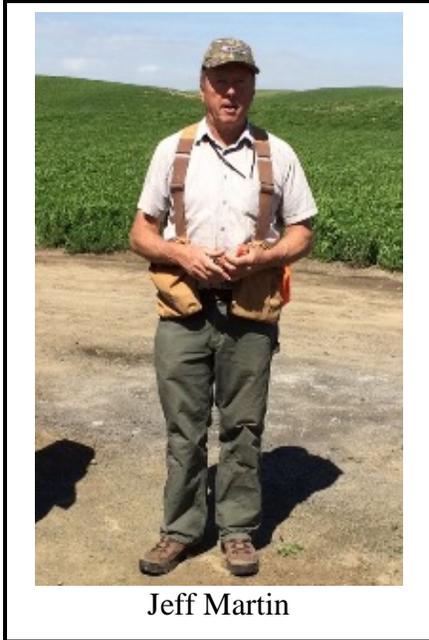


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I was born and raised in Griffith, New South Wales, in the remote west of the state, some 400 miles directly inland from Sydney, Australia. The landscape is an intensively farmed irrigation area very reminiscent of Sacramento, California. It is an incredibly rich farming area and today produces 25% of the countries wine production as well as large acreages of nuts, rice, citrus and cotton.

Our backyard was a 15,000 acre wetland and my siblings and I grew up with an awful lot of freedom, I like to think of it as “ the good old days “ but we were neither good or old. My brothers and I limited our hunting and trapping to anything that could run, swim or fly in our childhood years and assumed this was the way of life everyone enjoyed.

My family always enjoyed the outdoors. It was nothing to go camping on some of the inland rivers for a week at a time to swim, fish, and hunt. The principle was ingrained into us “take nothing but memories and leave nothing but footprints” long before I ever read the statement and never ever take more than you needed or could use.

As a farm kid we raised sheep, cattle, and pigs along with a menagerie of pets. It wasn't the Noah's Ark but with 5 kids it wasn't too far removed either. We trained everything from racing pigeons, to stock dogs, horses, and milking cows. A peregrine falcon for good measure and even ferrets for rabbit hunting were in the mix. In these endeavours it became obvious very quickly that rubbish cost just as much or more to raise than quality stock, so start with the absolute best breeding stock possible as the end result and returns were far, far better.

“Our” swamp was regarded by wildlife researchers as one of two key wetlands for waterfowl in SE Australia and because of this I got to see a lot of hunting dogs accompanying duck hunters that knew my father.

The GSP breed was first imported in 1963 from the UK by well-known sportsman Jack Thomson. With our quarantine rules it was an onerous task but Jack was a

helluva promoter billing them as the “wonder dog that could do it all, that only the German’s could have bred”. I got to talk to him and see his dogs many times over the years on his hunting trips to my area.

This jack-of-all trade’s dog seemed exactly suited to the varied hunting needs of this 12 year old at the time. Availability was scarce, but I arranged to see a litter only 200 miles away and my parents bought the pup as my birthday present in 1969. She proved to be a great hunting dog and had quite the reputation in local circles embellished by anyone that got to see her working.

It wasn’t until 12 years later that I had finished university, had married and built a house and felt I had the time to devote to another dog. I contacted Jack with the mindset to purchase the best bloodline that money could buy. She was a beautiful dark liver bitch with eyes that could melt your soul or tell you exactly what she thought of your missed shot in the duck blind.

I attended my first field trial when I thought she was ready and went out on my backside in short order!! That bloodied nose, meant that over the next 6 years I was on a steep learning curve eventually competing successfully in Utility Field trials, Retrieving trials, and shows at the highest level. This bitch was Dual Champ Dunfrui Suzette who became both a FT & show champion whose winning record was only surpassed by her daughter Riverfield Aspen who became the first FT & RT female in breed history. The utility test is run on wild native stubble quail with a brace of dogs competing and each handler shooting birds over his dogs work. It really is a superb test of dog work under actual hunting conditions only with a judge and gallery following behind keeping the score.

Trialing versatile dogs proved to be a door I couldn’t close and I regularly competed or judged both field and retriever trials before coming to Canada in 1994.

I visited Germany for the first time in 1983 and had the good fortune to spend time with Walter Rassing, the president of Club Rhineland. I was promptly gifted an honorary membership to his club and we corresponded for many years. It was over this time that I came to realise that this breeding and testing system was vastly superior to anything we had developed in Australia.

It wasn’t that we didn’t have some good dogs but most people dabbled with show dogs whose natural ability was akin to a Dalmatian. Not that conformation isn’t important, as I like to say “there are no pygmies in the Harlem Globetrotters” but it shouldn’t be an end to itself. On the other side of the equation we had field trial dogs whose work before the shot was top-shelf but whose conformation left a lot to

be desired. It didn't seem to matter if the dog had 2 heads as long as he could find twice as many birds. The field trial tests only allotted 10% of the score to water work so I found many dogs were getting weak in their love of water. This divergent way of testing our breed isn't dissimilar to many other countries around the world and always results in a split in breed types. Genetic testing for teeth, hip, testicle or eye faults to name a few were non-existent. In fact breeders were quick to sweep under the carpet any evidence or rumours that their highly prized dogs could ever produce anything but perfect champions.

