



GREAT BREEDERS WHO INFLUENCED THE DOBERMANN BREED

Interview with mr. Jens Kollenberg Norden Stamm Kennel



Jens Kollenberg in Moscow



J. Kollenberg with Ninjo & Nicole

Mr Kollenberg, please tell us the circumstances, which determined you to breed Dobermanns, and what attracted you mostly to the breed.



Picture from Album Family 1923



Picture from Album Family 1923

My first dog was a German Shepherd Dog but living in a flat made a long coated dog rather "impractical" in the household. My next dog was therefore a Dobermann. He was not very attractive to look at but he had a good character. I later bought a bitch, which turned out to be rather good looking but with a poor character. I later gave away both dogs. Visiting the first DV Siegershow in Wuerzburg in 1969 was an eye opener in many ways. I remember very well the winner, a 15-month-old black male named Chico v. Forell.



Chicco V Forell

More importantly, perhaps, was the opportunity I had to meet and talk to established breeders and breed enthusiasts like Ernst Wilking, Hermann Palmer, Leo Schellmann and Ottmar Vogel.

In Schellmann's kennel (v. Frankenland) I spotted a young male I couldn't get my eyes off and it took a lot of "arm twisting" to convince Mr. Schellmann to sell me the dog: Tex v. Frankenland.

Apart from being a masculine, harmonious and very noble male with a very strong character, Tex had a solid genetic background, which later proved to be of immense importance for the later success of my own kennel. I also visited Palmer's kennel (v. Fuerstenfeld). He had 23 bitches and said I could pick and buy any one of them I liked. I picked one but that happened to be the only one Palmer didn't want to part with ... so I drove home with only Tex in the back seat of my car.

However, the quality of Palmer's dogs had made a lasting impression on me, and his type of Dobermann was the one I wanted to breed and try to improve on. But more about that later.

Tex, Burga, Hilo, Alida, Anka, Kalina, Kasträ, Mia, Ninjo, Nicole, Prinz, Rembrandt, and Ebony were some of the specimens that have had a great influence on the development of the breed. Please tell us something about Alida v. Flandrischen Loewen; kennel Flandrischen Loewen was a known kennel at that time?

You bring up a lot of pleasant memories with your questions, however, should I go into details, it would probably fill a book.



Alida v Fl. Loowen



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In 1978 I judged a ZTP in Bremen. Visiting his home town and the ZTP, the President of the Australian Dobermann Club at that time (Richard Seidemann) asked if I'd be interested in judging their National Show the following year. That led to meeting my Alison in Brisbane, and after returning home to Kiebitzreihe (a little town near Hamburg), I decided to give away my dogs (including the then 8 year old Hilo v. Norden Stamm) to close friends before migrating to Australia where Alison and I got married in 1981.



Alida v Fl. Loowen

I will soon come to Alida but the story calls for a bit of background, first. It was possible to bring dogs to Australia back then but 15 months in quarantine was a suffering I wasn't willing to let any dog endure. Instead, I bought Alison two very beautiful full blooded Arabian horses in Germany as an engagement present and drove them to England before being shipped to Australia where only 30 days quarantine awaited them. Long story short: We bought an exotic farm, I spent two years building up a stunning horse farm, but when it was all finished we decided to move to Sydney; we sold the farm and the horses before going on a holiday trip to Germany. The visit to Germany was supposed to be for 3 months only but it lasted nearly 10 years.

Of course, back in Germany again, I wanted to take up my hobby of breeding, showing and training Dobermanns. And now I also had a wonderful partner in Alison, who proved to be a gifted wife in every way. I started to look around for a bitch and soon located one that I thought had all the hallmarks of a future splendid brood bitch; Alexa v. Heiderhof.



Alexa v. Heiderhof

I offered the owner a ridiculous price to buy her, but no such luck. Instead, I made a deal with the owner (Albert Rocktus) that, if he bred Alexa to a male of my choice, I would buy all the puppies in the litter and do the docking and cropping myself. This last point might not sound very important, but the docked tail and the cropped ears forming a purpose filled part of the cosmetic picture, should be done correctly. Doing it myself would ensure I could sculpture the outline of each dog as I wanted it to look.



Ali v. Langenhorst

I won't go into details why I choose Ali v. Langenhorst for Alexa, but as a complementary partner, both in pheno type and geno type, I thought it would be a good match. And I was lucky again; 8 weeks after the litter was whelped, I met with Rocktus and "loaded" 9 (1+8) beautiful puppies into the back of my car and drove home. Not long after I made my choice to keep Alida and Anka. My good friend Ottmar Vogel had ordered a bitch, and after picking my own girls, Amida was given to Ottmar as 3rd pick. He put a SchH3 and ZTP on her but unfortunately bred her to a useless male before I bought her back.

The two sisters I kept grew up to fulfil my expectations: They were easy to live with, had wonderful, out-going character with lots of drive, and they were as typey and beautiful as anything else I had had before. The story of both bitches' achievements as working dogs, show dogs, and brood bitches are probably well know to all your readers. To me, however, it was important at the time to have a link to past dogs that I knew intimately, as well as having the fortune of having two new stepping stones lined up for my future breeding program.

