability to get up.
- 7.** Treat all heat stress as a serious condition that can disable and may kill any dog no matter what breed, general health, or age. Assume that a heat stressed dog may need medical attention which includes an immediate trip to a veterinarian for an examination and treatment.
- 8.** A heat stressed dog needs to be immediately cooled off with water in its mouth (don't force a dog to drink if it doesn't want to or can't), on its ears, neck, belly, back and groin area. Squeeze water into the hair and down to the skin to assure that cooling contact occurs.
- 9.** When transporting a heat stressed dog in a crate or a dog trailer, make sure plenty of ventilation is available to keep the canine container from turning into a deadly sauna. Best of all, put a hot dog in the vehicle in front of the air conditioner.
- 10.** Put ice cubes in your dog's crate as an insurance policy that cool water will always be available when traveling down the road or sitting still on a hot day. Consider the use of commercially-made products specially designed to replenish lost liquid, minerals, and vitamins—sort of like Gatorade for dogs

[Click here to see this article online at Gun Dog Magazine](#)

GSP History

This Is the Shorthair

by Jim McCue

NOTE: The following article originally appeared in Gun Dog Magazine as a 2 part series, part 1 in March/April '89, part 2 in the May/June '89 issue. Many thanks to Jim McCue for sending it, and for his help in adding new features to this page.

In less than 50 years the German shorthaired pointer has become one of this country's most popular gun dogs. He earned that reputation gradually—without fanfare or ballyhoo—on his own merits. The shorthair is capable of a finished performance in a variety of hunting situations. He has a great nose along with much desire and ability, coupled with speed, stamina, style and guts. Intelligence and desire to please are two of his most valued assets. He is a near-perfect all around gun dog for the foot-hunter as he adapts his range to the cover and the terrain.

His versatility in no way interferes with his companionship around the home. His affectionate and playful nature make a big hit with the kids, his intelligence and shorthaired cleanliness is appreciated in the house. All pointing dogs owe that instinct to the Old Spanish pointer, directly or indirectly. His tendency to pause at bird scent (as does the hunting wolf, coyote and fox) was a great asset and much appreciated by the nobility of the day but his surly attitude and his plodding ways left considerable room for improvement. Whether the bird hunter used net, hawk or flintlock, he wanted a more pleasant and friendly companion. With the passing of "net hunting" he wanted a faster and more agile hunter too. Even before the shotgun, the bird hunter crossed the Spaniard with a couple of spaniel types (water and springer probably) and the setter was born. The English, Gordon and Irish setters all had their beginnings there. When the Old Spanish pointer was crossed with a mixture of foxhound and greyhound, the result was an English pointer with great speed but too much killer instinct and not enough nose. The setter was then crossed in many times to improve temperament, bloodhound was added for nose and more foxhound provided greater stamina, a slicker look and a still better nose.

While all of this was taking place in the British Isles, bird hunters on the Continent were developing their own pointing breeds. Any differences between these breeds depended, in the beginning, upon which scent hound breed the Spaniard was crossed with. All of them were some variation of the now extinct Hounds of St. Hubert, the eighth century staghound, cold-trailer and ancestor of all bloodhounds. The Old German pointer of the early 1700's was the result of one or more of these crosses all aimed at a better nose. There is little doubt that the Old German pointer's forebears were actually as much French as German and had originally come into the country as merchandise or as royal gifts from France and Spain.

With the social changes of the 1800's came great changes in hunting opportunities. It was probably at this point that the concept of a multi-purpose dog (Gebrauchshunde) first came into the mind of some thoughtful German huntsman. This name would be for a brief time—the German shorthaired pointer (Deutsche Kurzhaarige Vorstehhund). The last word of the name was dropped as soon as its significance became clear because the German shorthair (Deutsch Kurzhaar) would not be just a pointing dog any more. The same name problem would face the new breed when it came to America. The shorthair was the first of the versatile breeds and in time became the most popular of the versatile breeds in this country.

Although the smooth bore was the first firearm and came into existence in the 14th century, it wasn't until the 16th century that it had developed to the point that it was possible to take birds on the wing with it. It was another 200 years before wing shooting really came into vogue (1700's) and another 100 years after that before sportsmen had breech-loading, double barreled shotguns. As the shotgun developed so did the demand for the upland game bird specialists.

