

AUTUMN 2019

WGSDCA

DogSport Magazine



AUTUMN

WORKING GERMAN SHEPHERD AND DOGSPORT CLUBS OF AUSTRALASIA

WGSDCA

Editor

from the desk

KARYN WORTH

Our Autumn edition of the magazine is a really interesting read with a variety of articles from injury prevention for IGP dogs to addressing those myths and misconceptions about whether IGP (Schutzhund) makes a dog dangerous.

We also feature stories about the West Coast German Shepherd Schutzhund Club of Canada's 30th anniversary of their Work Week, our up coming IGP National Championship and a story on the unsung hero of IGP – the tracking phase.

Our final story covers the breed education weekend hosted by the German Shepherd Dog League of NSW with our very own President Sanne Pedersen as the seminar presenter.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition as much as I did. Until next time happy training and trialling but most of all enjoy the time spent with your dog.

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Dogsport: the preservation of the working dog

Mission Statement

To maintain and improve the temperament and physical soundness of the German Shepherd dog in Australasia.

To promote responsible dog ownership to our members.

Our Vision

To be a progressive dogsport organisation in partnership with the international dogsport community.

A Word from the President

“If you cannot do the little things right, then you will never do the big things right” – Admiral McRaven

Have you ever heard the “Start your day by making your bed” speech delivered by Admiral McRaven in 2014? If not, then I encourage you to do so. The speech strikes a chord with many because of its simplistic but profound message of starting the day with a task completed, pay attention to the smallest details, realise you cannot do it alone, rise to the occasion, life is not fair – drive on, don’t whine about it and give people hope.

For more than a decade the WGSDCA membership has fought for the right to represent Australia at the WUSV IGP World Championship – and this was achieved last year when SV Chief Judge, Wilfried Tautz communicated that future WGSDCA Championships are endorsed as a qualifying event for an IGP3 dog/handler to participate at the WUSV World Championship that given year. I feel we never allowed ourselves to celebrate this significant milestone, but



more importantly I think we collectively didn’t pause for a moment to think about how this achievement potentially creates a need for re-structuring. How do we support our membership base to give our handlers the best framework to prepare their dogs for not only a WGSDCA Championship but also the WUSV World Championship?

It seems reasonable to expect an influx of people as a follow on from achieving such a significant milestone as the one mentioned above. This raises a number of important questions: How do we accommodate that? How do we get more helpers, tracklayers, judge apprentices to support more clubs and club trials? Also, the gesture from the WUSV is placing further pressure on our National Championship and therefore the hosting clubs, tracklayers, helpers, funding, trial coordination, promotion and let’s not forget, support towards the Team going to the Worlds.



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Our Executive Clubs and WGSDCA Office Bearers must collectively address these matters in a timely fashion to ensure the Organisation flourishes and grows. It is time for us, as representatives of the Australian GSD fraternity, to demonstrate a willingness to cooperate with the WUSV whose foremost interest is to see actionable initiatives from the Australian GSD fraternities – initiatives that further aligns Australia with the WUSV incentive. Anybody who owns a GSD has a responsibility, but as members of the WGSDCA we collectively have to pull up our bootstraps, cease being stuck in the past and embrace the requests as the WGSDCA gets further involved in the WHP due to our shared membership based with the GSDCA.

The collaboration request drives a need for innovation, willingness and hope. With that comes complexity and uncertainty. However, if we are to rise to the challenge, we must work together as one team and acknowledge the decisions that are either made under the authority of the BOM and/or Executive Clubs. We cannot move forward if decisions are constantly being challenged by individuals. The BOM recognizes that change raises questions in our various clubs, and we encourage our Clubs to raise these with the BOM instead of second guessing. The BOM has the last 6 months focused on a gap analysis to identify practical approaches to address uncertainty and which assist adaptation. This will mean a significant increase in workload, one that will far exceed the capacity of the current WGSDCA office bearers. To assist with this, the BOM will be circulating a document which outlines identified gaps and roadblocks, and which will require discussion amongst our Executive Clubs as to how to close those gaps. The aim will be to develop a plan moving forward and establish cross-club working groups who will be tasked with a number of specific responsibilities to assist in implementing the plan.

I encourage members to raise their hands to help not only clubs hosting the nationals as they will only get bigger and more demanding but also with the increasing administrative tasks such as maintenance of our News Letters, Email shout outs, website updates, management of our online shop, working-dog, Caniva, sponsorships, creating leads for Team Australia support, promotion of events, external seminars and the list goes on and on and on. If we can find a way to get these 'small' things right, then we can collectively focus on the next big significant milestone that follows the dust of achieving the right to partake in the WUSV World Championships. On that note, I encourage our NewsLetter followers to support this year's National Championship by way of sponsoring a banner, trophy or purchase of a 2019 National Garment Memento. You can find more information on our Facebook page: www.wgsdca.org.au

Sincerely

SANNE PEDERSEN | WGSDCA PRESIDENT

BANNERS!

Are you a business or a breeder and would like to have your banner displayed at this year's WGSDCA 2019 National Championship?



Banners will be available again at this year's IGP National Championship. They can be for any type of business –

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Brisbane Sporting Dog Club,
host of the 2019 National Championship



West Coast Invitational Workweek – 30th Anniversary

The West Coast German Shepherd Schutzhund Club (WCGSSC) hosted its 30th Anniversary Invitational Workweek in March 2019. The WCGSSC is a high level club in Vancouver, Canada. It is the club of Lance Collins and has consistently produced Canadian Champions and WUSV world team members. Overall, the WCGSSC under Lance's leadership, has produced 10 Canadian Champions, 35 world team members, and 6 different dogs that have placed in the top 14 at the WUSV World Championship; as well as many other achievements. Australian ex-pat Gabi Hoffmann has been a member there for 14 years now, and previously Mark Gomersall from Brisbane was also a member there for approximately 8 years until his return to Australia a couple of years ago.



