

**8<sup>th</sup> Semi-Annual**  
**2018 North American Kurzhaar Prüfung**  
**Pierre, South Dakota, USA**  
**November 8-11, 2018**  
*by Jaime Adkins*

“Well... this was a real fine idea” I said to Dusty Galer, one of many friends with whom I was going to share the 2018 NAKP. Dusty said “yeah, last year we were shooting roosters here in our shirt sleeves on this very day.”



NAKP Awards Table

It was November 8<sup>th</sup>, 2018 and we were standing on the west bank of the Missouri River in Fort Pierre, SD. The river had a good 3' of whitecapped chop on it from the 20 mph wind coming out of the northwest. All standing water had been frozen solid by low temperatures the last few nights. There was 3 inches of snow

on the ground, an afternoon high of 27 °F and 80% humidity.

**Thus began the 2018 NAKP.**

**The Zuchtschau**

In spite of the weather, the Zuchtschau went pretty well. The patio was sheltered from the wind and provided a good place to read micro-chips, look at teeth and measure height, etc.

The sliding glass door and big picture windows of the Conference Center provided the gallery unfettered access and a good view of the lawn between the patio and the river bank. Plenty of warm beverages kept everyone defrosted.

I have watched over thirty Zuchtschaws since 2001. Over the years the various DKV Formwert Richters have been surprisingly consistent and called it as they saw it. Our Senior Formwert Richter for this event was the highly respected Ferdinand Schlattman. He upheld the high standards expected of a DKV conformation judge. Most of the conformation ratings were confirmed. A couple dogs were down-graded and none were upgraded. Two male dogs had their V conformation confirmed. All decisions were clearly explained and justified. It was a valuable education for everyone.

## Field Work

It is truly sad that more dogs did not participate in this test. It ended up becoming the best test I have ever been to. It was a rare opportunity. Thirteen (13) dogs had originally registered for the test. Four withdrew shortly before the test and the one dog that received a conformation grade of G was disqualified. That left eight (8) dogs for the two judging groups.

One aspect critical to the success of a test is the selection of the testing grounds. The test should be held in a location where the habitat and game numbers are capable of challenging a dog to demonstrate it excels in the hunting categories we



value the most. The skilled use of a fine nose, searching thoroughly, pointing staunchly, obedience and collaboration in the presence of game, and retrieving quickly and reliably.

Such places are rare in the USA. Most rely on pen raised birds. Tom and Vanita Skinner did a phenomenal job of arranging access to world class testing

grounds. The primary grounds were located on the Ross Nielsen Family Farm south of Pierre. Their farm is well managed and an awesome place to hunt wild pheasants. It had lots of savvy wild birds and great habitat to truly challenge a dog.

I have been to more than a few dog tests since my first in 2001. I have tested from Texas to Washington and in eleven different states. I have never seen a test on better grounds or had to test under more challenging conditions.

The judges picked an open field for the first search and gun sensitivity testing. Each of the dogs in our group got emptied out, ran well and did fine. Only one encountered game that first run.

Next we went to a beautiful spot that had awesome habitat and a lot of birds. We had a great view and got to watch some nice searches and pointing on wild birds.

“DOG NUMBER FOUR” Someone yelled out!

“That’s us!” I said. It was finally our turn to search. We were summoned to the end of a small slough maybe half a mile long. It had tall grass and the bottom was choked with brush and cattails and it contained an elongated pond half way down. The three previous dogs had searched it and produced some game, pointed well, but did not cover the upper end and far side of the pond thoroughly. We had seen a few birds go into it. I was hoping the judges could see how well this dog could run. As I released Lexi to search she exploded across that drainage and began to to

sweep it edge to edge. She got the wind and marked scent right away, slowed down and began to stalk. I knew there had to be a lot of scent for her to change her search like that. Within a minute she was on point. As Hans Machetanz, the head judge and I approached within a few yards of her Hans said let's just wait. After a couple minutes a rooster flushed but she did not move, just cocked her head a little. She was telling us there were more birds there and she was right. We moved a little closer and a hen flushed. We waited a minute or so. The birds moved. Lexi picked up her head and began to relocate. She was soon on point again. Again as we approached a rooster exploded in front of her and she stayed on point. As we got closer another rooster flew. We would have had a limit right there.



Wayne Touve & Charger

Then she began to search again casting from the fence to the pond until the scent was right and then pointed. She repeated the whole amazing sequence 3 or 4 more times over the next 10 minutes. Finally Hans said "I've seen enough". As we walked back to the parking area Hans said "don't worry, we will give her another chance to search."

True to his word Hans took us to another big field with less cover. The first two dogs searched well as a pair but did not encounter game. Then we went across the road to another field for the next two dogs.

