



A.W.M.A. ONLINE MAGAZINE

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INTERVIEW WITH EDGAR SCHERKL

BY DANA WILLIAMS

How long have you been in Schutzhund and how did you get started?

I start in 1976 in my Club in Repelen with a German Shepherd female. The motivation was to live with a dog in a friendship.

What are some of your accomplishments in the sport?

- First Place FCI-WC 2002 (A`Desert) and 2008 (Cayman)
- Second Place FCI-WC 2000 (A`Desert) and 2010 and 2011 (Cayman)
- Third Place FCI-WC 2009 (Cayman)
- First Place FMBB-WC 2001(A`Desert) and 2011 (Cayman)
- First Place FMBB World Cup 2010 (Cayman)
- Third Place FMBB-WC 2009 (Cayman)
- Third Place FMBB- World Cup 2011 (Cayman)
- Second Place European-Championship Belgian Shepherds 1992 (Arco)
- Third Place European-Championship Belgian Shepherds 1994 (Arco)
- First Place Austria-Championship Belgian Shepherds 1991 (Arco)
- First Place VDH-German Championship for all breeds 1991 (Arco), 2002 (A`Desert), 2011 (Cayman)
- Second Place VDH-German Championship for all breeds 2000 (A`Desert)
- 1 Place DMC –Championat 1990-1991-1993 (Arco) 2009-2010 (Cayman)
- 2 Place DMC –Championat 1992-1994 (Arco) 2001 (Desert)
- 3 Place DMC –Championat 2000 (Desert)

DMC-VDH and FCI Judge, Teacher for DMC, VDH and FCI Judge, Helper on German and Worldchampionships, Judge for Breeding and Teacher for them, President DMC, Seminars for IPO and Police dogs

What was your first Schutzhund dog?

A German Shepherd Female Uschi vom Wilmkesfeld

Do you compete in any other dog sports?

Only in IPO and IPO-FH

Please introduce a little about your current dog Cayman, his big accomplishments, etc.

Cayman is Cayman, now he is 6 years old and I compete on highest competitions now for 4 years. In this time he was on FCI every year on the podium, in FMBB



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three times, in DMC two times and in VDH one time. I think he is one of the most stable dogs.

How did you find out about Cayman's litter and decide to pick a dog from that particular breeding combination? Were there any special dogs in his pedigree you really liked?

This was luck. My friend Markus Neutz called me and said: "There is a interesting litter at my friend Costa, Duke x Azra, this can be nice." I say hey, they are 5 weeks old, so they are not free. He say, let me talk and so I get the first pick.

I go there to pick the puppy and when I saw Cayman and we looked at each other he was in my heart and that was the beginning of "one man and his dog". I know that this is one of the best things that happened in my life.

When you first saw Cayman as a puppy, what traits drew you to him? -Any stand out characteristics when he was a young puppy?

He was from the beginning a self-confident social dog and smart like always. The kind how he looks was amazing, you can feel his natural power.

As a puppy, was there anything in particular as far as foundation you did with Cayman?

Yes I build up the social behavior.

What were some of the biggest challenges you had in training Cayman and preparing for competition?

Not to loose my mind and be fair all the time. The dog only can do what the trainer is able to train. If something don't work is my fall.

What was the easiest thing for Cayman to learn?

To fight.

Who has helped you the most in making Cayman what he is today? Was there a "team" of people that help you train or do you train by yourself?

By the way his smartness, you need really good people around you, like my helpers Markus Neutz, Björn Giesen, Dennis Bauer and Lars Bloem. Always the master of track Jürgen Esser and my wife, to help me in Obedience.

How do you prepare Cayman and yourself for competition? What kind of training schedule do you keep in preparing for a large competition, such as tracking 6 times a week, focusing on retrieves or send outs, etc.

10 km running, 30 minutes bicycle and 30 min swimming four week and one week in front of the trial. Two weeks before every day tracking, one week before every second day. 3 times training in a week Obedience and protection

What were your favorite accomplishments with Cayman?

I think it is protection, he like it to fight. But during the time, when I become smarter he likes obedience. I learn to feed his dominant basic behavior in obedience with some provocations, he feel that he can manage the situation.

FROM THE EDITOR

Don't forget if you have any articles, ideas, pictures, that you'd like to submit for publication in the newsletter, please send them to Dana Williams at schhrotts@hotmail.com



MEMBER ADVERTISING

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AN INTERVIEW WITH JOE BROCKINGTON

BY DANA WILLIAMS

How long have you been involved in Schutzhund?

I got involved in Schutzhund in 2006, when I was a Junior in college.

Do you decoy in any other sports (French Ring/Mondioring)?

No, but I started off with a police background.

What are some of your accomplishments since you've been involved in dogsport?