Lance Collins explains the theory behind their training system.

During her time at the West Coast club, Gabi has won the Canadian Championships 3 times with 2 different dogs and competed at the WUSV world championship 8 times with 3 different dogs. During his time at the WCGSSC, Mark competed successfully at both the Canadian National Championships and the USA National Championships. Mark was also a top level helper, performing the back half helper work at the Canadian National Championships. He was also a national level Teaching helper in the USA.

A number of Australian schutzhund enthusiasts have attended the WCGSSC Workweek over the previous 15 years.

Workweek is an annual, invitational 6-day event hosted by the WCGSSC to promote a high level of training, competition and sportsmanship for the sport of Schutzhund. It presents the West Coast (WC) training - a logical and sequential learning/training program, which is dedicated to achieving high performance results. The goals are to minimize training and trial performance problems through knowledge and understanding.

The members of the West Coast club believe strongly in the tradition of sharing their training with others who are interested, to improve the sport in the way it is presented and perceived. They believe that sharing their success will encourage others, and promote a positive perception of the training, competing and breeding of working dogs.

The West Coast club hosts this event for free (apart from cost of meals), as a way to pay back all of those who previously encouraged, taught and aided them when they were first starting in the sport.

Multiple short workshops and discussions are conducted daily, all highlighting the theory, methodology and the philosophy of the West Coast club. The workshops cover training, canine behaviour, competing, handling, sportsmanship, judging, trial helper work and training helper work.

Each day starts at 9 in the morning and usually does not finish until 9 pm or later at night !! There is lots of opportunity to not just watch/engage in dog training and discussions, but also to get to know handlers and helpers from all around the world.

This year was particularly special as it was the 30th anniversary of Workweek. The beginnings of Workweek were somewhat different to what Workweek looks like now in some ways, but in other ways it is exactly the same. Initially this event started as a Workweekend – a long weekend where trainers, helpers and handlers got together to share training ideas and a camaraderie in the sport.

This became an annual West Coast club event, and grew each year. People started to arrive earlier for the long weekend, and over time it became an official 6-day event. People are still arriving earlier, filled with excitement for the event however it is unlikely to turn into Workmonth!! Gradually the size of attendance at Workweek grew as well, until it reached the maximum capacity that the club can handle at around 65-70 people.

The things that have always stayed the same from the first Workweekend to this, the 30th Anniversary Workweek, is the emphasis on high-level training and competing, the sharing of knowledge, and the camaraderie of the sport. It is not just about training...it is about training with friends, who share the love of the sport and the working German Shepherd. 🐾



Metro Dogsport Club members, Shane Asanuma, Reg Worth, Glynis Hendricks and Samantha Hendricks



Reg Worth and Gabi Hoffmann



Does Schutzhund Make a Dog Dangerous?

21 JANUARY 2017 | CARISSA KUEHN

Reprinted with permission



Garry Pitt's dog Crazy on and off the field



“Is this dog dangerous?” This is one of the most pressing questions handlers will face from family, friends, and strangers. There is great concern that training in Schutzhund means you are “training the dog to bite”, making the dog dangerous. After all, it has been drilled into us to teach a dog NOT to bite; why on Earth are we teaching it TO bite?

There are several misconceptions related to this overarching concern. Those unfamiliar with Schutzhund are worried that a protection-trained dog is unreliable and dangerous because they may fear that the dog:

- » has been “trained to bite” and is therefore more likely to bite
- » has been made mean and aggressive through the protection work
- » might decide to self-deploy on a harmless person
- » has been turned into an attack dog

A CLOSER LOOK AT PROTECTION

In order to address the above concerns, we must first look at the end product of IGP protection. Schutzhund training should produce a strong, confident dog with excellent control that can successfully complete the requirements of the IGP test in a public trial. So what is required of the dog in this test, particularly the protection routine? During the IGP protection routine, the dog:

- » Must engage only the helper upon verbal command or upon being attacked by said helper
- » Must only grip the jute sleeve, and nothing else
- » Must “out” or release upon verbal command, even when at a great distance from the handler
- » Must perform the protection work only while under voice control, without being touched by the handler

- » Must guard and not bite the helper when he has become passive
- » Must escort the helper in extremely close proximity, without engaging or biting him
- » Must be completely neutral and nonthreatening to all other people at the trial: judge, trial secretary, group members in obedience, spectators

VALUABLE "CROSS-OVER" TRAITS

What does the IGP protection test demonstrate besides biting? The protection work displays the dog’s genetic grip, courage, hardiness, and strength of temperament. But it also requires valuable traits such as:

- » **Discrimination** – determining who is a threat (the helper), and who is not (everyone else), and showing an ability to assess the level of threat and adjust his response accordingly (barking and guarding when helper is passive, biting the sleeve when helper aggresses)
- » **Self-control** – the ability to control itself and maintain composure even when pressured and in a state of high drive and excitement
- » **Clarity** – the ability to think and remain clear-headed even when under stress, focusing on his job and continuing to listen to the handler
- » **Obedience** – remaining completely obedient to the handler even when under pressure and while in high arousal. The obedience required of an IGP dog—even a dog going for its entry-level IGP₁ title—far exceeds any obedience expected of a well-trained pet. The control required of the IGP dog in protection is exceptional.

All of these traits above are extremely valuable in any dog expected to live within society. Who wouldn’t want a dog with excellent discrimination, self-control, clarity of mind, and obedience? **It is the alternative—a dog that lacks discrimination, lacks self-control, lacks clarity, and lacks obedience—that truly constitutes a dangerous dog, not the IGP dog!**



THE MISCONCEPTIONS

Now that we have a better idea of the test, let's look at these misconceptions one by one.

