

DKGNA SOLMS TEST and ZUCHTSCHAU
Salt Lake City, Utah
Saturday September 28th 2019
by Jeff Martin



Andrew Jorgenson, Senior Judge Jeff Martin, Judge Todd Synoground, John Heiner, Test Director/Judge Mark Peasley, John Davis

The DKGNA club held a very successful Solms and Zuchtschau 45 minutes south of Salt Lake City on the Wasatch Wing & Clay grounds for pointing and drag work and the Lee Kay dog training ponds for waterwork. The area had experienced an unusually dry summer but all weather reports were now showing a record breaking 90% chance of over an inch of rain accompanied by 15 mph winds. This had judges, organizers and handlers even more

nervous than usual.

Test Director and judge was Mark Peasley, San Carlos, CA with Senior Judge and SZR Jeff Martin, Penticton, Canada doing the Zuchtschau. They were ably assisted by the longtime Drathhaar owner and judge Todd Synoground, Tri-Cities, WA who has stepped up a number of times to help our club in 2019.

The test coordinator position was ably handled by Mike Albert who by far had the biggest responsibility coordinating the convoy of gallery, entrants, game, bird planters and myriad of other details that go into running a successful test. Mike has his first DK and handled her to a Solms prize 1 perfect score in 2018 and handled the coordinator responsibility with the same cool demeanor, well done.

Initially 5 dogs were entered but this was reduced to 3 in the week leading up to the test with first time owners doubting if their summer of training was enough to successfully pass the test. The Solms is a big step up from derby level but not an impossible task and nowhere near the diversity or spit and polish expected at VGP level . As the rules state “The training for practical hunting purposes is primarily completed by this stage”. A Solms candidate can be anywhere from 12 to 24 mths and is a great test to showcase dogs that mature early and can be used for versatile hunting at this young age. It’s a mistake for new owners to avoid this test, it’s a measure of your training for sure but it is also a learning experience second to none, you can’t beat jumping into the fire if that’s what it takes. A dog is allowed to compete in 2 Solms, 2 AZP , 2 HZP and if

necessary 2 VGP to prove its worth breeding, so there is plenty of other opportunities if that's the goal.

Entrants and results were as follows.

1. Bama vom Hochland #0853/18 (Payton vom Kings Crossing/Jinx vom Keljer) a 15 month old DK female owned and handled by Andrew Jorgensen. Her field search and pointing were very good on both opportunities. She is a smallish medium sized brownschimmel and was difficult to see in the tall dry grass cover. Her rabbit and duck drags were completed strongly with 4 scores in both the drag and the manner of retrieving. Something like 80% of Solms failures are dogs getting out to 350 yards and thinking their free agents and finding something else to do, so this is by far the most nerve racking for handlers. The total retrieving scores are averaged up to the rabbit score making the rabbit drag doubly important.

Her gun sensitivity and blind retrieve were completed with only minor hiccups. The live duck search had the duck dutifully enter cover on the opposite bank. Bama entered confidently and had the duck leave the cover where it could be sluiced on the open water and retrieved to hand. The duck left the cover on cue and had the gallery wondering if Andrew hadn't been training the duck. Bama and Andrew received a prize 1 Solms, well done for staying the course. She also received an SG or very good rating in the conformation grading.

2. Braya vom Hochland #0859/18 a littermate to the first dog owned by John Heiner. Braya was given fresh ground but figured she knew where the first dog's birds were located. After getting her back on track she searched with enthusiasm and pointed solidly at the first opportunity. Her duck and rabbit drags were completed with the same high quality as her sister. Braya's water blind had her covering a lot of ground on the opposite bank and she searched diligently before finding it. On the live duck search her duck wasn't as well trained but Braya pushed it out of cover as expected to be shot and recovered to hand. Braya and John received a prize 1 Solms well done.

In the Zuchtschau she also received the highest rating of V or excellent. Braya is a tall strong striking looking female at 63cm. Her very high quality conformation from head to toe was unmistakable by anyone that saw her.

3. Isobel vom Hidden Creek #0047/18 (Cole vom Hidden Creek/Beretta vom Hidden Creek) a 23 month old solid black female owned by John Heiner Sr. She was beautifully handled by the very experienced Jon Davis and displayed a very strong performance all day.

Her ground coverage and her head cocked into the wind at all times using the face of the wind correctly showed her great experience. Her pointing was solid at both

times and she was very steady to flush showing her training and maturity. Her fur and feather drags were very good as per the rest of the entrants.

At the duck ponds her retrieving and blind retrieve were done with polish and gusto. Her live duck was thrown into the same cover on the opposite side and promptly swam out of sight to the end of the pond. Isobel obediently went to the cover on the opposite side and headed down the bank in the direction of the duck. She saw the duck out in the open and the pursuit was on. It was a great display of what these dogs are capable of when tracking and recovering wounded ducks over water, it is purely the innate ability of the dog to think independently and use its abilities to get the job done which is so incredible to witness. The duck was finally shot and caught by Isobel who returned to an island the very way she chased the duck and unfortunately dropped the duck and wondered what to do next. At Solms level testing, leaving edible game after encountering it is an elimination rule. It was a tough break on the very last requirement of the Solms, particularly after her strong showing all day.

At the Zuchtschau she was graded SG or very good. This dog has very high quality conformation and being black has those super dark expressive eyes. She would melt the coldest heart around the home fire. She is in most respects a V type dog except for a weakness in rear angulation and therefore drive.

This only left the Weisen or calmness test. This is to evaluate the dogs calmness during a break in the days hunting. If you've ever had a hyperactive field trial type of dog you will appreciate the importance of this temperament test.

This test provided some comic relief on the day with all 3 of the dogs loving their owners so much they wanted to come and sit in their laps. This is a straight forward "down stay" obedience test. These dogs were mostly calm but I think the new owners and onlookers now have a better appreciation of what's expected.

In summary the weather gods looked after us with the rain holding off until we were finished. It was a wonderful day of comradery as well as fantastic to witness the involvement and keenness of a young group of people initiated by Tyler Smith to this wonderful breed. With a few litters of Deutsch Kurzhaar on the ground the next few years look very positive in Utah!!