(titles achieved, events selected for, etc)

- Handling
 - I've recently titled my male Yogy from BH to IPO3
 - Yogy received the 2011 MER Championships Helper's Favorite trophy
 - 2011 MER High Auslander
- Helper Work
 - O.G. Keystone Schutzhund Club Training Director
 - O.G. Keystone Schutzhund Club Helper
 - 2010 GSD Nationals Back Half Alternate
 - 2010 AWMA National Back Half Helper
 - 2010 AWDF Back Half Helper
 - 2009 AWMA National IPO 1-2 Front Half
 - 2009 AWMA National IPO 1-2 Back Half



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Photography

How did you become involved in Decoying for Schutzhund?

In 2006, I was in the hospital recovering from surgery with a broken back when I was introduced to a K9 handler, who was visiting my hospital roommate. After seeing multiple K9 teams in different stadiums I was intrigued. I thought what better time than now to start asking questions. My curiosity led me to lieutenant, Jeff Rynearson, from the South Bend Police Department. I began attending their police K9 training sessions. From that point on I have been in love with the sport.

What kind of work went into certifying as a National Level Helper? What was the hardest part of the certification?

The first step in becoming certified as a National level helper is a solid foundation. Knowing the rules and the overall picture of the helpers job is a must. Once the foundation is laid, hands on experience is the next step. I was fortunate enough to be able to work with some really great dogs in the early stages of my career. Along with the dogs, I was also fortunate to work with some excellent helpers and trainers who gave me some good advice. Attending helper seminars and training seminars allowed me to continue to grow as a National Level Helper.

You have been selected to work several large events. How would a new decoy go about training to work a high level event?

First, I would encourage all decoys to learn to push each dog, so the judge can easily separate the strong dogs from the weak. I feel that is the helpers most important job along with being safe, consistent, and fair. The best training is hands on experience, and constantly studying and improving your work.

What kind of physical preparation goes into preparing for a high level Schutzhund event?

Physical preparation goes into every high level Schutzhund event. The trainers take so much time getting their dogs ready for the event, I feel it is my responsibility to do the same as a helper. There is a local park about ten minutes from my house with 80 stairs. I do sets of 8 on the stairs, as if it were a flight of dogs. Being an active helper and working different dogs is also beneficial before an event.

Do you go on any particular diet or exercise regime to prepare for an event?

About 2 months leading up to an event, I try to stop eating out and cook most of my food. My mother in law is good at cooking healthy, so I head to her house for a lot of dinners.

[cont'd. on page 9]

FROM THE DESK OF THE AWMA PRESIDENT,

October 2011

This fall represents the eleventh year we've been in existence and we recently completed our ninth annual AWMA National Championship. The event was hosted by Machtig Strom in Illinois, with the event held at Global K9. Club members and the people at Global K9 worked hard to give us a quality event and I would like to thank them for their efforts. The organization has donated a flag with the AWMA logo for use at future events. We were fortunate to have judges Hari Arcon from Slovenia and Mike Caputo at the helm. The dogs were tested by our helpers Joe Brockington, Marcus Hampton, and Waine Singleton. To be sure that the tracking went according to plan, Glenn Stephenson was there. I'd also like to offer a special thanks to our newest regional director, Bob Miller, for everything he did to make sure that the club had the information and assistance needed to be successful. There are many other people who committed their time and effort to making sure the competitors had a venue where they could focus on their performances; you know who you are and I cannot thank you enough.

One of the comments I received while I was at the event was that there was an atmosphere of camaraderie and support. Perhaps this is because the AWMA is characterized by having a membership comprised of active trainers and competitors. Over 15% of our membership competes at our national event, and I believe that is far greater than any other AWDF organization. A similar percentage also competes at the AWDF National Championship. This is quite remarkable, particularly considering that our members are also doing very well at the national and international level. We also have a very high percentage of handler owner trained dogs, suggesting again that as a group we are engaged in the training process and not just in competition. I think it speaks volumes about the dedication you all have towards preserving the working qualities of the breed and your commitment towards top level training.

In the near future we will be posting the minutes of the meetings held at the event. There are a couple of things that I would like to bring to your attention that will be mentioned in those minutes. The first is the continuing need to have more local clubs and local events. If there are three or more of you in an existing club or within reasonable proximity of each other, consider taking the steps to make this happen. It isn't difficult, and if you have experience, you can petition to be a full club without having to go through the forming club status and affiliation trial that is required by other organizations. You can also consider becoming a dual club with another organization or existing local club. Note that to form and belong to an AWMA club, not everyone must be an AWMA member! We welcome those with other breeds and encourage them to participate in our events. Since our individual and club dues are considerably less expensive than other organizations, our scorebooks are issued locally, and we don't charge extra fees for people to enter our events, we are a viable alternative for people who wish to support the sport. These comments reflect an initiative that will be launched soon to market the AWMA. I have already changed the introduction on the homepage of our website to reflect this effort. If you have any ideas of how we can better get the word out on what we have to offer, feel free to contact me or our Vice-President, Christopher Smith. The second item is to watch for the announcement for bids to host the 2012 AWMA Nationals. It will be our 10th annual event. There is a contract available on our website that contains the basics for hosting, including the payment schedule from the AWMA; we provide \$1500 plus \$25 for each entry from the previous year's trial to help defray costs.