Misconception 1: Training the dog to bite makes him more likely to bite.

This misconception is similar to saying: "Training a child to do karate makes him more likely to hit people." In actuality, the reverse is true. Training a child in martial arts helps them develop confidence, respect, and self-control. Yes, they are learning "how to hit", but they are also learning how to control it, when to use it, and more. Most people who learn martial arts will never need to use it within real life, other than in training and in their competitions. Similarly, a properly trained IGP protection dog will most likely never need to use his skills within real life outside of training and trialing.

Schutzhund training essentially is martial arts for the working dog. Like in martial arts, we are

not teaching violence; we are teaching control. In IGP, we are not teaching indiscriminate biting; we are teaching the dog a specific way, place, and context to bite, placing this under our direct control as handlers, while developing the dog's own self-control. We are taking a dog's instinctual desires, genetic grips, and inherent bite satisfaction and carefully shaping it into something that is well-defined, well-controlled, and performed within the context of certain rules. All this training and control reduces the likelihood that this dog will bite someone indiscriminately.

Misconception 2: Protection work makes the dog mean and aggressive.

This stems from the belief that the dog must be made or forced to bite. This is completely false. The breeds that excel in IGP come with a genetic bite satisfaction, meaning they enjoy biting and gripping things like their toys, their tugs, etc. Most of these breeds in IGP like to bite with a full grip, a holdover from their original working heritage as a herding or utility breed.



WGSDCA SV Liaison Uwe Stolpe training his dog Nico

Nico at home as a family dog.



IGP protection work comes naturally to these dogs, and they absolutely love it. One only needs to watch young dogs learning protection work to see how much enjoyment they get out of it. The dogs strain at the end of the lead in excitement, trying to get to the tug or bite pillow. They bark and yip excitedly, eager to get the game going. And when they finally strike the tug and “win” it, they carry it around so jauntily, proudly displaying their “catch”. They have a great and deep satisfaction in the protection work.

Does protection change the dog’s temperament and make them more aggressive and mean? No. IGP training does not change the dog's basic genetic temperament. A happy dog will still be happy. A grumpy dog will most likely still be grumpy (He may be a little happier when he gets to fight with the helper!). Schutzhund does, however, give us an environment that exposes and tests this temperament, so that we can learn what

it is and learn how to handle it. Through proper training, the dog should gain clarity, confidence, direction, and joy in the work. Improper training, however, can amplify the wrong traits and cause confusion and conflict; thus, **it is important to work with qualified, experienced Helpers/trainers when doing IGP protection.** This qualification alone immediately rules out the majority of “personal protection” dog trainers. This is also the reason why protection work should not be trained by oneself at home!

Misconception 3: The dog will be more likely to “self-deploy”.

The concern is that the dog might make its own decision to go after someone once it has been protection trained. However, when a dog has been trained in IGP, he has learned contextual rules about when he should and should not engage someone. It has never been his decision to make on his own.

The reality is that it is the dog's individual temperament that will determine whether or not he will “take things into his own paws”, which is an attitude found in assertive, controlling dogs. Such a dog will seek the upper hand regardless of whether or not



BH Temperament Test

Mike Harper Wild Dog Photography

he is protection trained. For a dog like this, protection training takes his assertiveness and places it under the handler's control. Indeed, with a high-drive working dog that genetically possesses social aggression, a little suspicion, and strong fight drive, protection work can actually make this dog safer!

How can IGP protection work make a dog safer?

- » It gives the dog specific rules and boundaries.
- » It develops self-control.
- » It trains and encourages excellent obedience, even in high arousal.
- » It puts the dog under the handler's verbal control, even in high arousal.
- » It provides excellent physical and mental exercise, and an outlet for the dog to unload pent-up energy.
- » Most importantly, it develops the dog-handler bond, and teaches the handler who this dog is and how to handle it.

Just like any other dog owner, the IGP handler is responsible for maintaining control of their dog, and should do their best to prevent him from getting into situations he may perceive as threatening. The good news is that should this happen (and it can happen with any dog, protection-trained or not), the IGP dog has far more training, obedience, and control than most other dogs, is better able to think and

maintain composure, and has more experience with what constitutes a threatening situation. Yes, the breeds used for IGP should have some discrimination, but a dog does not think like we do about other people. Dogs think like dogs, fitting everything they experience into the framework of their canine understanding of the world. It is our job as humans to exercise our good judgment in our lives with our dogs.

Misconception 4: IGP protection work means the dog is now an "attack dog".

The IGP/Schutzhund dog is NOT an attack dog. True trained "attack" dogs are rare; what most people call an "attack dog" is usually an extremely aggressive animal with little to no actual training, making it an uncontrollable liability. The other interpretation of "attack dog" is guard dog, an animal that fiercely defends its home turf and people against ALL intruders. I will use the term "attack dog" loosely to apply to both interpretations.

There are many significant differences between a Schutzhund dog and an "attack dog". An "attack dog" or a true guard dog is not social. It sees everyone outside its immediate family or handler as a potential threat. They usually have very sharp temperaments, high suspicion, and high aggression. The "attack dog" has never had to go through any sort of standardized test, or have its temperament evaluated by an outside party, or even be taken out anywhere in public.

By contrast, the Schutzhund dog must have a stable and confident temperament. The dog must be social and comfortable around people in a public venue. The dog must also show versatility, courage, discrimination, control, obedience, composure under stress, and more. Additionally, the IGP dog:

- » must pass the BH exam, which tests the dog's temperament and obedience in a test similar to the Canine Good Citizen test, with the addition of an extensive obedience routine.
- » has its temperament evaluated at every single trial by the judge.
- » must demonstrate mastery of specific protection exercises, and is graded on the execution of these exercises by the judge.
- » must also show excellent obedience, in addition to demonstrating tracking ability, all at the same trial.

