



AWMA Magazine

Volume 2, Issue 3, November 2006

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Yahoo! Group Reminder

Don't forget, if you are not already signed up on the AWMA yahoo email group (an email list that allows the whole membership to converse by sending only one email) then please inform Desiree' Shaw at dezireeshaw@yahoo.com. To remind those of you already signed up the email address for the yahoo group is americanworkingmalinoisassociation@yahoogroups.com

Regards,

Desiree' Shaw

dezireeshaw@yahoo.com



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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR...

Hello again,

I am excited to say that more of the members are volunteering to help put together the newsletter! We are making this newsletter for the members so it is important that all of the members step up and take part. There are some exciting things planned for the upcoming issues so I hope you all enjoy it! The 2006 AWMA National Championship was this past October and it seems that everyone had a great time. Congratulations to all of the participants! I hope you all are motivated for next year. The annual board meetings were held in October and resulted in some changes in the board positions. Anne Camper is the new President, with Christopher Smith as the Vice President. I was re-elected as Secretary. Marina Shukh was elected as the Treasurer and Cele Danner as our new Membership Chair. A full list of the Officers, Directors, and 2006-2007 Committees is available on the AWMA web site. Once again, please feel free to contact me with any ideas you may have!



*Money will buy a fine dog,
but only kindness will make him wag his tail.*

Happy Training,

Desiree' Shaw
AWMA Online Magazine Editor
AWMA Secretary

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YOUR OPINION MATTERS

...AND WE WANT TO HEAR IT!

"What advice would you give the American Belgian Malinois Club- should they consider becoming part of the AKC's WDS program? And would you join the ABMC to add your voice to this issue?"

Please send your replies to dezireeshaw@yahoo.com

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A COMPETITOR'S POINT OF VIEW

By Pat Carpenter

I planned on going to the Mal Nationals in 2005 until my niece picked that very weekend for her wedding. So I guess you could say we planned on going and were eagerly anticipating it for an entire year! We did well at the DVG Nationals in June of 2006, finishing third, trialed again to qualify for the 2007 DVG Nationals, and then spent the summer training and preparing for WV.

It was fun to "talk" to people on the AWMA list and goof around about what we were going to wear and who was going to actually show up. (I'm the one who was old, short and fat, trying to keep up with my dog on the field!!) I'm sure that everyone who spent the money to enter and travel the distance thought they had a chance to be on the podium or at least make a very good showing. I was so excited to see the other Mals out there, meet the people I have been reading about and corresponding with, and become reacquainted with other Mal friends. I was especially excited to see my dog's brother for the first time, and some other dogs that I had heard about.

Podium Belgian Shepherd Working Dog Club did a great job putting together their entry packets and arranging the hotels, the practice fields and the trial itself. I appreciated that they provided the scanners for the microchip tests, and answered my questions about any other stuff that I thought of. Their friends from Germany were a wonderful asset and helped to make everything run smoothly.

I know how hard we all trained to prepare for this trial. No one just flies a dog from the other end of the country or drives from anywhere else to a National competition without putting in the hours to train your dog. You lay your track, age it and then run it with your dog. You try to problem solve, fixing corners, tracking in all conditions, working on articles, working on problems at the start, or whatever. We all tried to get our dogs to peak in all three phases at the same time: the third week in October. We practiced those fronts and finishes, worked the retrieves, and prayed for a good send away and platz. We all tried to balance our training so that our dogs would be strong on the protection field but still remain under control. We also needed them to be fit. This has to be one of the most difficult dog sports in the world, as anyone who has trained a dog to a Schutzhund III knows.

On Draw Night, we were all still winners. It was great to meet the competitors and hear about their dogs, knowing they all had dreams and hopes for the competition. And then at last, my draw—I was the last flight in tracking, and the first flight of obedience and protection. I sighed, and went back to the hotel. Someone has to be first, and someone has to be last—we all know that. Seems no one wants to track last, but no one wants to be first onto the field. And I felt no differently. Before sleeping, I hit the Imodium box and tried to have positive visualizations in my mind for my dog for Friday's tracking.