Watch for information on the upcoming rule changes for the sport. The AWMA has already voted to accept all of the new rule changes adopted by the FCI. This includes the ability to enter for a protection title without also needing to enter for an obedience title. There are few things still under consideration, and when all of the details are available, we will post them on the discussion forum.

I'd also like to thank those of you who have made donations to the organization or who have sponsored banner ads on the website. Your generosity has allowed us to keep our dues low and to offer financial support for our international competitors. We are grateful for your support!

As we transition into much shorter days and cooler (for us colder) temperatures and towards the holidays, I hope that all of you can reflect on a successful year of training and trialing. The friendships and support of our dedicated group of enthusiasts is noteworthy – we have much to be proud of as a small but incredibly active organization.

Anne Camper



Anne with Bazouka ("Zouka")
van de Trinekesdreef, IPO 3





THE DOGSPORT FAMILY: “HOW TO HAVE SUCCESS IN THE SPORT WHILE RAISING YOUNG CHILDREN”.

BY DANA WILLIAMS

In this issue of the AWMA Newsletter, we sought out to interview trainers who balance having young children while still staying active in competition. We would like to introduce you to Amanda Caldron and her two children, Miguel who is 3 years old and new addition Arianna, who at the time of publishing is 3 months old. Amanda currently has two dogs, a 7 month old black Belgian Malinois who is training in French Ringsport and PSA, and a 4 year old Dutch Shepherd who has dabbled in nearly every sport but is currently focusing on French Ring and PSA. Amanda was interviewed to find out her secret for balancing two children under 3 years of age while still staying active in dog sports.

How do you balance having a toddler with training your dogs? Any tips for families with young children on how to find time for your dogs without losing time with your children?

Amanda: I constantly struggle with time restrictions and I always feel guilty about time distribution no matter what I do. There are always good and bad days. I feel part of being a responsible dog owner, not just for working people but also for pet people, is remaining loyal to your companion. When owning an animal we are obliged to many factors of their overall health and well being. Some of those being physical and mental stimulation which tend to be the first thing people fall behind on when having children. When my son was younger I made it a point to include him in activities with the dogs as a benefit to them, him and myself. I would carry him in a backpack carrier while doing obedience, feeding them, playing ball or swimming with them. He also developed a huge interest in the dogs and wanted to work with them as well. When we took them for walks or were conditioning them, he wanted to be right there to assist. I would say it's hardest doing obedience and/or bitework with a toddler around because they tend to get bored quickly and to have them interfere too closely could be dangerous. Conditioning exercises are a great way to introduce children and allow all parties to have fun. My son loves throwing a ball into the water for dogs to swim, he loves helping "guide"



my Dutch Shepherd Achilles along when doing weight pull. I find the best times for obedience or bitework is during nap time or make an early morning and get out a little before the kids wake up. Having a supportive family and spouse definitely helps as well. My parents definitely help out from time to time with babysitting duties. You can do it alone but you just become a little more limited. The days I'm by myself, which is most days, I tend to play the two ball game in the yard along with running the dogs on the treadmill during every day activities such as feeding children, bath times, etc. Then during nap times we fit in a short obedience or bitework session. In general, I recommend getting children involved in the dog activities. They learn a sense of accomplishment and responsibility while also being properly educated on reading animal behavior and proper interaction. The easiest exercises are simple walks, playing ball, conditioning like weight pull or draft work and using the treadmill. Some easy obedience where kids can interact is teaching control during the retrieve of something. You can have the dog drop it in front of you or your child and teach the dog to back up and lay down or sit stay and you can assist your child in doing another retrieve. I have also learned a dog bonds better with kids this way and already associate them with you as being top leader and they gain more respect for a young child when they are included. I also think the kids knowledge of safe handling and interaction with dogs is something I value for them as they age.

What limitations did you have when you were pregnant with your daughter and still training? Were there any phases you were unable to do or a point in time you limited your activity? Was there a point in your pregnancy where you stopped training?