The DKV testing system is the only one that I'm aware of that regularly results in its best dogs being beautiful looking animals that are capable of excellent test scores for work before or after the shot whether field, forest or water. Testing a dog through the system at various stages of development can tell you a lot about its natural abilities and therefore those abilities that are likely transmitted if bred from. Testing a high percentage of any litter can tell you a lot about the average quality of your dog's siblings and if there are issues to be aware of. Performance testing the progeny of breeding animals has resulted in unbelievable production advances in domestic animals over my lifetime and is the only way forward for any breeding program IMHO. DKV or JGHV testing for that matter proves the individual animal is worth breeding the first time, but only its progeny testing can quickly tell you if it's actually an animal worth breeding again with any certainty in the future. Another aspect of the German testing is the emphasis on temperament. This "livability factor" is scarcely given a second thought in other testing venues. I really value the importance of the calmness or Weisen test. Also judges are instructed that a statement has to be made about the dog's temperament when evaluating conformation in the Zuchtschau. It's important that calm, confident dogs with an air of nobility (as the standard asks for) are ever used for breeding DK.

Coming to North America in 1994 and being able to test firsthand in the DKV system was a breath of fresh air for me. What I love about this system is it's a minimal derby/Solms/Zuchtschau or even simply a Solms /Zuchtschau which can ALL be accomplished over ONE weekend. This then substantially proves if a dog is worth breeding or not, as the owner you don't have to make a career of campaigning dogs or paying pros to campaign your show dog all over the countryside, the so called "petrol champions". The DKV tests are very comprehensive covering pointing, tracking, and retrieving fur or feather over land or water. Hunters invariably all have the best dogs and from their limited perspective that's understandable, but talk is cheap. In these standardized tests that each simulates a hunting situation the dog can either do it or not. In north America there are 12,000 GSP registered in AKC each year and in other registries you could add another 4,000. The number bred by backyard breeders is anyone's guess but

this relatively simple German testing system is too hard for these breeders to be involved with, what does that say about their standards??

What I've written so far is so you have some insight into my perspectives. I've had a 50 year love affair with the breed and gravitated to the German testing as there is a net result that's real and tangible.

I studied over the past 10 years to become both a VR field judge as well as a SZR conformation judge to give something back to the breed and testing system.

I have the greatest hopes for the DKGNA which will become fully functional in 2019 . Germany has 32 regional clubs in a landmass twice the size of Washington State. So I don't see any conflict of interest with having another club operating in North America. On the contrary, I see it as only enhancing what is currently being done for the Deutsch Kurzhaar.

In point form these are just some of the goals that I see:

1. **The current Board of Directors** will be in place for another year and is volunteering their spare time and working for you, the members. The membership will be surveyed shortly for what they specifically want from DKGNA, in effect how can we serve you better. This testing system is easily misconstrued as an elitist group and it shouldn't be as it isn't, it should always be inclusive. To these ends the Board is open to any advice and questions of the membership at any time.
2. **We have to abide by the rules of the DKV** as it is those rules that allowed the breed to achieve the quality it is today. Some new members may not fully understand the reasoning behind them, but they have been developed and improved on for over 100 years and are in place for good reason.
3. **Testing is one of the keys to the success of the new club.** There seems to be a revolving door of people with an interest in the DK that attend a simple Derby or natural ability test. They then never attempt a Solms or if they do, fail and too often are never seen again. There is clearly a lack of support for these people to be successful at the higher tests. The Board is brainstorming how to change this with training days, mock tests, and training programs with a step by step approach to passing tests all supported by DVD or u-tube clips to help overcome the problem and the problem of distance. Training for these tests is surprisingly easy with a plan and even at Solms level, you will have one of the best hunting companions you or your hunting buddies have ever seen.

4. **Testing should be fun but at the same time it has to be credible.** Every dog entered has the potential to be a Prize 1 perfect score and every judge worth his salt wants to see this, even to the extent of rerunning a test aspect if it proves to be unfair. Three judges officiate at a test and each has equal input into the scoring. It is essential that we always have good experienced judging teams with the right attitude. There is a standard as outlined in the rules. I don't ever want to see judges bending the rules for their training buddies or handing out "V" conformation ratings or 4H outstanding scores when they are not earned. These awards need to be honest and well deserved or you don't have a standard.

5. **Historically in North America DK breeding has resulted in 90 or more puppies bred each year.** This often places NA as the most puppies bred of any DKV regional club. The argument has always been new members need dogs. However, NA has the lowest number of these dogs being tested even at a simple Derby level. This is partly a symptom of my point 3 about lack of training support however it's a statistic we need to address.

The DKV has the attitude that breeders have freedom to choose breeding dogs as per the tested dogs and regulations as the progeny will be tested. Its allowed that a low Sg (very good) or even a G (good) rated dog with just a pass Prize 3 Solms score can be bred, however this is rarely done. There are just so many high quality V (excellent) rated dogs with passing scores littered with outstanding scores that should perpetuate future generations. This system is about testing, sorting, and selecting the best for breeding. I would like to see breeders doing this and clearly understand the responsibility of breeding a litter and supporting the new owners to get the best out of the breed. There is no reason why a cooperative group couldn't fund importing semen for AI or even a quality female in whelp, the potential is limitless.

6. **GSP vs DK??** Most people still don't really understand the difference and most GSP owners use them as a bird dog if anything at all. The DK is capable of so much more as a high quality versatile dog and I think we need to be more proactive promoting that difference to grow the membership. The GSP's popularity was established a long time ago in NA compared to the German Wirehaired Pointer which wasn't established to the same extent. I think this partly explains why the Deutsch Drahthaar has been able to establish itself to a much higher level than the DK over the past 25 yrs.

7. **Be inclusive.** This means we will support any group or individual in their efforts with their versatile dogs and hopefully they will reciprocate. The past should be the past as we are in this to enjoy the dogs and politics shouldn't be part of it.

It also means we intend to be inclusive of the members families. A testing weekend, seminar, or annual meeting should have something for a members “cheering squad” to enjoy and to give as many reasons as possible to attend a club event.

As I stated at the start these are just some of the goals of the new club. It will be a ton of work before the end of 2018 but the future looks bright.

Good training and enjoy your dogs,

Jeff Martin