When we review what's required of the Schutzhund dog, it becomes clear that a trained Schutzhund dog is NOT an attack dog—far from it! 🐾

CONCLUSION

Training a dog in IGP protection work should not create a dangerous dog. Rather, it results in an animal who is confident, stable, and controllable with excellent obedience. The IGP dog is a well-trained canine suitable as a companion dog, family dog, and integrated canine member of society. Whether the dog genetically is a happy, biddable dog or a strong, assertive canine, the extensive training required for Schutzhund can make them a safer dog.



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8th September, 2017

To Whom It May Concern

I have been involved in German Shepherds since 1967. Over that time I have owned, bred, trialed, exhibited and imported many German Shepherds. Since 1977 I have been a veterinarian and because of my background in the breed have always worked with many German Shepherds including the NSW Police Dog Squad, Breed clubs, private breeders as well as security dogs and working dogs imported for obedience work.

I can duly testify that I have worked with many IPO trained dogs and find them very amenable to handling, including full physical examination, taking blood, giving anaesthetics and other injections plus a host of other procedures required of a veterinarian to service my patients correctly. These dogs are balanced animals that display good traits as family dogs. Indeed, I do much work for Councils and the Courts in NSW to assess temperaments especially dogs declared dangerous under the Dangerous Dog Act and can state I have never had an IPO dog presented for this issue.



Dr Robert Zammit

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DR. ROBERT A. ZAMMIT BVSc(SYDNEY) URU DR CIARAN GALVIN MVB DR LUKE SMITH BVSc(BAPP) SOI DR VAUGHAN MOORE BVMS(SOI)

Dr Robert Zammit, BVSc

Since venturing into the practice by himself in 1980, Robert has turned Vineyard Veterinary Hospital into one of the most well known and admired practices of the area. Rob has dedicated his life to not only caring for animals but also teaching others to enjoy that similar passion. Known for his media work in such programs as A Country Practice, Burkes Backyard and zGB, Dr Zammit's first love is veterinary science with a special interest in small animal reproduction work. He lives on the premises with his family, including the numerous pets roaming around.

WGSDCA

2019 IGP

National Championship

31st May – 2nd June 2019



Trial Fees for Competitors

Account details

BH/VT: \$40.00

IGP-V: \$50.00

IGP 1 - 3: \$50.00

UPR 1-3 (OB) \$50.00

FPR 1-3 (TR) \$50.00

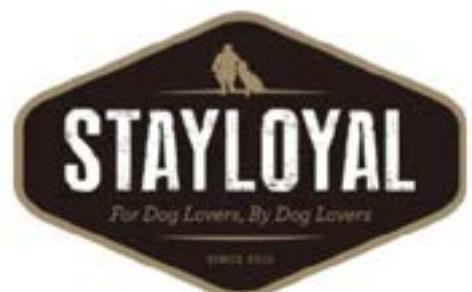
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Trial Entry Deadline May 1st 2019. Please send your Trial
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Injury Prevention for IGP

DR JAIME JACKSON - BVSC CCRT | PRIMAL PAWS

IGP, like all dog sports, places an array of stresses on the canine athlete. These stresses, if not prepared for and properly managed can lead to injury. The dogs involved in IGP must have endurance, power, and coordination to compete safely.

In a physically demanding sport, it is no surprise that injuries happen regardless of how careful we are. However, science is giving us answers about how injuries that were previously not well understood occur, and allowing us to take steps to reduce the incidence of some injuries dramatically. We can also screen dogs for weakness and early signs of musculoskeletal disease to identify dogs that need extra care or aren't suitable for a particular activities.

Risk Factors

The best way to avoid injury is to manage risk and properly prepare for activity. There are a number of factors that you can manage easily to help reduce injury when your dog competed.

Fatigue

Just like tired people make more mistakes, tired dogs do as well. Fatigue can easily cause a decrease in accuracy and increase the risk of injury. Don't overwork your dog or compete and train with them when they are tired. With many dogs, who live to please, working out when they are tired can require careful observation. Some typical signs may include your dog moving more slowly, 'tipping' bars on jumps, lying down instead of sitting, excessive panting or being reluctant to complete activities.



Surface

The surface you train and compete on can have a big impact on your dog. In particular, you should avoid surfaces that are slippery (such as wet grass) or surfaces that are hard (such as dried clay or concrete). These surfaces put your dog under additional stress that can make injuries more likely.

Preparation

There are also steps we can take to prepare our dogs for competition.

Physical Assessment

I recommend that all competition dogs received a complete assessment every six months while competing. Regular assessment allows us to identify issues earlier and take steps to mitigate them before injury occurs. An assessment involves a review of your dog's movement and muscles. A review by a trained practitioner can identify asymmetries, compensation or incorrect muscle recruitment in your dog's movement that is an indicator of weakness. We can then use exercise therapy to address these issues and avoid injury.

Strength Training

Body tissues increase in strength in response to stress placed on them. There is a balance between providing enough stress to improve the body, and excess stress which will cause damage and injury. Investing the time to prepare your dog physically, just as you would with their skills for competition, is vital to prevent injury and also leads to great results.

Proprioception Training

This is the unconscious perception of movement and spatial orientation arising from stimuli within the body itself. It's how you know that your leg is about to touch the ground and what allows you to catch yourself if you slip and avoid a fall. Having excellent proprioception will help avoid injury as your dog is better able to sense when things are going wrong and compensate for them.

Like anything, proprioception can be trained. Encourage your dog to walk and trot on a variety of substrates and terrains as a whole body work out that improves proprioception.

Common Injuries

Common injuries fall into two main categories, overuse, and sudden traumatic injury.

Overuse Injuries

Overuse injuries are seen when time is spent repeating the same movement. It may be exacerbated by poorly strengthened tissues and inappropriate muscle recruitment.