Amanda: When I was pregnant with my son I was extremely limited in training and didn't do much other than obedience and conditioning at home while I was pregnant. That was due more to lack of resources such as trainers, equipment,

finances, etc. Even when he was born and I gained access to the right resources I still limited myself due to not having child accommodations in colder weather. With this recent pregnancy with my daughter, I really aimed to stay on task and schedule with the progression of the dogs and made it a point to work with the dogs regularly. I aimed for 3-4 days a week which generally was before my son had woken up, during his naps, or I'd include him and allow him to play outside or in garage while I trained. It does help with the dog's ability to concentrate during a level of distraction. For people with young children that want to try this I have found several activities that are fun for a child such as bubbles, chalk, riding a bike, etc. I also would occasionally utilize a dog park for scent work or obedience since they are generally large enough to separate yourself from high traffic areas and take advantage of the traffic when you desired. The only problem it is a risky thing as you can't control the other dog owners, the other dogs and sometimes dogs aren't always kid friendly.

I did have to start limiting myself at different times during the pregnancy. I actually had to leave my job for medical reasons so I did start to become more aware of specific training exercises that I had to avoid. I began limiting my direct handling during our puppy's bitework at about 7 months pregnant so there wasn't the jerking and pressure on my body. I avoided playing tug with both dogs at about the same time frame since they both put paws on me. My adult dog, Achilles, I was pretty much limited to placement commands, send away, and close proximity obedience. I limited doing recalls, long distance obedience and/or play because was worried about getting injured. Knowing your dog and your own limits is important for everyone's safety if you're going to continue staying active during pregnancy, especially with working dogs. My male also got a little pushier with people in general knowing that I was in a more fragile state so it was important for me to control the variables of which we trained around so I didn't put myself in a bad position. I delivered at 39 weeks and 1 day and between 35 and 37 weeks I really kept to a bare minimum of just allowing the dogs out and limited exercise with them. At the end of my 37 weeks and throughout my 38th week I became a little restless and was eager to have the

baby so I was doing more with the dogs to hopefully induce labor. It didn't work but I would recommend staying consistently active as it does help with a less painful and quicker delivery. It is also important to exercise with precaution for your safety throughout pregnancy and always follow your doctors specific orders.

After the birth of your daughter, how did you go about introducing her to the dogs and your son?

Amanda: After both deliveries, Achilles became protective over the children so I tried to limit interaction unless it was controlled and in a family setting. For example we allowed interactions with assistance from family members during walks together, running on the treadmill, swimming, etc. We also did controlled obedience while my family member holds the baby etc. With both children I set up all the baby stuff well in advance so the dogs got use to seeing swings, bouncers, crib, etc and learned to respect the boundary of those items. I even introduced them to walking with an empty stroller prior to baby's arrival. There are different creams, lotions etc. that are used for children so I will often put them on myself so they aren't overly interested in the new smell when the baby is wearing some of those products. When baby comes home I don't have them meet right away and I don't change my demeanor

towards my dogs. I don't want to them to associate the baby with excitement, anger, fear, etc. I allow them to get the direct smell of the baby from private interactions with me. After a few days I usually decide to introduce them to the baby once the smell is not overwhelming to them and doesn't spark a huge curiosity. I then have the baby in a stroller or in my arms so they may smell the baby from a safe distance. Again, knowing your dog and taking all safety precautions is best. Having two kids is definitely harder than one and I expected the dogs coped with the change of a new baby better than my older son, Miguel. I kind of went about it in the same way teaching him that he needed to respect boundaries of the new baby items throughout the house and he learned the difference between his belongings and the new arrivals belongings. Luckily my son already knows the meaning of being gentle and quiet and he follows instruction quite well. I think this stems from having an early foundation with being around animals and other kids). Miguel has always been



[cont'd. on back page]





RENDERING SOME SENSE INTO FEEDING FAT

Last month's article on dietary strategies for distance racing revived the age old relationship between high fat diets and performance in racing sled dogs. In a way it was like re-inventing the wheel; it may seem like a futile practice, but each time we do this we refine our understanding of the machinery and how best to use it. The research featured in Donna Marlor's article was the latest installment in this process. Like all good research it revealed some exciting new information and raised several new questions. With that in mind I thought it might be a good time to review what we know about the role of dietary fat in sled dog performance and how this information can be applied to optimize performance and minimize health risks.

Feeding high fat diets is not a new idea, in fact it was used successfully in sled dogs long before anyone thought of racing them. Since people in the North Country have been using dogs to transport themselves and their belongings they have fueled them with seal meat, salmon, and scraps from moose and caribou all of which is high in protein and high in fat. It wasn't until dogs were removed from this traditional diet and placed on "cereal" based commercial food that the benefits of the traditional diet became apparent. While these early dry products were convenient and balanced for vitamins and minerals they were associated with stress diarrhea when dogs were worked long and or hard.

