

My First Trip to Germany

by Scott Jacob

I had a wonderful first visit to Germany this month visiting a new friend and Leader for Ungaro vom Trocken Bach (Maui) to continue his training and performance in Germany for the next 15 months. As a field engineer for Zeiss, I travel frequently, but mostly far Westward through the Pacific to Saipan, American Samoa, Guam, and Japan. Going East to Europe was a new exciting experience. Despite some delays that were painful we made it to Frankfurt, Germany and made our Northern trek North on the Autobahn to Bondelum (a small town near Husum). My rental SUV was ironically a Ford with a 6-speed. Next time I will check for an automatic because driving a 6 speed on the autobahn is interesting with the various speed limit changes. The Ford SUV would shake going any faster than 120 km and didn't seem safe, whereas the Mercedes Benz seemed to drive with ease. A lot of "Benz" didn't like my American style of driving it seemed. Luckily, I learned on the road that exits with a solid white line making two lanes doesn't mean you can drive in either lane as the left lane is actually for oncoming traffic. At least in Germany they drive on the right side of the road.



Enroute to Bondelum off the
Autobahn

Bondelum is 90 minutes Northwest of Hamburg and 50 km from the border of Denmark. My friend, Thorsten, works for the German Navy as an EOD officer. He lived and trained out in Virginia for removal of Explosive devices for several years and learned English then. It was fun for him to speak in English as we spent the weekend at his home allowing Ungaro to get accommodated with his new surroundings.

Thorsten and his wife, Natalie, love helping dog trainers. They planned out getting DKs originally, but with certain hunting restrictions where Thorsten wanted to hunt at required him to acquire the Small Munster lander breed. Thorsten and Natalie have fallen in love with the breed and love to discover how and what the dogs are thinking.

When I first arrived, I came during his 2nd puppy-training session for the day. Natalie told me of the various owners and breeds that were there. It was amazing to see in person the actual training with his 5-month-old Small Munster lander pup. I noticed that unique sounds that echoed in the German language helped the dog listen and obey with ease. Having the ability to speak Japanese fluently made me realize how the German language has simple sounds that are easy to train and communicate with a



Puppy training with 1 Drahthaar, 1 Stoberhund, 3 Pudelpointers, 1 Longhair, 1 Blk DK, and 1 musterlander

dog. Simple things like pointing a fox tail on a fishing rod and using a one-syllable to release the pup to catch the tail was amazing. Moreover, after the catch, Thorsten was able to use the fishing pole to guide the pup back to simulate a retrieve while praising the puppy. Simple things like this help communicate properly with the puppy. I later found he used a simple German whistle to easily train the dog to “whoa” with the long end creating a stutter noise. I realized the dog easily recognizes the sound to stop or lay down (accepted with German rules).

The short end of the whistle was to communicate direction and to come back. Very simple. Very direct. I was dumbfounded by how difficult I have tried to train via the English-language/field trail pros/books/etc; and only to realize there is a simpler way to train just by watching Thorsten.

Thorsten has opened my eyes in ways that I never realized and wished I could have made a trip to Germany 30 years earlier. One difference that I liked is that his specialized training to avoiding harsh discipline on the dog and focusing on what is the dog thinking. By analyzing what the dog is thinking, Thorsten is trying to introduce to the dog a better way to work together as a dog and companion. He has found great success with it. Ungaro is a reward-based dog achiever and loves to super-excel in his performances. Thorsten is excited to work with Ungaro to see how he performs. Later after I left Thorsten let me know Ungaro is “buddy-kind-of-dog.”



Ungaro hanging out



Husum City

Before I left I had the pleasure to be taken to Husum and visit various shops. One shop in particular was an ice cream shop from Italy that specialized in deserts. I couldn't resist despite my keto diet and chose to eat a waffle with caramelized ice cream. I enjoyed every bite. I didn't take pictures, but they also made other spectacular deserts like ice cream made from Italian dishes of Pasta, Lasagna, etc. I really wanted to try all of them. Another cool item they had were beach baskets. Beach baskets would fold up when not

used, great for couples, and provided adequate shade for wind/sun/shade.

I realized in Germany they didn't sell Diet sodas (most likely due to the aspartame), but zero calorie sodas similar to a diet coke. They tasted okay, but you can't have everything. One last cool thing that I enjoyed were their buggies, horse trailers and little cars pulling the horse trailers. I had never believed anyone would be foolish enough to use a little car to pull two horses! I saw one pulling two horses with the buggy in front of an elongated horse trailer (small SUV as the car). However, I realized these cars were diesel, hence, the towing power.

I found one of the local favorites that gas stations offer to customers is called Leberkaswecken (sandwich meatloaf). It doesn't sound great in English, but it looked good. I found out from my German Zeiss colleagues that it is very delicious! I saw one customer just requested the meatloaf 3" thick with two 3" slices of bread sliced open with nothing else. Next time I am there I will have to try. Also, I found out the Germans love bottled carbonated water (mineral water). Most avoid regular plain water and just drink mineral water. I kept buying the wrong type (mineral water) and really had search high and low for just bottled water, lol. Quick tip I learned from one of my German colleagues: if you are unsure if its carbonated or natural water, just squeeze the bottle. The mineral carbonated water will be firm, air-tight due to the carbonation. Whereas, the natural bottle water will give-in a little to your hand pressure. I really wanted to laugh at the simple things.



Basket Benches

I noticed several places had these basket benches that opened up and closed up when necessary. The benches provided a great way for shade/cover from the elements and great to socialize and drink their beverages.

I am excited to return to Germany and spend more time there as a vacation to enjoy the experience next year. It will give me more time to practice up on my German I once learned in

high school for three years.

Scott Jacob