Together with good friends and good wine, Alison and I shared many late nights discussing possible stud dogs for our two girls. Luck struck again as I was judging a Dobermann show in Madrid in '84. Into the ring walked a majestic brown male, which, the moment I saw him, I instantly "knew" was going to be the sire of Alida's and Anka's first litters. The only problem was that Ebo v. d. Groote Maat did not have a German ZTP or a working dog title. But after having convinced myself that Ebo's basic character matched his conformation, the owner agreed



Ebo v. d. Groote Maat

to giving me Ebo to bring back to Germany to train and trial for his ZTP and SchH1.

There I gave Ebo to Alison to work and show. She did an excellent job in all departments, although he was no easy "pick up". An angel at home, but when working he was a very serious dog with excellent nerves, hardness and courage. His only minus was his relative low prey/play drive and hard to keep motivated in that drive.



Anyway, as soon as Alison had achieved what we had set out to do, we couldn't wait for the two girls to come in season. The two resulting litters, I dare say, produced what we had been "dreaming" of. As examples I can mention: Kastra SchH3, Ang. and later the dam of Prinz SchH2; Kalina SchH3 and later the dam of Ninjo SchH3, Nicole SchH3, and Tiffany SchH1; Mia SchH3 FH and later the dam of Rembrandt SchH3.

Kastra at work



Kalina v. Norden Stamm



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Ninjo v Norden Stamm



Nicole v Norden Stamm



Mia v Norden Stamm



Rembrandt v Norden Stamm

Ebo v.d. Groote Maat, Baron Bryan Harrosberg, Quinn dei Nobili Nati, Eick v.d.Rappenau are some stud dogs you have used. What made you choose these stud dogs? You have a huge 40 years of experience, during which you've bred some 65 litters.

All the males you mention were excellent dogs; true to the correct type, dry,

harmonious and basically correctly built and proven beyond doubt that they had a character to match their conformation. Before picking a stud dog for a bitch I decided to breed, I "ruthlessly" try to pick her apart and list all her virtues and the points I'd like to improve on.



Tiffany v Norden Stamm



Gilda v Norden Stamm



Kalina & Mia v Norden Stamm

English horse breeders have a saying: Breed the best to the best ... and hope for the best! The truth is, there isn't a male in the world that can "fix" all the problems a bitch might bring into the "wedding", so following the English saying, it goes to say that a brood bitch must be as good as the stud dog if you are to expect fair odds.

Next is to stick to Type! Then to avoid a male with faults (weaknesses) similar to my own brood bitch.

Practically all my brood bitches have been trained and trialed to SchH3, and a number to FH. There is no substitute for a soft character and thin nerves.



Baron Bryan Harro's Berg



Quinn dei Nobili Nati



Eick v.d.Rappenau

A good Dobermann is foremost a good working dog. "Finally", I take a look at the pedigree so see if the male on the top of my list has a genetic background matching his pheno type. It is important to remember, I think, that a pedigree doesn't tell you what a dog looks like but what he should look like. If not, he's off my short list.

Prinz has become one of the most important reproducers of the last decades, it almost doesn't exist a pedigree in which Prinz is not present. Please tell us about your "P" litter; was Prinz an outstanding as puppy?



Prinz v Nordenn Stamm



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The two male puppies in my P-litter both had a lot to offer; Prinz more so than Phoenix. He had the better head, in my opinion, and he was the one I recommended the Italians to bring home ... although the young man from Milano preferred the brother. He probably thought I was going to keep Phoenix for myself. Phoenix was sold to the USA where he did well as a stud dog and passed his SchH3. A 3rd puppy in the litter also stood out as a beautifully sculptured animal. She was Pia v. Norden Stamm and sold to a local friend. She ended up as a spoiled family pet and it was a loss to the breed that my friend refused to breed her. I offered him a lot of money for her later on in life, after I'd sold Kalina and Mia. The fun and excitement was always to take the best and try to make it better.



Pia v. Norden Stamm

Which were the dogs from your kennel or other kennels you liked more and why?

Without meaning to be arrogant in any way: There were so many beautiful and exotic dogs to pick from and to mention one above the other, either from my own breeding or from other breeders' stock, would not be



Zarina v. Norden Stamm

"fair". Without meaning to be arrogant in any way: There were so many beautiful and exotic dogs to pick from and to mention one above the other, either from my own breeding or from other breeders' stock, would not be "fair". Each generation had its own crop of excellent specimens, but should I (nostalgically?) pick out one "all time favourite", it would have to be Zarina v. Nordenstamm ... a result of a brother/sister mating between Hilo & Heidi v. Norden Stamm in 1975. A male I greatly admired was Eick v.d. Rappenu.