Our rule of thumb is to vary your dog's exercise as much as possible. Variety will work to strengthen your dog as evenly as possible. I also like to add in therapeutic exercises for individuals to address any weaknesses.

One of the most common overuse injury seen in IGP dogs is Biceps Tendinopathy. The biceps are responsible for elbow flexion and shoulder extension as its primary action, it also slows down elbow extension and shoulder flexion. This means that it is used repetitively when slowing down quickly. It is also theorised that jumping with the shoulder in full flexion can cause damage to the tendon due to rubbing over the shoulder joint.

Signs of a biceps injury include a reluctance to jump (worried about landing), short striding and weight shifting of the leg.

We can modify activities to reduce the number of sharp breaking activities during training and limiting the number of high jumps the dogs are performing. Instead of performing strength-based activities using their body weight and resisting gravity performing activities such as down to stand and single leg lifts can be used to strengthen this muscle without causing rubbing or repeated high impact. Play bow can also be used in a variety of ways to strengthen this muscle.

I suggest additional checks during periods of heavy training or when coming back from a break as these are the times that injuries are most likely to occur.

Traumatic Injuries

Traumatic injuries occur when there is an unexpected or abnormal load placed upon a joint, muscle or tendon and it fails.

One of the most common traumatic injuries I see is hyperextension injuries of the iliopsoas. This is an important muscle in the groin that is used for hip flexion, and to slow down hip extension. This may be injured if a dog slips and the leg slides back.

We can minimise the risk of this injury by considering the substrate your dog is working and exercising on, picking activities that do not require speed and agility on slippery surfaces is the best place to start.

Spending time on body awareness (proprioception) will help your dog respond quickly if they do begin to slip. Just like with humans this is a skill that needs to be practiced to be refined and result in quick reflexes. Signs of iliopsoas injuries can include slowing down in competition, an occasional skip and knocking jumps.

Preventing injuries is all about taking a wholesome approach. A mixture of preparation and training, risk mitigation and refuel observation will give your dog the best chances of a long career competing injury free. 🐾



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Only the Nose Knows

SHARONIKA WILLIAMSON

In IGP dogsport, the dog needs to master three disciplines: Obedience, sleeve work and tracking. Tracking doesn't get as much screen time as the obedience or sleeve work because let's face it, it's more fun to watch a dog execute the various exercises in the two other disciplines than watch a dog sniff the ground. IGP obedience is expressive. Sleeve work is explosive. But, there-in should lie the essence and intrigue of tracking. It's not an adrenaline pumped display of power. It is tranquil. But the power of the dog's conviction is the same, just exuded on a different emotional spectrum. Obedience and sleeve work are one thing but tracking, it's a league of its own.



Mike Harper Wild Dog Photography

Its teaching is more complex than just throwing food down on the ground and following the dog. Tracking is simple yet so very intricate. There are methods the dog must learn to be proficient in if they are to have success on the track. It's about teaching them to problem solve. In the other two phases we know what the dog's next move should be. The dog even knows. Picking a dumbbell off a stand can cue the dog that a retrieve may happen. The completion of the A-frame exercise can cue the dog for the next exercise, the send out. They learn a pattern. We can teach them to anticipate that pattern by teaching them even more patterns. We ourselves know the pattern we need to walk.

In a trial, tracking is an exercise of blind trust. At that point it is up to your dog. The track tells the dog what to do. There are no physical structures to cue the dog or close handler contact where a handler can give their dog sneaky verbal help on what's coming up next. Your communication happens through the line, through ground scent and at articles. These 3 things become your dog's cues. Silent cues.

As with anything in training, how well you set your dog up for success will determine the outcome for your dog. How you lay your track relevant to the dog matters. When you lay it, how long you lay it for, what you put in it, what you don't put in it, how you challenge the dog... the list goes on. Track laying is just as, if not more important, than the actual track. Laying the track is an art form in itself. It forms the



Jetta tracking at the SA 2014 National Championship. Photo Credit: Darren Lewis

basis of your dog's foundations. And to keep your dog motivated and committed to the track is part of that balance. You can't just stomp out a track and go for it.

For your dog to have purpose you must lay your track with purpose. You must think like the dog. You have to become a good reader of a dog's body language. But it's not just the physical aspect you should pay attention to. Here the focus should be more on the mental state of the dog. The concentration required for a dog to track is far greater than the concentration required to follow a handler during the obedience and sleeve work.

Physical exertion requires a lot of endurance, but we all know that mental exertion is more taxing on your body. The anticipation of a send out or the excitement of a Helper can all help to easily put the dog into a sense of compliance. But to actively fixate the concentration of the dog takes another form of discipline.

Tracking may not be the star of the IGP Dogsport but unless you do it you really don't know what you're missing out on. As you delve deeper into the magic of your dog's nose, you realise that while this phase of the sport is relatively silent, it sure does have a lot to tell you and your dog. 🐾

Hunter tracking taken by Mike of Wild Dog Photography at the 2018 SA National Championship.





Working Dogs

You May Own One and Not Know It

BH-VT and ZAP-A Workshop Presentations at the GSDCA Breed Education Weekend March 9-10, 2019

BY SANNE PEDERSEN | SYDNEY DOGSPORT CLUB INC

The Breed Education Weekend was an initiative by the NBC BSIP Education Group, hosted by the German Shepherd Dog League of NSW (GSDL) and based on the current debate surrounding the implementation of the WUSV World Harmonisation Plan in Australia. As a member of the GSDL and following my introduction to the Australian SV Judge (Show) Mrs. Jo Cathie at the 2018 BSZS in Nurnberg, Jo invited me to run two practical workshops on respectively the ZAP-A Puppy Test and the FCI BH-VT Test as a representative of the WGSDCA Club Affiliate, Sydney Dogsport Club. I accepted the invitation with some level of anxiety due to the ongoing - let's just call it - squabble surrounding the World Harmonisation Plan implementation in Australia.

