

WUSV GSD Week

WUSV THINKING
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Judges Seminar, World Congress, Show, Dog Sport, and a WUSV Special Assembly



There were three themes flowing through the WUSV GSD Congress and Judges seminar.

- **Ethics** in judging and breeding.
- **Health** of the dog, both physically and mentally.
- **Unity** - connecting as a community to protect the wellbeing of the breed.

One Breed - One World

The week featured a multitude of events and competitions; an International Working Dog Competition, Agility workshop and competition, seminars with speakers from all over the world (21) and a seminar for judges in terms of breed and trial, seminars for veterinarians covering performance of official x-rays for the diagnosis of hip and elbow dysplasia.

The event was organised in collaboration with the WUSV Board and REAL CEPPA team led by its president Javier Silva Parrondo and event coordinator, Rodrigo Gonzalez Campuzano. A host of volunteers did their utmost to ensure the needs of all the presenters, exhibitors and attendees were met.

At the heart of this global forum was the desire for networking and community building, to jointly explore how to collaborate and contribute ideas, how to challenge thinking and the status quo.

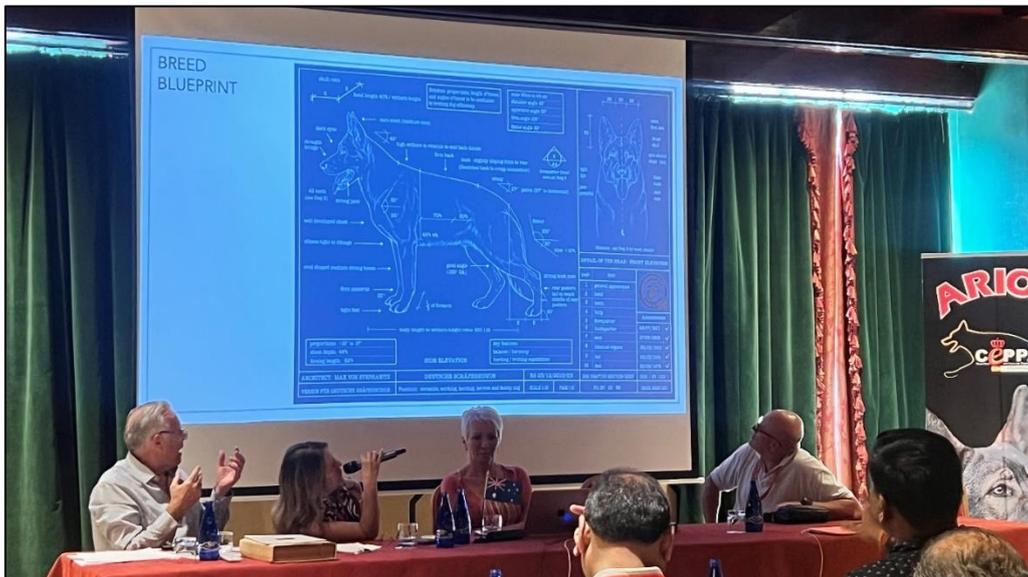


The Judges Seminar

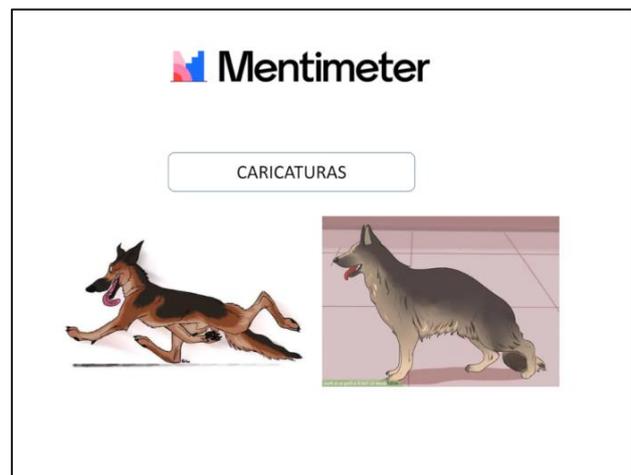
The week began on Tuesday with the judges' seminar for both working and breed judges. The working judges' forum was led by a board member, Vadim Plotska. Presentations will be available for viewing in due course.

Margit van Dorssen, SV Judge, began the breed judges forum with a lecture on the role of the judge. Roberto Caputo explored the 'hypo' and 'hyper' types. An interesting poll was conducted during this section about which dog of the past most closely reflected the standard. The two dogs shared the top spot, Quenn vom Loher Weg and Remo vom Fichtenschlag.

