

Special Recognition Award



Rodatt Cito (Jochen)
Sire: *Lafer von Batu 'a', 'Z', H-Neg
Dam: *Duval Uska 'A', 'Z'
DOB: 19/10/2004

Owner & Handler - Mrs Elke Effler

Jochen was purchased with his future as an Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) Dog in mind. Within two weeks of bringing him home, at 10 weeks of age he was already barking on command and barking at the 'Bark Box' and 'Enzler Lid' both training props to teach dogs to bark on detecting human scent.

He took to the USAR training like a duck to water. He developed energy, determination and a love for working on a disaster pile searching for buried victims that was quite extraordinary. Playing tug-of-war has always been one of his favourite activities yet, whilst doing so after finding a victim, he caught the scent of the second victim, let go of the toy and charged into the rubble pile, locating the next victim and alerting strongly.



Jochen at work

After the Black Saturday Fires in 2009, our organisation, the Australian Swiss Search Dog Association Inc. was asked to field dog teams even though our dogs are trained on live victims only. Jochen and Elke together with a confirming dog team and Peter Effler as team leader were assigned one search. Jochen located a handful of small human bones in the rubble of a burnt out house, confirmed by the second dog and by the victim identification officers.

Jochen and Elke were on standby for the Christchurch & Japan earthquakes, Cyclone Yasi and the Lochyer Valley floods in 2011.

In June 2013, Jochen and Elke with team-leader Peter assisted in a search for a missing hiker (who had already been lost for 6 weeks and may never be found given the extreme terrain) in Mt Kosciusko National Park, that he had special training high up in the Austrian Mountains in 2012 and has had basic wilderness search training, it was appropriate to deploy Jochen. He demonstrated the value of quality breeding for a sound mind, body & temperament as well as quality training. The Canadian Army volunteers very quickly learned to trust Jochen absolutely and viewed him as their best asset.

He made five very strong bark alerts high up in five different stands of snow gums on the western slope of Mt Townsend, even attempting to climb up into the trees. His consistency of direction over the two days was convincing and we were all sure that someone was down in the valley as the wind was blowing strongly up the slope from that direction. Unfortunately two fronts came in that saw the whole search party confined to tents for two days and three nights. When the weather finally cleared, everyone was helicoptered out and we were not able to pursue Jochen's 'hits'.



In the 48 hour deployment exercise held in Les Epeisses near Geneva in September 2012, Jochen proved his worth by being a fine search specialist. He developed this form of searching naturally.

The Swiss train their dogs to fine search. Every time fine search was required Jochen was always the dog called first.

'Fine search' means that the dog works in a fairly small area very slowly and methodically, following the scent emerging from small cracks and tiny holes in the rubble and requires patience, focus, a commitment to the search and human scent. It is very tiring for the dog.

Jochen has never missed a victim in the countless searches he has taken part in and he has never refused to search. He is without doubt the most experienced USAR dog in Australia.

IMPORTANT DATES

- 2006 passed the Foundation Skills Assessment at 2 years of age.
- Since 2006 he has attended every South Australian Urban Search (USAR) & Rescue Search Force 48-hour exercise, usually twice a year.
- 2008 passed the Canine USAR Basic Operational Test, four searches with 7 victims, with very high scores.
- In 2009 he was deployed with his handler Elke Effler after the Black Saturday fires to Sraithewen. He located a handful of human bones although not trained for cadaver work.
- Repeated the Canine Operational test in 2010 with very high scores.
- 2011 passed the Advanced Canine Operational Test of seven searches with 14, 'victims' with the highest scores.
- Was on standby to go to Christchurch and Japan with his handler after their earthquakes.
- 2012 August - October spent in Switzerland with his handler. Attended a four-day workshop in the Austrian Mountains and was included in an equipe exercise. An equipe consists of three dog/handler teams and one team leader. He located all victims in his search area.
- Deployment exercise in Geneva, he was part of the most successful equipe.
- After completing 7 searches of the Swiss Canine Disaster test he was vetted out due to a back spasm.
- June 2011 deployed in Mt Kosciusko National Park searching for a missing hiker. Jochen had five clear alerts that could not be followed up due to bad weather.

Presented at the 2014 National Show & Trial

Elke Effler and Jochen



Elke, Jochen & GSDCA President Vince Tantaró

Jochen in action