I suspect at this point there may be some readers asking what do I know about the ZAP-A test. Not much - as it is yet to be formally implemented here in Australia, but Sydney Dogsport Club did host a ZAP-A Seminar in March 2018 with the WGSDCA SV Liaison Uwe Stolpe. As a sidenote, being a molecular biologist who works with cancer and how people may be genetically pre-dispositioned to cancer or mental disorders, I do have a personal interest in what the various components of the WUSV Breed Matrix aims to address.

A total of six workshops were covered during the weekend: Saturday, "Introduction to ZAP, playing with your puppy, ZAP test Demonstration", "Unpacking the Breed Standard to understand the way forward" (Breed Surveyor and GSDCA Specialist Judge Melanie Groth & National SV Show Judge, Jo Cathie), "Specialist Ring Presentation of the GSD" (Kylie Zimmerle Expert Handler & Melanie Groth), and Sunday, "Towards BH for Breed Survey", "Breed killers - dispelling the myths on bloat, haemangiosarcoma, aspergillus



and the like” and “Fitness & Nutrition – balanced training and nutrition for the GSD Show Dog” both by Dr Karen Hedberg BVSC. There were about 85 attendees on both days.

My anxiety to participate in the Education Weekend was totally unfounded. People went out of their way to make me feel welcomed and I was utterly surprised about the genuine interest in not only the ZAP-A and the BH-VT, but more importantly - to me at least, I felt the audience craving to understand how to engage and play with their dogs. The ZAP-A presentation focused on explaining the difference between temperament (inherited traits) and character (social cultivation | training), instincts, drives, nerves and the intent of the ZAP-A Scheme. The theory was followed by a practical demonstration where Kathi Minton and her dog, Chilli, volunteered to run through the ZAP-A routine. Chilli did a beautiful job not only as a demo dog, but she also managed to remove the ‘performance fear’ from the audience and before I knew it we had dogs left right and centre trying out the various exercises. We had some good discussions as to how to expose the younger dogs to the equipment as part of preparing for the ZAP-A test.

The remainder of Saturday was an eye opener for me. I know next to nothing about how a dog is critiqued during show, and as a working person I struggle with show as a sport as what do you do if you have a dog with less desirable conformational structure? There is nothing you can do to fix say a missing tooth, a soft ear or oversized ears, eyes that are too light, over-angulation, a croup too steep, a tail too long etc. etc. As a working person, at least you can go home and train harder on that sit

exercise that you missed in the trial. We had a good chat about how this may be one of the reasons why GSDCA struggle to retain new members and whether introduction of BH, ZAP-A (and one can only hope in the future, IGP) perhaps would help retaining members who may not have the best dog for showing.

Sunday kicked off with the BH-VT. The presentation turned out to be quite interactive and the audience had a lot of good questions as to how to start the foundation of the BH-VT. The presentation was, of course, centred around the FCI Utility Dog Scheme, e.g. The IGP Dogsport Scheme. I was pleasantly surprised about how this was received, and I subsequently received many comments along the lines of ‘we have been misinformed’. For the practical part I had brought Rixie with me as a demo dog. Those who know Rixie, a.k.a The Schnitzel, knows this dog loves obedience and he seems to know when he is in the spot light. We gave a quick demo of the BH routine and on the spur of the moment, I asked if somebody wanted to try to handle Rixie with

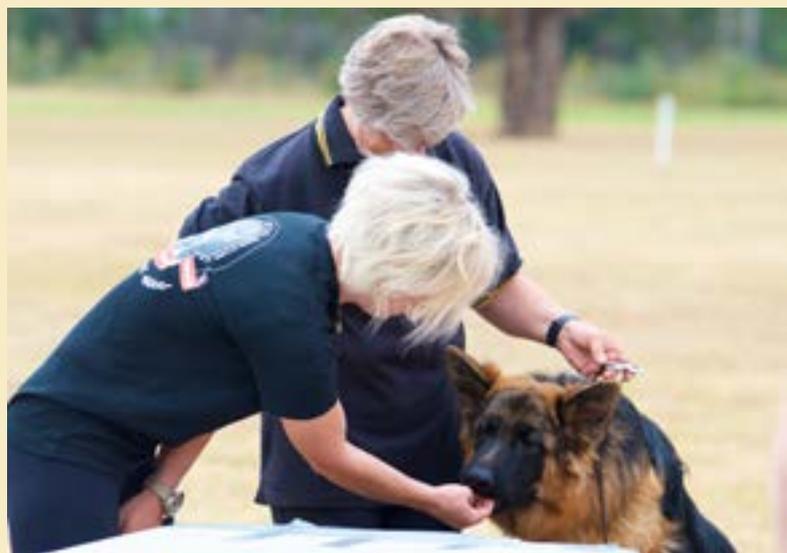


Mike Harper/Wild Dog Photography



the note that he is ready for his IGP-1 title and hence fully trained in sleeve work. Julie Delriego stepped out and volunteered. Julie seemed so nervous. After a couple of quick rehearsal on Danish comments she got the ball under the arm and Rixie on the left – and off they marched. The smile on Julie’s face and the laughter from the audience made my day! Tony D’Arcy stepped out to have the second go and I will never forget the concentration on his face as he and Rixie weaved their way through the many spectators and several dogs. Rixie doing his thing and never did his focus falter. I am very proud of my Mr Schnitzel who did his very best as an ambassador for IGP dogsport. Subsequent to the demo, the dogs came out in one steady flow for 2hrs to have a go at motivational dog training. It is hard to do much within 10-15 minutes but I truly enjoyed working with all the dogs that presented and I can only hope I have inspired their owners to start playing and working with their German Shepherd Dogs. The dogs deserve it.