In the 1970's David Kronfeld and Harris Dunlap published a series of papers which redefined the accepted nutritional dogma of the time and showed that high fat, high protein diets were superior to high carbohydrate diets for promoting endurance in sled dogs. This flew in the face of the new and widely accept concept of "carbohydrate loading" that had proven very effective in human marathon running. Kronfeld and Dulap went so far as to show that dogs could maintain normal blood values during strenuous exercise on diets completely free of carbohydrates. These dogs even maintained normal concentrations of glucose, the main sugar or carbohydrate circulating in the blood. The authors did recognize however that the dogs fed the carbohydrate-free diet experienced occasional diarrhea while running. They concluded that a small amount of carbohydrate, about 5% of the calories, may be necessary to promote optimal gut function during hard work. Unlike the other energy nutrients (fat and protein) carbohydrates can be used with or without oxygen which is sometimes of limited availability in the gut during hard work. The lining of the gut gets its nutrients from what is in the gut and not from the blood stream so Kronfeld and Dunlap suggested that having a little carbohydrate available during hard work might keep the gut better fueled and decrease stress diarrhea. These studies were the basis for the addition of meat which is high in protein and high in fat to dry dog foods. The concept has been further developed today with the formulation of performance diets which are so high in protein and fat that they may work without the addition of meat. By the 1970's we were back to the traditional concept of feeding a high fat high protein diet but we still didn't know why these diets worked better and why this strategy was more successful than carbohydrate loading.

I've always thought it helps to understand how something works if you want to optimize its use so in the late 1980's we started re-examining the role of diet in performance. Our first study evaluated the effect of feeding a high fat or a high carbohydrate diet on how energy was stored and utilized in sled dogs. We discovered that even in the untrained state, dogs fed a high fat diet were better able to mobilize and utilize fat as a fuel the first day they ran in harness. This was significant because at the time many mushers fed any diet that would prevent death in the off season and waited to switch to a good diet at the onset of training. It takes between 8 and 12 weeks for a dog to completely adapt to a high fat diet thus dogs fed this way were beginning their season in a real deficit.

In this study we also found that dogs fed a high fat diet were able to sustain intense exercise longer than those fed a high carbohydrate diet. At that time, and to some extent still today, the most popular endurance enhancing strategy used by human athletes was to load their muscles with as much carbohydrate (or glycogen) as possible before beginning an event. While fat can supply most of the energy necessary for low to moderate intensity exercise (up to 60% VO₂ max) carbohydrate must be added in as exercise intensity increases and becomes very important for exercise intensities above 80% of VO₂ max. The depletion of the relatively small carbohydrate stores forces an athlete to slow down to an exercise intensity that can be sustained predominantly by burning fat. This is what happens when an athlete "hits the wall" or "bonks" as they say in cycling. Athletes who carbohydrate load "overflow" the carbohydrate tanks in their muscle and so can run longer than those that start the race with a less full tank. This assumes that both athletes use their carbohydrate at the same rate, and that is where the dogs fed a high fat diet have a distinct advantage. Although the dogs fed a high carbohydrate diet stored significantly more carbohydrate in their muscle they also used it at twice the rate of the high fat fed dogs. We found that dogs fed a high fat diet could sustain very intense hill climbing 30-50% longer than those fed the high carbohydrate diet. Carbohydrate sparing rather than carbohydrate loading appears to be the most successful strategy for endurance in sled dogs.

From these studies we found that dogs trained on high fat diets were able to generate more power from fat than dogs fed a high carbohydrate diet. We still did not know the mechanism responsible for this amazing adaptation. To shed light upon this question we ran dogs on the treadmill while wearing a mask and measured how much oxygen they used and how much carbon dioxide they generated while exercising at gradually increasing intensities. This information told us what fuel they were using at different intensities and also defined their VO₂ max. VO₂ max is the maximum amount of oxygen your dog can burn per minute per unit body weight. It sets the physiological limit for performance and is often used in determining an athlete's performance potential (bigger is better). Lance Armstrong has a VO₂ max of about 82 ml/kg/min. We measured dogs on our team that had a VO₂ max of 240 ml/kg/min or about 3 times that of Lance Armstrong. I always tell people that is why we ride on the sled and the dogs pull it! In these studies we found that if you took the same dogs, trained them identically and fed them a high fat diet for 12 weeks and then a high carbohydrate diet for 12 weeks they achieved a 30%

higher VO₂ max on the high fat diet. This is greater than the increase you usually see as you progress from the untrained to the trained state. They also achieved a significantly higher power output from fat alone when fed the high fat diet (60% VO₂ max on high fat vs 40% VO₂ max on high carbohydrate). This translates into higher sustained speed over time. These results were so unexpected that we repeated the study 3 times to make sure they were real. We then examined muscle biopsies and found that dogs fed the high fat diet had re-tooled the machinery of their muscles to enable the changes we had measured. High fat fed dogs had 30% more mitochondria per fiber than high carbohydrate fed dogs. These little particles are the site in the cell where fats and carbohydrates are "burned" with oxygen and converted into the energy form used by the muscle to do work. When dogs were switched from a high fat to a high carbohydrate diet the numbers of these mitochondria decreased, VO₂ max fell and max power output from fat as a fuel decreased. Feeding a high fat diet not only provides the most important fuel for work, it changes the structure and function of the muscles so that they can use that fuel better. The bottom line from these studies performed on sprint sled dogs is that you could run further at a faster speed when you fed a high fat diet than you can when you fed a high carbohydrate diet.