It was at about this time on the Continent that the right to hunt, heretofore reserved solely for the nobility, became slowly available to the middle class. The professionals, the merchants, teachers and the like, began to buy, or at least lease, hunting lands—preserves. This changed the whole complexion of the hunting game. A variety of game, both large and small, was available on these preserves. Much of it was hand-raised and all of it carefully managed and protected. In a matter of a few hours a German and his dog might hunt Huns and rabbits, a roe buck, a wild boar or a fox, and maybe some ducks. An Englishman –

even if he could participate in such a hunt-would require four or five separate specialized breeds to handle the job-including a bloodhound to trail his wounded buck.

The practical Teutonic mind wanted none of that. He said the man who had many dogs had no dog. He wanted a full-time friend, one that would be by his side at all times, a single canine hunting buddy with whom he could share all his hunting days afield and who would join him by the fireside at night as companion and protector. And to this day the shorthair is a better family dog than a kennel dog.

He wanted a dog who would put his good nose deep to the ground to trail furred game yet hold it high searching for the scent of Huns or a running pheasant, a dog with plenty of pointing instinct and birdy desire, one who would retrieve fur or feather from land or water. He must have the size, strength, build and courage for any hunting task. His coat must be short but dense, lay flat and have a firm, coarse surface texture to protect his body in heavy cover and to shed burrs. He must have a fine dense undercoat for protection from the cold. The fur of the head and ears should be shorter, thinner and softer. He must be good looking, intelligent, alert; he must develop early and be easily trained. He must have a friendly, pleasing temperament but be tough and sharp on predators. Many of these characteristics were enumerated early as goals to be achieved. The task the German huntsman set for himself was a tough one. It would require years of breeding and testing, of trial and error, of sweat and frustration-and for success, considerable breeder cooperation and not a little luck.

Right from the beginning, the goals shared by most shorthair breeders were pretty much the same. There was, however, no agreement on how that would be accomplished. There were two schools of thought on the subject. One group felt they could reach the desired versatility by starting with, and emphasizing, physical appearance, form and conformation. The other group felt the path to success lay by field testing for all of the desired working characteristics and breeding only the animals which proved to be the best "through efficiency to type."

The "form" group led by Karl Brandt and Samezki were nationalistic, wanted nothing British. They wanted to use only German stock. This group knew that to retrieve a fox over an obstacle, for example, the dog must stand taller, have a bit longer neck and a lot stronger neck and back. And they set out breeding toward that conformation, trying to get function to follow form. They favored the long, dangling, circular ears and the stopless or Greek profile as indications of a purebred German precisely because the English pointer's ears were small and tight, and his dish face had a definite stop. This small but vocal faction held the upper hand in the beginning and as a result progress was much delayed because many fine performing specimens were discarded because they failed to exhibit the "legendary" ancient German conformation.

The "function" group was led by Prince Albrecht zu Solms-Braunfels and Baron von Zedlitz. Solms was a pioneer breeder, had a fine kennel of pointers and setters (and some experimental breeds), pushed for the introduction of pointer blood. Zedlitz was a sports writer using the pen name "Hegewald" and was of the same mind. This met with considerable opposition from the patriotic, "form first" boys. It is difficult to know exactly what breeds produced the shorthair because of this conflict. In the beginning, many German breeders were secretive, intentionally vague and evasive about their breeding stock to avoid being labeled "Anglophiles." In those early days it was mostly talk and most of the discussion centered on the multipurpose dog to come, the pointer debate, what tests (field trials) should be set up, the strange results of various crosses and "what should we try next?" Because in the beginning pointing was about all one could count on, the pointing instinct seemed to be dominant in most crosses.

Everyone knew that bringing in pointer blood would be hazardous. The question was: would improvement in nose, pointing instinct and slickness be worth the loss in versatility? Pointer blood reduced trailing ability, dampened enthusiasm for water work and brought cowardice before predators. It decreased interest in retrieving and it thinned and softened the protective shorthair coat.

The Germans make a point of the fact that there is no English bloodhound in the shorthair but admit to the role of bloodhounds in shorthair development. There were plenty of bloodhounds (Schweisshund-scent dogs) around at the time and the German themselves were breeding three types. The French also had three different types-actually the French breeds seemed to have the edge in appearance but most all stood taller and were faster than the bloodhound. The French Gascon hound may have been used. He was the first tall, good-looking, smoothfaced bloodhound although he still had the long, dangling ears.