Friday morning the weather, beautiful for most of the week, was taking a turn for the worse. The temperature was dropping and the wind was picking up, and the forecasters were promising extremely windy conditions after 12 noon. My coach and friend, Joanne Fleming Plumb, had come along with me for moral support but ended up babysitting me for the day Friday. It rained Thursday night and then poured again about 9:30am Friday morning, and then the wind began to howl. My tracking flight didn't leave the hotel until 12:55pm. My nerves were **not** under control so Joanne, in a valiant attempt to distract me, drove me around town trying to find some shoes with traction that would work on the field the next day. The orangey-red clay when wet was extremely slippery and I had fallen in the hotel parking lot the night before when exercising my puppy. It seemed like forever that we waited to leave for tracking.

We finally took off over the mountain, our little train of the last tracking dogs of the day. West Virginia is beautiful but I was much too nervous to enjoy it by this time. When we got to the fields, we parked and I walked in to see if I could get any information. What I heard was that Cynthia Zimmerman had gotten a 97 but that many people's dogs had not done very well, and many had failed. Broken hearts, tears, and hugs all around. Someone would come walking up the lane with their dog, and their faces showed that their hopes for these nationals had been crushed. Thank goodness all the tracking was scheduled on the same day, so that we all had pretty much the same conditions.

There were 9 in my flight, and again my draw sucked. I drew the 30th of the 31st tracks of the day. (The last dog was Joey's bitch in heat.) Mach & I were scheduled to track at 4:45pm, so we were out there for over three hours, just waiting. The wind was incredible, and it began to turn cold. The last four dogs had to go to another field down the road, so off we drove. White caps were whipping about in the rain puddles along the side of the road! Finally it was our turn. My fear was that Mach might not start. Sometimes he just thinks it is too hard and that he can't do it! I didn't know what would happen here as I had never even practiced tracking in a windstorm! We checked in and proceeded to walk to our flag. My dog looked back at me once before we hit the flag as if to say, "Hey, are you freaking kidding?", but he put his nose down and pushed into the wind, his nose deep and nailing every



Pat Carpenter heeling with Macho of Vitoshia



Mike Morgan's Baccus vom Drachenherz over the one meter hurdle



Front-half helper Glen Crawford driving Mach

footprint. The first leg went up a rolling hill directly into the wind. He lay down perfectly to indicate the first article, and I walked up the line, happy to find the wooden article between his front legs. Breathing a sigh of relief, I told him how wonderful he was and he started again beautifully. When he came to the first corner, he searched for the scent, circled once, found his way and went off on the second leg.

Oh no! My line was tightly wrapped around his back leg, and there was nothing I could do to help him. The next corner was beautiful and his nose was still deep, tracking intensely. Now we were heading down the third leg and the wind was at our backs, which is nice if you're on top of a horse, but not so good for my tracking dog. And I couldn't stop thinking about the line around his leg. Mach paused and then kept going. (If I had had my wits about me, I might have realized that this was the third leg—he was probably pausing to check an article but the wind was blowing the scent away. Maybe I could have stopped the line just a tad, enough to assure my dog that it was an article, and he may have gone down.) But he walked the article, found the other turns nicely and worked his heart out under the most difficult tracking conditions we have ever been on. Unfortunately, however, he missed the last article also and I had to pull him from the track. He was still working intently, trying to find it! We ended up with a disappointing 82, our lowest tracking score ever. The wind was still whipping it up outside, but it had certainly been knocked out of my sails.

A lot of hopes and dreams were crushed that day. About one third of the dogs failed, and the judge even wrote an explanation that was posted on the Mali 06 web site about the lousy tracking conditions. But those dogs who managed to keep it together, keep going forward, find the corners, and indicate the articles were true tracking dogs and deserved a steak dinner!

More Imodium, a restless night, and I awoke to a bright new day for obedience and protection. We were the second team of IPO III dogs on Saturday morning, and Mach did his long down first. This usually works out well for me as he just lays there and LOADS! When I picked him up to work, he was in drive and ready to go. The obedience is my favorite part of Schutzhund, probably because I had a lot of AKC obedience experience and have always felt more comfortable doing it. I was happy and proud of my dog with him prancing along with me, his tail wagging during our program. We ended up with a 94 and 2nd high obedience. If I could only stop his chewing on the retrieves! (Teaching all the behaviors in Schutzhund seemed so daunting to me in the beginning that I wasn't careful in shaping each part of the retrieve correctly—I figured, JUST learn all the stuff for pete's sake!)