Although providing adequate amounts of fat is a key to success in fueling a sled dog, carbohydrates still play an important role, and this role may differ depending upon the arena in which the dog is expected to perform. On the sprint side, exercise intensity often exceeds 85% of VO₂ max. Even though fats supply most of the energy up to 60% of VO₂ max, the remaining 25% or so must come from carbohydrates and if that fuel source is depleted, speed and performance will decline. The most successful strategy for maintaining carbohydrate stores over several successive days of racing is to give the dog a dose (1.5 g/kg BW) of rapidly digestible carbohydrates, like maltodextrin, immediately after exercise. The timing of the dosage will have an important bearing on the outcome. It is important that the dogs be dosed as soon after exercise as possible. There is a short window of time when the body will funnel the carbohydrates given towards replacing muscle stores. That window shuts about 30 minutes after exercise ends. Also, carbohydrate administration can adversely affect fat metabolism and it takes a while for the body to store the carbohydrates so they should only be given when there is at least 4 hours of rest following their administration. This strategy has been used successfully for over 15 years in sprint racing, but does it work in mid distance and long distance racing?

Anytime when carbohydrate utilization limits performance this strategy will be important for success. In mid distance racing, where speeds may average 10-12 mph, or in races with repetitive hill climbing, there will be enough exercise above 60% of VO₂ max to warrant carbohydrate replenishment. In long distance racing exercise intensity rarely exceeds 60% of VO₂ max. This intensity is not sustainable over the time period that these athletes perform and so there is still some question as to the necessity of carbohydrate replenishment in this side of the sport. A step towards the answer comes from some recent and interesting work out of Oklahoma State University. This group showed that dogs exercising for about 100 miles per day for 4-5 days showed an initial drop in carbohydrate stores to as low as 20% of the pre-exercise value and increased over time to settle back at about 55% of the initial value. These levels are probably enough to support sustained efforts at the 6-8 mph pace most teams maintain at the end of long distance races. The question is, if two mushers found themselves in White Mountain within a few minutes of each other, would having increased carbohydrate stores at this stage of the race, which is attainable in an 8 hour rest period, yield a speed advantage in the 70 mile trip to Nome? Could they go 10-12 mph over that distance if they had the carbohydrate reserves to do it? The amount of carbohydrates necessary to replenish these stores would not significantly alter total calorie or fat intake but if applied at a strategic point in the race might have an influence on the outcome. Some one should do a study.

If high fat diets optimize performance in sled dogs, the next questions should be how much fat and what type should be fed. Here we get into the practical side of nutrition, the side which is a blend of art and science. The definition of a high fat diet will vary depending on who you talk to and the animal involved. Sled dogs have an innate tolerance for dietary fat levels that would literally kill other breeds of dogs. For many of the sporting breeds a high fat diet would be considered 30% of the total caloric intake. For sled dog purposes high fat diets generally range from 50-80% of the calories. From experience I can say that 50-60% of the calories in fat is safe to feed long term during training as long as the rest of the diet is balanced for protein, vitamins and minerals. Once you exceed 60% of the calories you must be careful because at this point fat starts to displace other nutrients, most notably protein, and you can run into serious problems if you feed these ultra high fat diets long term. The best example of this I can remember was a call I got from a prominent musher in Skwentla when he scratched because his team was too flat to continue. For those

of you who know your Iditarod geography Skwentla is much closer to Anchorage than to Nome, so I was surprised that one of the mushers picked to be a front runner was already done. When he had a vet examine his dogs he found they were all profoundly anemic. An evaluation of his diet, which he had been using for several months, showed that he was feeding almost 85% fat. I had him drop the fat to 55% of the calories, increase the protein to 35% of the calories and in 2 weeks their blood counts had all returned to normal. The next year with same team on this new diet he finished 6th in the Iditarod. I have seen this same scenario many times and feel certain that for long term feeding you are playing with fire if you exceed 60% of the calories as fat. You can go as high as 80% of the calories for up to 2 weeks without a problem if the dogs are





working hard, previously adapted to a high fat diet, and they start the period in good physical condition. You may suspect a problem is starting to arise if the dogs' performance flattens out, they go off food, or they become anemic.