We read about as frequently as the "Bloodhound" error that it was the German nobility who originated the shorthair. Such was not the case. A study of those involved in the foundation of the breed reveals very few "high born." Most were middle class-those who had just gained the right and the wherewithal to own, or at least, lease hunting rights. The nobility error may have

crept in because of the later development of the Weimaraner by the Royal Court of the Weimar Republic.

It was the 1872-whelped, brown and white Hektor I ZK I (ZK, Zuchtbuch, stud book) still showing his Old German beginnings many generations back, who was dog Number 1 in Volume I of the German Stud Book. The Karl Brandt crew set the Breed Standards to withhold registration in the Stud Book to any dog lacking their idea of a good German head. And they often did just that, discarding many fine performers and slowing the effort toward versatility. It is no wonder there was a great deal of squabbling; the wonder is that the program survived at all. It almost didn't. Many of the early generations' experimental crosses produced little beauty and even less signs of suitability. Often those few which did show signs of suitability were not permitted to be registered. There was a lot of breeding and there was a lot of bucketing. Frankly, it was discouraging almost to the point of despair. Some did give up. Prince Solms withdrew from the Klub Kurzhaar because of the bickering although he did stay in dogs.

Fortunately the conformation boys finally got bogged down chasing stopless faces and long, round ears. Those breeders with open minds eventually saw the folly of "function follows form," finally saw the virtues of Prince Solms' advice to use the best dogs (of any breed) wherever they were found, test them in the field for all the desired characteristics, then use for breeding only those dogs which perform best in the field. In the beginning, do not worry about appearance, he told them. Forget about form, type. It will take care of itself with time. Eventually the Prince's admonitions were accepted, followed and appreciated. Years later we read (idiomatically) in the official Shorthair Studbook, Volume VI (1902), "The Type is evolved from among the breeding stock by continuously using the same dogs at stud that are most efficient in hunting." "Through efficiency To Type," it said.

Few realize how close we came to never having a Deutsch Kurzhaar. Thank God for the enlightened and dedicated few who hung on despite the odds against them. They will never know what pleasure they have provided generations of American hunters.

That great, rich river of inheritance flowed strongly throughout the breed, improving and strengthening it. The practical, good-looking, utility dog capable of excellence in all the hunting requirements of field, woods and water was no longer just a dream, it was a fact. The traits were fixed, the impossible had been achieved. And it was about this time that some of the best of those were being exported across the Atlantic to the USA.

From old studio photographs and dog-eared, family-album snap shots of German immigrants, we see the shorthair pictured as a family member in this country within 20 years of the registration of Hector I IVol. I, No. 1, 1872 German Stud Book I. But the real beginning of the breed in the United States came with the importations by Charles R. Thornton, a physician, of Missoula, Montana, starting in 1925. He brought in only the best-all top German-Austrian bloodlines were represented. By that time the versatile characteristics had become fixed in the breed. For the first time the hunting qualities of a number of different hunting breeds had been successfully fused together, melded into a single all-purpose hunting dog-the German shorthair.

In a 1926 issue of the American Field, Dr. Thornton discussed the new breed in some detail: "The coat is longer than our English pointer and very closely knit, resembling the coat of the hair seal.... They stand on strong legs and good feet, are short coupled, well muscled, deep barrel-shaped chest, characteristically expressive eyes and intelligent head; long, broad ears, regulation cropped tail; extremely elegant and smart in carriage and movement. On point they are strikingly beautiful. They begin retrieving as early as six weeks of age.... They are naturally staunch (on point) and require little or no training. On game they can give one a real thrill. They will point any kind of game that will lie to cover and tree those that flush and take to the trees, where, as a rule, they hark 'treed'. I've used them in packs on coons just that way. After once they start pointing they will invariably hack any other dog they see pointing, sometimes honoring from a distance of 150-200 yards, remaining absolutely steady until the bird is flushed. This backing instinct comes naturally and puppies need not be trained to honor.... As to speed and range they compare favorably with our English pointers and setters of the shooting-dog class. They seldom range farther than a quarter of a mile from the gunner. I have hunted them side by side with some of my fast Llewellyns and they invariably located more birds.... They hunt heavy cover with ease and eagerness, naturally adapting their range to suit conditions. As retrievers they are at home on land or in water and they will locate dead or wounded game in the heaviest brush or briar...." So spoke Dr. Charles Thornton, back when the shorthair was the new kid on the block.