Hans asked for Baby Bea (Beatrix vom Golden Sun) and Lexi. The field was about 160 acres on a steep hillside with modest green winter wheat cover and some heavier dry grass and weeds along the bottom. Hans told us to compete. As Vanita and I scurried across the upper end of the field to get to the better cover and wind, Baby Bea and Lexi were casting back and forth across the whole darn field. They were working independently and competitively keeping an eye on each other and would cross periodically. They thoroughly covered the whole field casting 200-300 yards to each side as we advanced, always using the wind.

As luck would have it, after covering 80% of the field on one of Lexi's last casts she marked scent down in the bottom and began to stalk. Baby Bea was already headed that way and swung around to catch the wind behind her. Lexi locked on point and had a bird pinned in a strip of tall grass. Baby Bea was right behind, thirty yards away with a nose full of scent and she demonstrated her fine manners by honoring the point. As Vanita and I hurried to the dogs Hans yelled at us to stop. The judges and gallery just wanted to enjoy the view. We stopped. After about 5 minutes we were told to pick up our dogs. A big fat heavily feathered old rooster got up a little out of range as we approached. It was really really fun.

## Water Work



Frozen Judges

That night it got down to single digits again. It was difficult to find water that was calm and not frozen. The testing entourage went to a couple of places on the Missouri River hoping to find a place to do water work. The wind was over 20 mph again and the temperature had warmed up into the high teens. The

whitecapped waves were 3' high and there was no cover on the edge. The judges found this to be unacceptable.

Every place we went that had proper cover was mostly frozen. The judges walked on the ice and concluded it was not consistent enough to be safe. They said they were concerned we would end up with a dog under the ice. Finally the judges decided to hide ducks in a 5-10 acre heavy cattail bed by a frozen pond for the search after the duck. Their reasoning was... Even if the water was open, the ducks nearly always end up back down in the thick cover anyway. It was an extensive cattail bed. There was a strong wind and the cover was tough for a young man to walk through. Not sure how Peasley made it. It took him a while. Not conventional, but it was the best they could come up with under these conditions.

Four ducks were clandestinely released into the cover by the judges. Each handler and dog were then individually brought to the cover and given an opportunity to search for a duck. The starting point was upwind of the cover so the dogs didn't get any free motivation. Each Handler was instructed not to enter the cover.

After the first three dogs worked it was our turn. Lexi burrowed into the heavy cover and started searching. There had been a lot of action in there and a lot of scent and there was only one duck left in a huge area. I could not see much the whole time. Lexi would pop out here and there and then go right back in. After about 12-15 minutes Lexi came with the duck, sat and delivered it perfectly. The judges were located on a hillside above the cover. They said they had a great view of the whole thing and that Lexi covered the perimeter of the pond and the whole cattail bed quickly, thoroughly and methodically and never lost her focus. They commented favorably on her perseverance.

Finally we went to a pond that was surrounded with ice but had an open area big enough to test gun sensitivity in water. The judges created a safe entry point to the open water and were careful not to throw ducks in a spot that would place a dog in danger of breaking through the ice or getting trapped under it. There was still some

risk if a dog decided to not take the direct route but it was the best we could expect under those conditions. Each dog took a direct route and passed with flying colors.

Overall there were 8 dogs tested at the 2018 NAKP. All passed the test. Six (6) dogs earned a Prize 1 and two (2) earned a Prize 2.

The most amazing thing was that Oscar vom Theelshof earned two (2) 4h's at 9 years of age. I've hunted behind Oscar and he is an old stud, but that was pretty impressive for the old warrior! Beatrix vom Golden Sun earned two (2) 4h's for search and pointing and was the Suchensieger with a perfect score. Alexis Roche Jaune earned three (3) 4h's for nose, pointing and search after the duck but none of that was the most important. The important thing was... the purpose of the NAKP was accomplished.



The purpose of the North American Kurzhaar Prüfung (NAKP) is to provide a means whereby American DK breeders can assess the current status of their breeding stock as compared to the highest Deutsch Kurzhaar Verband (DKV) standards without having to travel to Europe. The test is an important tool provided by the DKV and is central to their focus to continuously improve the performance and quality of the Deutsch Kurzhaar breed worldwide. The test format is identical to the International Kurzhaar Prüfung (IKP) held semi-annually.

I think every handler there learned where he was at along the path to improve the quality and performance of his or her dogs and the DK breed. It would have been nice if there had been greater participation. I would like to thank the DKV for sanctioning this event. In my opinion it was "Mission Accomplished" and the best overall test I have ever been to.

Waidmannsheil! Jaime