Protection came soon enough and Mach was pumped up! I had been working all summer on **control** because we had lost so many points on his spinning around the helper, missing blinds, an extra poke on the sleeve, and his butt popping up when I returned to him before beginning the transports. I had excellent control but had lost some of my dog in the process—as I mentioned before: this sport is a balancing act! He shook the sleeve on almost every out and we lost some major points on his grips. We ended up 11th overall after all was said and done, with a disappointing 82, his lowest protection score, for a total of 258, also our lowest score ever. Back to the drawing board; we'll take the winter off playing AKC games and try to get his Utility title. In the spring, back to it and see if we can fix what I broke. Mach is only 6 years old and I hope he still has a lot of good years in him.

Since I was too nervous to watch many of the performances, I have enjoyed looking at the pictures at the official trial photographer's website, www.nolanddogart.com. I ordered a composite picture of Macho which is posted on her site. Catching these Mals in action in the pictures She has some awesome shots of the dogs, and some incredible pictures of the helpers in some amazing athletic poses, most with dogs attached to their arms. Check out the detail on her site!

The helpers at this trial were incredible. I am adding some pictures that were taken Bobby Arellano at www.delriodennels.com. These first are pics of Macho doing tracking, obedience and protection taken by Joanne Fleming Plumb. (By the way, this article was much harder to write than I thought it would be.) Next page is Greg and Flair, Cynthia's dog, Vis, Mike Morgan's dog, Baccus, in the blind, and the darker dog on the bottom row in the blind is Paula Daigle's Ozzie. Mike Morgan and Baccus heeling, and next to him is Dre Hastings and Zion, also showing very nice heeling. On the last page, some of the dogs are not identified, but on the bottom of the last page is Steve Gregalunas's Eli in the blind, earning his IPO III at this trial.

The first place winner and also high obedience was Wilson Rosa and his beautiful heeling with Azzaro is shown on the last page. On the sleeve is Marina's dog, Simba, who got high protection. Maybe on our Mal list, owners will identify their dogs! I know I am not sure of all of them.

Sorry this article is so late. It was my first attempt to put text and pictures together and I am not going to change my career any time soon to computer genius!!! Hope to see all of you in Michigan in 2007!



Pat Carpenter tracking Mach



Dre Hastings and Zion of Vitosha showing very nice heeling



A great bite on back-half helper Rondrell Marshall





Steve Gregalunas' Eli vom Teufelhund in the blind with Glen Crawford



Hardy Ernsting heeling Caraq von Löwenfels



Cynthia Zimmermann's A'Bete Visage Noir vom BMT shows his power in his last trial before retirement



Mach's guarding on Rondrell

View more great action shots on
Cindy Noland's website <http://www.nolanddogart.com/mali06gallery>

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INTERVIEW WITH DR. JOHN SHERMAN

This interview was submitted by Gary Shaw. Gary is an AWMA member from North Carolina.

On Sunday, Oct 29th, after several weeks of telephone tag I finally caught up with Dr Sherman at his Raleigh, North Carolina facility "VetHab". Dr Sherman's practice specializes in physical therapy for sport dogs, though he does a lot of pet dogs as well. His specialty is returning high level "canine athletes" to their previous or higher level of performance after an injury, whether surgically repaired or not. I approached the interview with expectations of a couple of treadmills and a small pool. What I found was a high tech facility to rival the sports medicine facilities associated with professional human athletes. Dr Sherman competes in Field Trial sports himself, but has rehabbed dogs in nearly every possible sport, including Schutzhund and Ring Sport. I found the interview one of the most interesting I have ever conducted, and I am excited share it with you as follows;

Gary: "How did you become involved in this aspect of veterinary medicine?"