In 1931 in a Nebraska brimming with pheasant and sharptail, quail and prairie chickens, a couple of hunting buddies, Ernest Rojem and Walter Mangold, imported a good pair of shorthairs with the help of Rojem's brother, Peter, in Germany. Six-month-old Claus v SchleswigKönigsweh and Jane v grunen Alder who was two years old and trained. Both were royally bred.

Walter Mangold was the postmaster at Bennington, Nebraska and Claus went to work with him every day. The dog's job was to ride the children around piggyback. Although he was a gentle dog, he was a good watch dog and no stray ever bothered him twice. In a Nebraska where summers were often over 100 degrees and winters to 30 below with 12-foot drifts, it took a rugged dog just to survive, but Claus met the challenge at every level. Walt said that he was a fireball on land and didn't even let sand burrs stop him and that they many times sent him through drifting ice for duck and he never failed to get the job done.

A year later a former German gamekeeper, Joseph Burkhart, of St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, brought in three outstanding specimens which will be found in most early U.S. pedigrees: Bob v Schwarenberg, Arta v Honreusch and Feldjager's Grisette. All of them proved their worth. From the second mating of Bob & Arta, Jack Shattuck got a pup he named Fritz v Schwarenberg, widely and successfully campaigned, he became the foundation of the Schwarenberg strain in the USA. Arta was sold to New York and there bred to Hallo Mannheimia, a KS Frei Sudwest son, recently imported. From that mating Joe Burkhart picked Treu v Waldwinkel who became one of the top all-time producers in the USA. Most of the early imports proved to be top quality and generally related. This meant that with only a handful of mates to choose from, every breeding-in the beginning and for several generations- just about had to be good linebreeding. For pedigree details, consult *The New German Shorthaired Pointer* by C. Bede Maxwell, published by Howell Books. Much of the data presented here comes from that source.

The action took place on a beautiful Maine lake in October in the late 1930's. The faint babble of ducks came to my ears while I was still in the woods. When I peeked out I could see them. There was a nice raft of ducks, more than 60 yards from shore and a good 200 yards down the beach from me. In that area there was a brown dog trotting by the water's edge coming toward me. I took my eyes from the dog to the ducks and when I looked back at the dog he was going away from me. While I watched he turned and came back toward me and then he suddenly disappeared. It was baffling.

Cutting back around through the woods until close to where the dog, now trotting back and forth again, and the ducks, now closer to the shore were, I saw the blind and recognized the hunter hiding there. I stayed hidden to watch. It was fascinating. This nice, dark brown ticked dog with a long cropped tail (no breed I had ever seen before) continued to trot back and forth several times-never apparently paying the slightest attention to the ducks- then return to the blind momentarily, then out again he would trot, each time a little further from the water. All the while the curiosity of the ducks, like a magnet, drew them closer and closer to shore, as antelope come to a waving flag-and they do! It wasn't long before the mallards were right along the shore. I couldn't believe my eyes.

At this point the hunter jumped up. The raft rose as a single duck, quacking loudly and clawing the air for altitude. Three shots rang out and four ducks, one a cripple, dropped out of the flock. "Fetch, Duke," the man hollered. The big brown dog raced for the water, leaped high and hit the water a full 10 feet from the shore and ignoring the dead ducks swam directly for the cripple which was very much alive. The duck dove and headed for the deep water with the dog close behind. The dog swam well (I later learned that he has webbed feet) but it took a good 15 minutes before the dog worked the exhausted duck back into the shallows and ran him down. Duke brought the cripple to hand, then headed out for the three birds which hit the water dead. On one retrieve the dog brought in two of the ducks at once. Only after bringing in the last duck did he shake the water from his fur.

"That's one hell of a dog, Lawrie, what is it?" I asked.

"It's a German shorthaired pointer. It's new to this country and I can tell you it does a lot more than point. It does everything. Smartest dog I ever owned and you know I've owned a few. This morning on our way to the lake we picked up two partridge and a late woodcock. All pointed and all delivered quickly and tenderly to hand. I use him on everything."

"Well, what's this thing with the ducks? I've never seen that before."

"Oh, that. It started back before the shotgun, in the 'netting' days. It's called tolling. The dogs were taught to lure the ducks into a funnel-shaped net trap. This shorthair picked up tolling so fast it scared me. They're very intelligent animals."