There are many great sources of fat but no one source can provide all of the possible benefits fats have to offer so I usually blend 2 or more fats when I feed my dogs. Some fat sources are extremely expensive, some impractical and some unsafe, so you want to know what and why you are mixing specific ingredients before you start. Moderation is the key. Too much beef tallow and you may end up with hot spots in their skin. Too much vegetable fat and you may not get enough benefit from your fish oil. Don't even bother with fad fats like coconut oil and flax oil. Coconut oil is too stiff at cold temperatures to be practical and I have yet to find a dog that will voluntarily eat it. Flax oil is often touted as a good omega-3 source but the omega-3's in flax oil are not in a form that dogs can incorporate in their body and so they become a very expensive substitute for vegetable oil. I like to mix one part animal fat, one part vegetable fat, and one part fish oil. For my animal fats I prefer beef tallow or poultry fat. They are palatable and stable and not too expensive. For vegetable fats, if money were no object, I would love to use wheat germ oil but since it is, I use corn, canola, or safflower oil depending upon availability. Vegetable oil provides essential fatty acids (EFA's) which are necessary for healthy skin and coat and provide a waterproof barrier in the skin. These EFA's are very important in maintaining healthy skin on the foot. I live in Alaska so salmon oil is fish oil of choice but herring oil and menhaden oil will also work well. Make sure your fish oil is cold pressed, and well preserved with some real preservative like ethoxyquin, BHA, or BHT. Rosemary and Vitamin E are popular natural preservatives but they don't have the staying power of the artificial preservatives. Store it away from light, heat, and air. Fish oil that has gone rancid can stop your team's progress faster than a charging moose. I have seen several mushers season's ended by this problem. The common complaint is that the dogs start out fine but fade after just a few miles usually exhibiting a stiff gait and inability to stretch out. The problem can be resolved by removing the offending fish oil and supplementing with large doses of antioxidants during a period of enforced rest. Fish oil can be great for decreasing inflammation, improving coat quality and even enhancing oxygen transport but make certain you have a safe source and feed it with moderation (never more than 1/3 of the fat calories) and with antioxidants (400IU Vitamin E or 2-4 mg astaxanthin).

And so we have re-invented and refined the high fat diet "wheel" one more time. As someone who has spent their entire professional career studying the relationship between diet and performance in sled dogs, it seems humorously ironic to me that if we put together all we have learned from these many studies we would formulate a diet very much like that which was fed a thousand years ago.

Nutrition: Rendering Sense Into Feeding Fat, published on April 15, 2010 in Mushing Magazine, www.mushing.com

Author: Dr. Arleigh Reynolds DVM

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Dr. Reynolds is a senior scientist for Nestle Purina and an expert in canine nutrition and performance. He is a diplomate of the American College of Veterinary Nutrition and former assistant professor of clinical nutrition at the College of Veterinary Medicine of Cornell University. He earned his bachelor's degree in biology, doctorate in veterinary medicine, and Ph.D. in exercise physiology and nutrition at Cornell. His work has taken place in the laboratories of Cornell University, his Salcha, Alaska laboratory, and on the Alaskan sled dog trails. Dr. Reynolds has worked as a veterinarian at the Iditarod, the Open North American Championship, and the International Federation of Sled Dog Sports World Championship. In addition, he is an accomplished sled dog racer, having trained teams and competed at a very high level in prestigious sled dog race competitions.

[cont'd from page 3] I also find it important to drink a lot of water and stay away from soda.

Who are some of the people who have been influential in helping you get to where you are in the sport?

Jimmy Honda has given me constant support (in many different ways) and encouragement. There are several trainers out in the Midwest who have helped me considerably. Nate Harves, Mike Diehl, and Ronnie Wiess being three of them.



You have worked a number of big trials ... which dogs have been the most impressive to work and why?

The first dog that sticks out in my head is Erriz Blatenskeho Zamku. His experience led me through what my job was as a helper. I always find myself comparing dogs to him, because he set the standards for me. When I think of killer long bites, I think of Stuka vom Enckhausen and the speed he brought all the way through. As far as a solid working bitch, Erika Zamat comes to mind. I was such a fan of her, that I currently have two puppies out of her. Another fast and intense dog I have worked is Vion la Maschera di Ferro.

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The 2012 FMBB World Cup and 2012 World Championship are scheduled to take place May 3rd thru May 6th in "Rocca di Papa" just outside of Rome, Italy.

The updated 2012 AWMA Declaration Information for IPO, Agility, & Mondio have been added to the AWMA website.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at shari@malinoisdogs.com.