The Sunday finished with presentations by Dr. Hedberg – the first one putting quite a damper on the elated mood that followed the BH workshop as the topic was cancer, bloating and auto-immune diseases. With that said, it was quite informative and on a personal note, I now know what Kita was suffering from – and it was a relief for me to realise that I made the right decision to give her peace. The last presentation was about nutrition and preparation for showing training. Very timely information due to the WGSDCA National being just 10 weeks away.



All in all, a very successful weekend, and the stream of Facebook messages that followed makes me hope that perhaps this was one of a series of similar events that will see a collaborative effort from both the working and show GSD fraternities to benefit the future German Shepherd Dog in Australia.

I would like to thank Mike Harper who came down to capture the moments of the weekend. A special thank Jo Cathie and Mel Groth in persuading me to do the presentations. Thankyou to the GSDL Canteen who took a personal interest in making sure I got something to eat. I had a lovely weekend. Thankyou. 🐾





Preparing for the 2019 WGSDCA National Championship

KYLIE ANDRYC

Well, we've been head down and bum up at Brisbane Sporting Dog Club making preparations for this year's WGSDCA IGP National Championships.

Brisbane Sporting Dog Club is one of the oldest clubs in the organisation and has a rich history dating back to 1989. Over the years like all clubs our numbers have fluctuated however, in the last 12 months the club has really grown. We have a lot of new members with puppies, which is really exciting for the future of our club and IGP.

As a club we are excited to have such an awesome opportunity to be the host club for the 2019 WGSDCA IGP National Championships. BSDC members will be working hard in the background to ensure the national championship is a well-executed event for everyone to enjoy.

This year our club will only have a small contingent at National Championship. Team BSDC will be represented by Gary Pitt who will be competing in IGP 1 with his dog Bronson and Tyrone Foster with his female Kaiser in BH. Our members will be there cheering them on as well as showing our support for all the other competitors from the various WGSDCA clubs who are competing.

We are looking forward to seeing who will be 2019's WGSDCA IGP3 champion and go on to represent Australia at the 2019 WUSV World Championship in Italy (2 - 6 October). If you would like to support Team Australia please contact info@wgsdca.org.au to find out how.

Finally we would like to thank all of our sponsors for your support and wish everyone competing the best of luck throughout the competition.



Get to know our Judge

We are thrilled to welcome Herr Daniele Strazzeri (SV Judge, Germany) to Australia. We are truly privileged to have Herr. Strazzeri officiating at the 2019 WGSDCA National Championship.

Mr. Strazzeri has been involved in IGP dog sport since 1997. He has trained and competed numerous times with various GSDs at several German championships. He was appointed as an SV Judge in 2010, and has since judged +150 trials, including at LGA & BSP level and several National Championships around the world.

His kennel prefix is “Zwinger von der Donauvorstadt” and several of his dogs have been represented at German Championships (BSP/LGA) as well as WUSV World Championships. He is an active dog handler and appointed chairman of the Landesgruppe Württemberg since 2013. 🐾

2019 WGSDCA National Championship Minor Sponsors

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The GSDCA Educational Breed Weekend

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Hosted by the GSDL NSW

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The German Shepherd Dog League of NSW very proudly hosted the first 'GSDCA BREED EDUCATION WEEKEND' on Saturday 9th and Sunday 10th March 2019. The NSW club are in the enviable position of having two of the GSDCAs education working party among their management committee – this crossover placed the league in a great position to lead the way and set the bar for the education weekend roll out across the states. Our League Breed Affairs Chair Jo Cathie, a GSDCA specialist and SV qualified breed judge, and our League Vice President Melanie Groth, the GSDCAs National Breed Registrar and breed specialist judge and surveyor, teamed up as the main drivers for the initiative - bringing a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm together among speakers and contributors to ensure valuable educational breed content delivered in an interesting fashion. The weekend numbers were capped at 100 and interest maxed this out after only 2/3 days of advertising. Attendees present came from all corners of NSW, from ACT, from Victoria and from Queensland.

The GSDCAs education working group had identified and highlighted areas for inclusion and the presentations were as follows:

Saturday

ZAP Test - Introduction to ZAP - How to play with your puppy to prepare for ZAP - ZAP Test

Demo – Attendee involvement

Sanne Pedersen, Sydney Dogsport Club (WGSDCA Club Affiliate)

Unpacking the breed standard to understand the way forward

Melanie Groth, GSDCA Specialist Judge, Surveyor, National BS Registrar, Jo Cathie GSDCA Specialist Judge and SV Breed Judge

Presentation of the German Shepherd in the specialist ring - advice for handlers and owners alike - handlers perspective/judges perspective

Kylie Zimmerle – Queensland / Melanie Groth – NSW

Sunday

Toward BH for Breed Survey - BH Presentation

- BH Demo – Attendee involvement

Sanne Pedersen, Sydney Dogsport Club (WGSDCA Club Affiliate)

Breed killers - dispelling the myths on bloat, *haemangiosarcoma, aspergillus and the like

Dr Karen Hedberg BVSc Sydney, NSW

Fitness and nutrition - balanced training and balancing intake and output for the healthy German Shepherd showdog

Dr Karen Hedberg BVSc Sydney, NSW



Image Supplied by GSDL NSW

Membership of GSDL NSW trying out the BH routine with Sanne's dog Rixie

A lovely quality education booklet was given to all participants, put together by Jo and Mel and printed at Plumpton High School in Sydney.

Sanne had additional materials for sale to those keen to learn more about the BH format. She presented background on her topics first in the clubhouse on both days then headed outside for practical demonstrations and attendee participation. She spent a lot of time helping puppies try the ZAP puppy test obstacles and tests on Saturday and showing attendees training techniques for BH/obedience on Sunday. Her IPO dog Rixie was put through his paces by several keen attendees, showing that a trained dog is able to work with anyone. These presentations dispelled many myths about the ZAP test and the difficulties with training for BH and Sanne's bubbling enthusiasm spread through those listening like wildfire. Many young dogs were brought into a whole new situation to try something new and showed the real keen trainability of the German Shepherd breed.