"How do they stand your rugged Maine winters-the short hair, I mean."

"No problem. 'Short' doesn't mean thin. This is no sparse English pointer coat. Feel that coat-it's heavy, dense, closely knit. Feel it, go ahead."

"It feels stiff, harsh to the touch-coarse."

"It is. It's tough-it's not the length of the coat that's important anyway, it's the texture and density that make the difference-arctic seals, for example, have short hair. Easier swimming-quicker drying. A long soft coat or a long wiry coat doesn't make the water a single degree warmer, they only mean more drag while swimming-ask the seal."

That was my introduction to the shorthair. But it was almost 15 years before I got my own-there was high school to finish, college, grad school, war, marriage, kids, apartments, et al. But I've made up for it in the last 35 years and although I enjoy watching all dogs work in the field, I never met a shorthair I didn't love.

The breed caught on quickly. Less than 15 years after Thornton's first importation, there were sufficient numbers to apply to AKC for recognition. The center of activity was in the MinnesotaWisconsin area, another indication the shorthair thrives in rugged country. The group had difficulty with the name. They wanted German Shorthaired Pointer-Retriever Club of America, Inc. AKC said, "No way." Pointers are pointers, retrievers are retrievers and never the twain shall meet. But the shorthair is more than a pointer and restricting him has not been helpful. Even many shorthair owners themselves, after calling the dog a pointer for so long, are unaware of the total versatility of their shorthairs. Because there was no other choice, the "German Shorthaired Pointer Club of America" became the name of the AKC Parent Club. The National German Shorthaired Pointer Association is the name of the Parent Club to the American Field. The word pointer, in both instances-as Vorstehhund had been in Germany-was the culprit. It is too restrictive; it has hampered the growth and development of the shorthair in this country.

At about the time I met my first shorthair in Maine the breed was moving into northern California too. In the San Francisco area at Saratoga, Don Miner, a professor of Banking & Finance at San Jose State, started looking for a shorthair because, as he said, "I heard they had a 'choke bore' nose, and I heard you could use them on everything and since I hunted everything that's what I wanted. My first shorthair, Faustina v Schwarenberg, I got out of a local bitch, Sox v Ammetal owned by a guy named Abbott who had sent her to Jack Shattuck's Rusty in Minneapolis to be bred. That was before Rusty had gained his Dual title. Anyway, Faustina was a nice solid liver bitch and she did have a 'choke bore' nose and she did hunt everything

"In 1946 three of us went up north of Tahoe in Carpenter Valley [in the Sierras] to hunt deer and I took Faustina [dogs were legal]. I wanted to see what she would do. I didn't know what to expect. We arrived the afternoon before opening day and after setting up camp headed out to get the lay of the land and stretch our legs. We left the guns in camp but we took Faustina. In just a few minutes we could hear her giving voice. She sounded like she was over a canyon or two. As we listened we could tell she was coming closer and closer. I figured she was running a deer. Was I surprised when a big black bear went flying by us with her in hot pursuit! I was able to call her off the bear-she was pretty well trained for only a year old. Anyway, we went on a little further and she slammed into a classy point. We kicked around in the brush and flushed a covey of Mountain Quail. Not more than ten minutes later she put two deer right in front of us. We could have taken both of them easily.

"The next morning we hunted the rim rock around Carpenter Valley. By noon she had pushed four bear- two of them cinnamons- right to us. Later in the afternoon I heard her baying again and coming down the mountain closer and closer. I thought she was on another bear when out of the woods right in front of us appeared a beautiful big buck not more than 50 yards away. I shot it through the neck and it dropped dead. Moments later she ran up and jumped right on top of the deer and mauled it a little before I called her off. We dressed out the deer and took it back into camp and under similar circumstances filled out other tags that evening. I don't know to this day if that's the way shorthairs are supposed to handle big game but it was great for us.

"Since we filled our tags early we moved down to Grimes in the Sacramento Valley to hunt pheasant around the old Goodwin Ranch- much in rice paddies. It was tough hunting, the dogs would be in water sometimes up to their bellies. Her coat shed the water well-dried quickly-and the long, sharp briars in that area didn't bother her a bit. It was great not to spend hours picking burrs too. We got a few ducks that day. She brought them in right to hand. I had never trained her; it just came naturally.