Guys Hilo v. Norden Stamm



Guys Heidi v. Norden Stamm

Once you judged in Hungary (Gyongyos). Your best male was Energo Fortobella and the best female and BOB was Come as You Are Alabama. These two dogs, beside their common genetic background, had a similar phenotype. What type of Dobermann do you prefer? What are the qualities you mostly appreciate in a Dobermann?

Looking at what I have tried to achieve over the years, I guess my preferences are easy to spot. "Type" is the most important aspect in the evaluation of the breed, of any breed, I'd say... and most people would probably agree. But when we try to define what we mean by "Type", most of us start to stutter and find it problematic to put words to their thoughts.

The Dobermann is working dog, bred to "work". To do the work he has to be of a certain (functional) type. Let me explain: You expect a needle to be long and thin, sharp in one end and with a hole in the other end to enable you to put a tread through it. A tool shaped like that would be a functional



Energo Fortobella



Come as You Are Alabama

type of needle. A wheel has to be round to enable it to function as such; as for "Type", it doesn't matter if the wheel is "black, brown or fawn", if it is wide, large or small. The main thing is that it is round. Looking for a wheel for my tractor or my bicycle would put dimensions to the (type of) wheel that would best suit the purpose...

I'm sure your readers have got the idea already, and the rest is imagination.

Let me; however, mention a few points connected to the importance of type.

Harmony: nothing should stick out as a more noticeable body part than an other part.

Balance: all body parts should be in harmony with each other.

Dryness: no sloppy loose skin should be tolerated.

Top line: a correct top line is formed by a high wither, a short firm back and long, well laid croup that gives drive to the rear end angulation.

Angulation: well balanced and well angled both front and rear.

Head and neck: Long, balanced, dry, dark eyes with a firm, "intelligent" expression.

Gait: as widely ground covering as the type allows for. No loose joints.

Character: free, open, uncomplicated. Stable nerves, lots of balanced drives, high trainability.

Sounds a bit like the breed standard, doesn't it?

One Italian judge, Mr. Marchetti, said that Norden Stamm Dobermanns were renown for their fascinating expression, exotic look and stable character. How do you comment?

Mr. Marchetti is too kind to me, but the compliments coming from a famous plastic surgeon and one of the best and most consistent Dobermann judges I know of, is of course very flattering.



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We know that you are also a very good trainer, please tell us about your trial performances.

A dog that I cannot work is as useless to me as a horse I cannot ride, or as useless as a car without an engine under the bonnet. Only through working my animals over time I can find out what they are worth: about their robustness, their trainability & willingness to work, their ability to cope with stress, and their inherited drives. To prove a point (mostly to others), I have mostly only bred with bitches we have trained and trialed ourselves to SchH3, and often also to FH. I seriously don't know exactly how many dogs (of different breeds) I have successfully trained and trialed; my first achievement dates back some 50 years, and now, nearing 70, I still have a lot of fun going to the club and train and trial my dog. My last big achievement was with a Malinois male in 2004 winning the Australian National Championship.

Right now I prepare my bitch for the 2007 Championship, and from her next litter I intend to keep a puppy to go on with.



Jens doing 99 points in FH2 with Zico



Bryan - Jens tracking



In the last years you've changed your residence a couple of times, what have determined you to leave Europe?

I enjoyed many wonderful years in Norway but Germany gave me financially much better opportunities in my business ... and it was also the centre for my canine interests. After marrying Alison it was natural to try my luck in a new country ... and believe me: Australia, or more specifically, the Gold Coast where we live, is a wonderful place. The land itself, the people, and the climate are wonderful, and not the least the opportunities open to everyone interested in achieving something. As I mentioned earlier, Alison was "responsible" for my desire to move to Australia in 1980. In '82 we sold out and planned to resettle in Sydney after a short trip back to Germany. That "short trip" lasted until 1991. We then bought a wonderful property on the Gold Coast where we still live. However, in 1995 we decided to take a couple of years in Germany again, this time for our then six year old daughter to spend her first two important years in a German school and thereby learn the German language properly. Those two years were dragged out to become five years.

Now, Sarah, at 17, speaks and writes three languages, which I hope will be of advantage to her later on in life.

When and why did you decide to not breed Dobermanns?

I don't think I have ever decided not to breed Dobermanns any longer but as you no doubt

understand, I'm not particularly interested in cultivating a flower garden in a "political" dessert. The increasing power of the anti-cropping and anti-docking lobby makes for no pleasure. Instead I turned to my "old" breed, the German Shepherd Dog and quickly made a name for myself as a breeder in Germany. My best achievement so far was a VA5 at the SV Siegerschau in 2001 with Amida v. Norden Stamm SchH3. In Australia I've continued that success, and bred among other top dogs, the National Champion and VA1 in 2003. Now I want to be Number One with my Malinois.



Amida v. Norden Stamm

What can you say about Dobermanns in Australia?

Character wise: totally useless ... as working dogs. Conformation wise: Very tall; slab-sided, narrowed chest; arched top line; short, steep croup; short, straight upper arms; fine bones. Some people find them attractive though.

*Jens and Igor Chiller v. Norden Stamm
SchH3, Club Ch.*