The presentations on understanding the breed standard and Kylie's show presentation demo were very well received and encouraged plenty of discussion among the groups, hopefully also encouraging a new way of looking at what most of us already do.

The breed standard presentation originally based on the NBC chair Jenny Yuens presentation for judges and surveyors was adapted by Mel and looked to make breeders and exhibitors actually recognize the faults and attributes of their own dogs and consider these when looking to breed onward. Furthermore, it hoped to highlight where critiques can be subjective and show that variations will exist naturally in opinions among judges to some degree and certain types or styles of GSD will do better under one judge than another.

Kylie was assisted by Melanie and by Jo with GSDs Havoc, Trixx and Tallii, each at different stages of learning in show presentation. This seminar also gave the group a rather rare chance to hear Kylie speak publicly on handling techniques and to ask her questions from the floor.

Sundays presentations by Dr Hedberg were intended as a 'mythbuster' with some of the lesser discussed breed killers discussed. Her nutrition presentation impacted many of the crowd on the road to our upcoming national and I for one introduced electrolytes to my dogs for training and travel immediately.

Lunch and morning and afternoon tea were provided by the Mid North Coast Branch of the GSDL NSW, as were items for the raffle on the day. The raffle raised \$200 dollars which was given thus - \$100 dollars in thanks to Plumpton High School who had printed the full colour education booklet for the weekend, and \$100 in thanks to the host club the League to be put toward training equipment for the members for ZAP and other disciplines.

The heartening attendance was in keeping with the very positive atmosphere over the whole weekend and the excellent feedback afterward.

The league will look to provide further educational events for the membership at regular intervals including those put forth by the GSDCA as well as those initiated by breed affairs. And ideas for future topics should be directed to the breed affairs chair.

Jo Cathie
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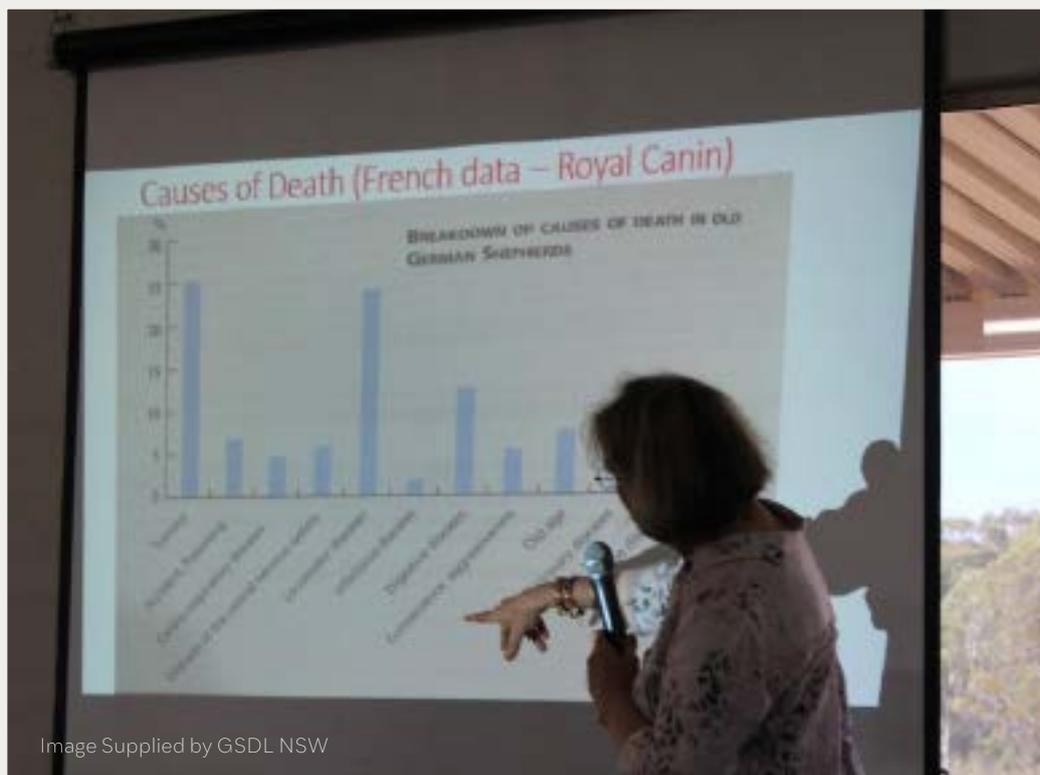


Image Supplied by GSDL NSW

Dr Karen Hedberg discussing causes of death in German Shepherds



Scorebooks, Sports Passes and Forms

When filling out the forms for your score books, sports passes, membership and in particular trial validation forms it would be appreciated if the forms could be typed rather than hand written, where possible, to ensure accurate records are kept and scorebooks and sportpasses reflect the correct information. Also when scanning please make sure the scans are of good quality in black and white.

Please ensure payment forms accompany all payments so the money can be allocated to the correct person and item eg. Smith – scorebook.

Individual WGSDCA Membership

Whether your interest is breeding or training the German Shepherd Dog, or simply enjoying the company of people like you who love to spend time with their dogs, WGSDCA has something for you. Send us an email to learn more.

Membership Application

You can join WGSDCA through one of our Club Affiliates or directly. We have five categories of Individual Membership of the WGSDCA:

- Individual Membership
- Dual Membership
- Youth Membership (free)
- Life member
- Social Membership

Members of WGSDCA have to renew their WGSDCA Individual Membership annually.

Send us an email for further information.

secretary@wgsdca.org.au