"Nothing is sharper than rice stubble; it cuts. It would literally shave the hair right off her face- her nose would be raw, her teats bleeding, but she never let up. This was tough hunting but she was tougher.

"I dropped an old cock pheasant that fell into a big brush pile. I sent her for the retrieve. She went right through the brush pile. I called her back and put her into the pile; she went right through again. I got disgusted and went into the pile myself-on my hands and knees. When I finally crawled out, there was Faustina sitting there with that big cock bird in her face. That's when I realized that even a year-old pup knows more about hunting than any human. That's when I realized that we had finally found the perfect dog for our way of hunting.

“Each year she learned more and did better. We developed a real bond between us. She was a part of our family. Only the Lord knows how much game, furred and feathered, I shot over her. She provided me with some great pups too. I enjoyed her friendship for almost four years till someone poisoned her. I found her limp body by our stream and buried it. The grave is still kept and marked. That was 40 years and many shorthairs ago-but there is still a very warm spot in my heart for my first and only Faustina.”

The shorthair is a versatile hunting dog, developed by the practical Tunic mind for the foot hunter whose way of life is the “mixed bag.” The upland specialist is the pointer; in the duck blind it’s the retriever; and on the trail, the scent hound. How incongruous the sight of a Lab searching the broad, open expanse of Saskatchewan prairie for sharptail, or an orange and white pointer shivering in a sleet drenched Maine duck blind. Yet the shorthair is a natural in both areas-and, indeed, in the woods and on the trail as well, if we chose to use him there. One of the great charms of the shorthair lies in his practical, utilitarian inheritance which permits him to join his master and family in all their hunting adventures. You need not hunt every spe-

[Click here to see this article online](#)



cies the shorthair can handle but it's nice to you have that option.

gundogs



Sneaky Pheasant Tactics

By Ron Spomer, Field Editor

Few birds are as easy to “program” as pheasants. While they can live seemingly anywhere from cornfields and cattails to sagebrush and swamplands, they gravitate toward agricultural edges. Find where any decent escape cover abuts cropfields and you’re well on your way to finding ringnecks.

Then all you have to do is hunt it correctly. Do it wrong and these feathered sprinters will run circles around you and your dogs.

A Pheasant’s Daily Routine

Timing is a big part of the equation. At dawn pheasants leave their nocturnal roosts—usually relatively short grass fields—and fly or walk toward preferred grain fields. Corn, milo, wheat, oats and similar grains are favored, but they’ll make do with seedy annual weeds, rose hips and similar “natural” fruits. So, in farm country where there are more than enough grain fields, you’re usually searching for those bordered by rarer grass, brush, cattails, bulrushes and CRP fields. Cover is the key.

The birds usually feed until mid-morning, then stroll or fly into cover near the field to rest up until their late afternoon feeding period. If undisturbed, they may stay nearby in the corn stubble

or weedy fencelines and ditches. Where heavily hunted, they are apt to run or fly as far as a mile to hide in deeper cover or any place they’re left alone.

So your game plan is simple: At dawn walk the short grass fields; after sunup, switch to crop fields; by midmorning, move to denser hiding cover. As hunting pressure increases by mid- to late season, move to really deep or isolated cover.

Help Your Dog Do Its Job

Here’s where the dog work begins. Nearly any old mutt is happy to run, sniff and quarter through any cover you direct him to, but it’s your job to keep him from wasting time in the least likely places. Work the most appropriate covers at the most appropriate times. There’s little sense in wading through cattails an hour after sunup or an hour before dark when roosters have taken their dates out to dinner. Remember to work into or across the wind to maximize the dog’s chances, since breezes carry scent.

Pheasants are notorious runners, so

it’s wise to push them toward habitat in which they are least likely to run—the long edge of a naked field, for instance, or the edge of a lake or river. Similarly, it’s good practice to nudge them toward narrow funnels or dense cover where they are more likely to hold until you’re close enough to shoot. Early season birds will probably hold in any cover until you get close, but a day or two of pressure is sufficient to encourage them to run, run and run some more. They won’t fly until you’d need a .270 to bring them down. So, you may want to teach your dog to hunt closely, no matter what, until conditions are right for birds to hold.