Dr Sherman: "I had started with sporting dogs as a participant when I was 13 with field trial labs and was "bitten" by the bug so to speak. Then I became a veterinarian and became interested in injuries to sporting or working dogs. In my 2nd year in practice, while preventing a technician from being bitten by a large dog I injured two discs in my lower back and eventually had to see a neurosurgeon, resulting in surgery. Afterwards I had a lot of problems, adhesions, walking, pain and they didn't know what to do with me so they sent me to physical therapy. They had to break down the adhesions and I wasn't happy with my care. It seemed more reaction then proactive. I realized that I wasn't much better in my own practice. You know we would look and see, 'well it's a cruciate injury, we can do surgery and then crate him while it heals and good luck'. And I realized that it was by chance that they got better. I promised myself and the good guy upstairs that if I could have the opportunity I would work with them step by step and lead them through the injuries working with the tissues and muscles. And I guess that's where the vision of Vethab was formed. I think that early in my career I had some well known people in the field trial sport come to me with high level working dogs with cruciate injuries and I was able to help return them to the sport, which in 1995 was unusual. The dog world is a small one and so I began to have more and more people asking for this service and I came to kind of a crossroads in my career. I was 8 years out of school and looking for my niche. No one out there had a rehab only type of practice. Some had kind of tacked it onto eastern medicine kinds of things like acupuncture. Laurie McCauley in Chicago had done some early stuff, so I kind of said, you know there is need out there and I'd like to target sporting dogs but still treat the pet in this kind of a practice alone. So I took the plunge and said I'm going to start a practice that did that alone. I still remember the NC Vet board saying, "Boy you want to do what? And call it what?" And no one knew quite how to handle it, but we worked through it and really kind of set a model for other states to follow. Six or seven years ago it was kind of unheard of, but today it is one of the most rapidly growing fields in veterinarian medicine."



Gary: "Is all you do orthopedics? I understand you do some pre-surgical work on dog's expecting surgeries and such."

Dr Sherman: "Right we do a kind of "Pre-hab" if you will with dogs getting them used to the equipment. We do physical conditioning for dogs preparing them for tasks and sports and upcoming events. We do weight management for dogs and some cats with weight issues and help them recover from injuries. We find ourselves doing a lot of pain management and wound management with animals with tough cases for regular medicine, as well as with animals recovering from radiation treatments and that type of thing."

Gary: "I heard that you are doing some work for injury prevention in sports specific areas."

Dr Sherman: "Yes, we have found that animals doing the same kinds of things over and over, such as Schutzhund for example, which I know is your sport, we found that there are a lot of neck injuries and cruciate injuries. So then we look at the types of specific activities and look at what kinds of specific work can we do to help prevent the injuries we are seeing. And then, injury recognition, we include as part of that service. So we then started to travel and give seminars to try to show people how to recognize the dangers and minimize the threats at the same time."

Gary: "So you've developed seminars to target specific sports?"

Dr Sherman: "We have. We try to cover all of the interests of those in the room. I have found also, that many people are doing more than just one sport with their dogs. Sometimes you have to cover all sports that they are interested in, but we try to tailor our talks for the particular group we are talking to."

Gary: "Have you found some sports that cause more injuries than others?"

Dr Sherman: "I hear that question a lot. Mostly from agility people, which is probably the most popular sport out there, and they want to know if it's too much for the average pet. You know, I think the benefits far outweigh the risks. You know the risks to the handler in the field can be as significant as to the dog. Part of me has thought of doing part of the seminar on how to prepare the handler for the sport, making sure we cover both aspects, as it's a team sport."

Gary: "As a bite work helper I would love that."



Dr Sherman: <laughing> “Oh yeah, probably your shoulder, wrists, elbow, and neck show the wear also.”

Gary: “Absolutely. And I have an interest in an area you may have already addressed. I think that many of the dog’s injuries in my sport [Schutzhund] often occur due to the work of the helper. And I have often thought that if we could get someone with your expertise to observe the higher impact exercise and work with the helpers we may be able to reduce those kinds of “jamming” injuries, have you ever considered something like that?”

Dr Sherman: “I have I have a good friend, Chris Zinc, and she and I can talk all night about working dogs and how to make them better. And you know, she and I have a big project going on trying to figure out gates of certain dogs in relations to their propensity for injury. Comparing different gates to all different sizes, so you figure out what “normal” is and then compare them to the specific exercise and injuries that can occur from those exercises. We have to figure out what normal is first, but that is something I would love to build on in the near future.”