Shari L. Lipski
AWMA WC/NE
Committee Chairperson



THE DOCK DIVING V-BEAST

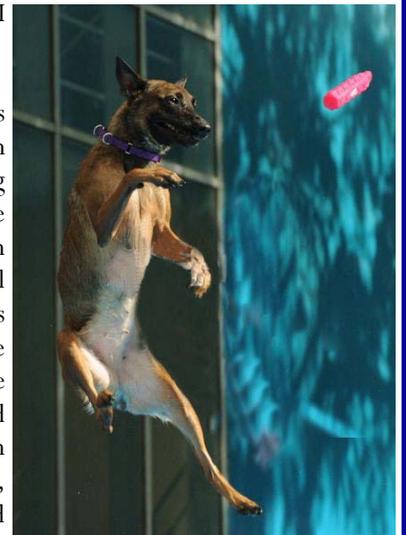
BY LISE ANN STRUM



I guess I would have to say that the dock diving is Vhoebe's happy place. I found dock diving quite by accident. I was invited by a friend and Vhoebe took to it right away, breaking Splash Dog's Belgian Malinois record twice in her first competition weekend. She is a natural, but her handler not so much. She has gone from a 23 - 24' average in big air to a 27'5" average. I have gone from throwing straight up in the air and out of the side of the pool to a fairly accurate throwing partner for my very springy dog. There has been a lot of practicing, a little bad language and some retrieving the bumper off the roof during throwing practice in my front yard.

Thank you to my husband and coach Scott for all of your help. I now have a target in my yard that is 20' from my start line and I try to throw 40'. The target is 15' high. I practice my throwing technique all the time.

There are several dock diving organizations holding events all over the country. Splash Dogs, Dock Dogs, Purina Incredible Dog Challenge, Super Retriever Series, Ultimate Air Dogs, NW Challenge and American Diving Dogs, with new ones springing up all the time. Splash Dogs has the most events on the west coast. Dock Dogs has more different types of events. My dog Vhoebe now competes in Big Air, Speed Retrieve and Extreme Vertical and is currently top Iron Dog, (top combined scores from those, in the Dock Dogs organization). Purina and Super Retrieve Series have awesome event



qualifiers out this way for a chance to jump in their championships!! Each organization is a little different and provide rules and general information on their websites. They are easy to find on line and post upcoming events well in advance. Vhoebe and I compete in the first four I mentioned. It was my goal this year to do 4 championships and we are on our way to doing that. We are running around the country having a great time together. She is an amazing dog. Below are listed some of her accomplishments.

Vhoebe du Loups du Soleil CHIC, BH, CGC, ED, EDS, UUJ, Super Elite, Top Gun, Turbo, 2009 3rd Iron Dog Upland Dock Dogs, Splash Dogs Malinois record holder twice in 2009, 2009 Top Malinois Splash Dogs, 2009 Splash Dog SV World Champion. 2010 Purina Western Regional Champion, 30'2", 2010 SRS Crown Championship 6th place 27'9", 2010 Purina Nationals 2 time World record breaking dog 31' and 31'1", 2010 Splash Dogs Jr. World Champion, 2010 Splash Dogs Top jumping female and Top Malinois, 2011 SRS Qualifier Champion. 2011 SRS Crown Champion. 2011 Purina Western Regional Champion with a World Record jump of 31'5". Sponsored by **Primal Pet Foods, Zoom Dog Supplements and Sunny Dog Place**



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prideful in his relationship with the dogs and enjoys the satisfaction of assisting with them and other activities and I try to encourage the same interactions with his sister. He loves helping with bringing diaper, grabbing bottles, and giving her affection etc.

How long after the recent birth of your daughter did you wait until you started training again?

Amanda: With my daughter, I had begun doing obedience again just a couple days after her birth and had started back at formal club training two and a half weeks after giving birth. It was always my plan to wait until I knew she was properly nursing, design some form of feeding and sleeping schedule, and was confirmed healthy at her first doctor visit. If she had an issue nursing and transferring from bottle to breast, wasn't gaining weight, or was in any form below average for her age I would have pushed off training as a priority until she had gotten to an average level for her age.

How do you plan to balance raising both children and still being active in dog sports? Again, any tips for families with young children?

Amanda: My best advice for families or single moms who plan on being active with working dogs or actively competing is to evaluate your goals for yourself and each of your working dogs. Then formulate a plan with step by step details of progression and figure out both short and long term progressive goals. You will also need to find resources such as baby sitters, indoor training locations, etc. to help accommodate your needs and help you successfully follow your plan. Figure out how you can distribute your time appropriately without neglecting family and dog priorities and try to stick to it as close as possible. You should also discuss with your family how your time will be distributed so there is no tension over differences in priority, etc. Plan your trial and seminar dates as far in advance as possible to accommodate all parties. It is most stressful when one person in the family becomes overwhelmed due to poor planning, lack of communication or support. It really takes a team to be successful when balancing actively working dogs and a family life. Between being an active parent, maintain a romance with your spouse, having relaxation time for yourself and balancing other family activities with your dog related activities, it can all be very overwhelming and far too stressful to try and be successful in both areas on a whim. It takes planning and dedication in all areas to make it work successfully!