For example, if you and Billy walk a big CRP field 60 yards apart, encourage your pointing or flushing dog to quarter between you and perhaps 20 yards to either side as you drive the field toward smaller cover. Then converge on the smaller cover, pinching the birds into it, where they are more likely to hold until you’re in range for a shot. You’ll be

■ **Quick Tip** Don’t have a hunting buddy to serve as a blocker? No problem. Teach your dog to drive birds to you! I did this with my first springer until she’d hold position while I circled 300 yards around a covert. **When in position to intercept wild birds, I’d silently hand signal her to “hunt ‘em up.”** She’d either roust birds that usually flew over me, since I knew their escape routes, or force them to run right into me. The trick worked for pheasants and even ruffed grouse.

amazed to see wild roosters flush 100 yards or more ahead in big fields, but then nearly knock your hat off as they flush under your boots in a tiny patch of weeds at the end of a grassy waterway. It's all about using the cover to your advantage.

If the birds routinely flush wild or run excessively, try an old trusty tactic: Position at least one hunter at the end of a covert as a blocker and hunt toward him. Be extra careful with your shots. Dogs will often pin birds for you or flush them over the more distant shooter.

It also helps to keep noise to a minimum. Roosters will hear you walking, but yelling and whistling at dogs only spooks them further. Direct your dog with hand signals if possible, and encourage careful searching if your dog acts birdy but then gives up. Ringnecks have a way of burrowing into the skimpiest cover and hiding their scent.

Last December my pudelpointer trailed fresh tracks in the snow to the far side of a slough, then lost the trail before backtracking and slamming onto point not more than 10 feet from where I stood. The bird continued holding until I stuck my boot into its grassy snow hole. That's nothing new in "pheasantland."

A Sneaky Trick

One popular dog trick in great pheasant country is to surround a piece of cover with a few hunters and slowly walk toward the middle, keeping the dogs at heel as you nudge birds to the center. This might entail driving birds from several big fields so that they run or fly toward a central pocket of brush, cattails or other dense cover. Then the hunters surround the cover and send in the dogs. Flushing breeds are perfect, plunging into the densest hellholes to push out birds. Pointing dogs in these situations often come nose-to-beak with birds that refuse to fly until you wade in and give them the boot. Shots can be close. Sometimes a single shot will spook out the entire cover, but other times birds will hold until your dog has pinpointed each and every one individually at tennis-racket range.

More than any other species, pheasants demand tactical hunting from both humans and their canine partners. Hunt hard, but hunt smart, too. *ah*

Photo: Bill Buckley

EXCEED YOUR EXPECTATIONS, NOT YOUR BUDGET.

THE REVOLUTION™ has all the features you want in a riflescope: Illuminator Lens System™; 100% waterproof and fog proof design, finger click adjustments and, most importantly, an agreeable price tag. Plus, with a proud American name like Redfield®, you know you can count on it season after season. Demand more from your scope.

2011 American Hunter Golden Bullseye Award "Optic of the Year" redfield.com

REDFIELD
the SOUL of the AMERICAN HUNTER®

©2011 A Brand of Leupold & Stevens, Inc.

When the dust settles, come out on top!

ShootingIllustrated.com
The Internet's Definitive Source for the Modern Shooter

Stay Informed with tests and reviews on the latest firearms & accessories.

Learn tactics and techniques from the experts.

Get Involved in the discussion of current topics on our blogs.

NORTH AMERICAN VERSATILE HUNTING DOG ASSOCIATION
SAN DIEGO CHAPTER

Matt Moore
3557 Ponderosa Dr.
Oceanside, CA. 92058
Website: www.sandiegonavhda.com

San Diego Officers

President: Ericka Dennis (760) 634-2250
Vice President: Jeff Derbes (858) 409-0191
Treasurer: Ed Gebelein (949) 388-1350
Secretary: Mark Miller (619)384-5363
Training Coordinators:
Gabby Awbrey (951) 473-5589
Gary Willhite (619) 672-3264
Newsletter Editor: Matt Moore (619)300-3770

We solicit newsletter contributions (stories, photographs, recipes, advertisements) from club members. Please send all contributions to the editor: Matt Moore (honda140@cox.net)

Training Days

Guidelines & Procedures

- Dogs are to be under control at all times (leash rule is in effect)
- Everyone in the field must wear blaze orange hat, t-shirt or vest and have completed a hunter safety class or have a hunting license
- Children are to be supervised and remain within the designated parking area at all times
- No Alcohol on premises
- Shotguns must be break open only

Our national sponsors