Gary: “I understand you have specialized out into the area of gate analysis using digital video.”

Dr Sherman: “Oh yeah and I have found it invaluable for many reasons. Using digital video gives a picture of the “flow” of the dog and what’s going on. Our eyes see 15 to 18 frames a second, whereas a normal camera gets 60. So you can get so much information on the kinematics of the animal. You can focus in on each individual area, see the velocity, acceleration and weaknesses so you can plot those points and judge the strain on the body and it’s never been done before so it’s very exciting.”

Gary: “Over the years I have found a kind of instinctive ability to watch a dog and say, ‘I don’t know exactly what, but something is not right.’ Have you, through the study of kinematics been able to sort of drill down on that a bit, and almost kind of diagnose through this procedure?”

Dr Sherman: “Yes, actually I have clients travel from all over for rechecks. We’ll have the digital video and do rechecks based upon the movement, especially after becoming familiar with those patients norms. So yes, by looking for symmetry we can say, ‘they [the dog] are protecting or not using an area’ very well. I would like to see a day when (and I don’t think it is to far away) people bring a working dog in when it is a healthy adult and we will capture a digital video, so that later if the dog is developing problems we can make a digital comparison and immediately identify the “hot” spots. As a person says they are worried, or the dog’s performance is off, and hone in on the problem. Dogs are so driven and stoic but I have come to trust people’s sixth sense. If I have a client that works their dog and they come in and say something is not right, I will keep looking until I find it because I will tell you 99% of the time the handler is right. That’s kind of the goal of my seminars is to give people the tools to identify these kinds of problems early so that treatment is still a possibility.”

The Second part of the interview along with pictures of Dr. Sherman’s facility will be published in the next AWMA online magazine, due out in January, 2007.

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PUPPY ANNOUNCEMENTS...

Remember, any AWMA member can advertise puppies or breeder information at no cost! Email dezireeshaw@yahoo.com

Oak Spring kennels

Nala x Taureau and Dovre Fjeld Zany (A'Tim x Nala daughter) to (possibly) Leo Hinojosa's dog **Yghor**, a Rakky son. Some pups may also still be available. Contact Phil Behun 847-420-6208 phil@oakspringkennels.com

Ot Vitosha*

1 **U Ot Vitosha x Venom Ot Vitosha**

2 **Turcodos vd Duvetorre x Kali Ot Vitosha**

3 **Qenny Ot Vitosha x Faye Airport Hanover**

4 **Turcodos vd Duvetorre x J'Eeve Ot Vitosha**

* females only; males will be trained and placed for sale at 18 months

Contact Ivan Balabonov 813 433 6597 ivanb19@msn.com

Loups du Soleil

Feist du Loups du Soleil X Lareina du Loups du Soleil

Another "F" litter linebreeding. Lareina is a VERY driven member of our fantastic "L" litter. We expect wonderful working dogs with great grips. Puppies due early March.

"BB" des Contes d'Hoffmann X Fauxtois du Loups du Soleil

This will be Fauxtois' last litter! She has proven herself to be one of the best producing females in the US. "BB" is a first class dog in every way, and a good representative of the justifiably famous Contes d'Hoffmann kennels. Early April.

Contact Mike Ellis rolmik1989@yahoo.com 646-345-0232 or

Lisa Maze mal-n-border@cox.net 619-997-6808

Dantero Kennels

O litter du Dantero Pups are due April 16, 2006. **Dantero's Red River Rapids "Chaos"** - FRI, OFA Exc, elbows normal (Raptor - FRIII x Nature - FRI) X **Vassiliev des Contes d'Hoffmann "Mac"** - FR Brevet, RATP(K9), CGC, OFA Good, elbows normal

Contact Kadi Thingvall malndobe@juno.com 760-723-3291

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OUR MEMBERS' MALS



Don Cates' "Boca Van Joefarm"



Desiree' Shaw's "Carma Ot Vitosha"



Gary Shaw's 10 week old "Mayhem"



Dana Miller's "Kelso Street Ruby" earning her "Flyball Dog Champion" title in New Mexico



Winter training in Maine



Carma Ot Vitosha

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