Louis Donald followed with a presentation that examined judging in the standard today. Focus was on the objective versus the subjective elements of the standard. The meeting culminated with the WUSV/SV President Heinrich Messler exploring the responsibility of judges and future challenges. It was a long day, 8:30 am until 8:00 pm.



Gabrielle Labbe, from Guatemala, very capably translated the presentations. The main languages spoken were Spanish, English and German. This was a challenge for all and added



considerable time, nevertheless we had great interaction through Roberto Caputo's use of Mentimeter and Louis breakout group discussing elements of the anatomy and the challenge they present to judges.



Definition of hyper-typing / Definició 

- Overemphasis on one or more standard features, neglecting the overall picture and the "primary" breeding goal
- Énfasis excesivo en una o más características del estándar, descuidando la imagen general y el objetivo de cría "primario"

The Congress

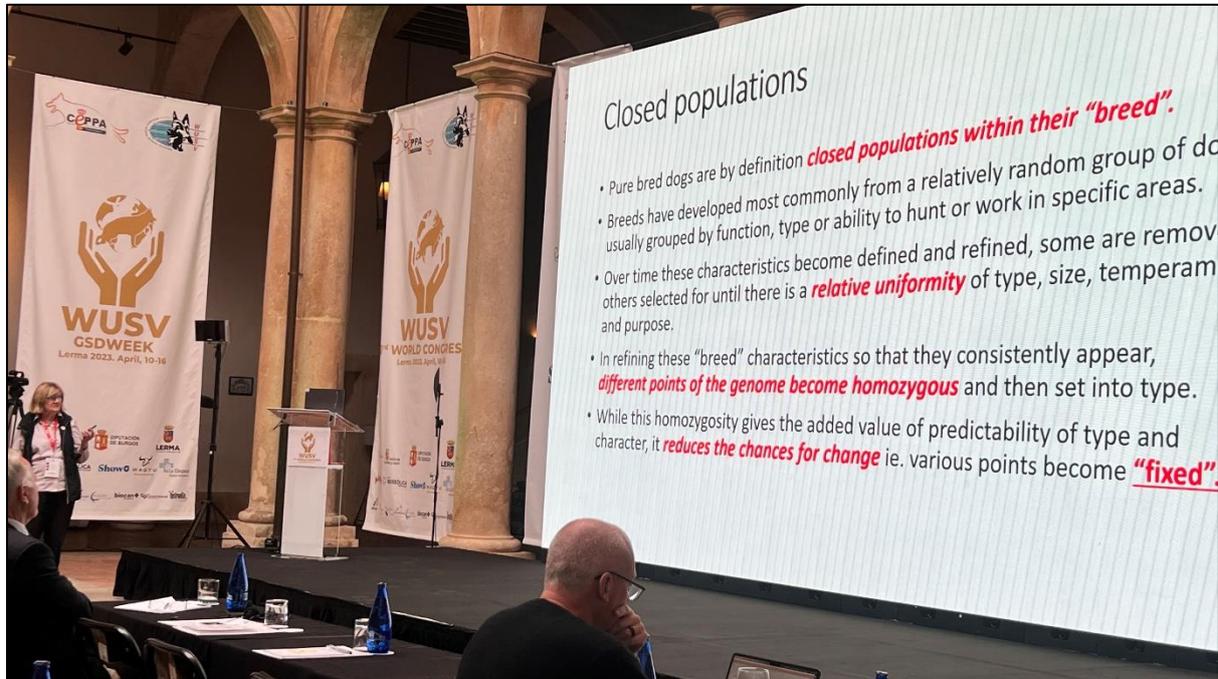
Thursday

A series of presentations covered the value of using DNA and Genetic technologies, the value, hazards, and pitfalls in pure dog breeding, examining inbreeding depression and the challenges for purebred dog. Ursula Zabel, a long-time lover of the breed and past Board member enlightened us with her provocative views on pure dog breeding in the Twenty First Century. Louis Donald presented excerpts from his recent book on the value of the breed standard today. Professor Messler continued the theme of pure dog breeding, the strain on welfare organisations, GSD inbreeding depression. Over typing leading to torture breeding where exaggerated animals are in pet homes and have the effect of damaging the reputation of the pure-bred registered dogs.



Professor Udo Garislosser provided an amazing online presentation. He examined the heredity of mental traits; a fascinating insight into epigenetics and the inheritance of characteristics - such as anxiety/fear resulting from stress (more mother related than father), aggression, and ADHD. He concluded that tests to assess these characteristics should be intuitive rather than be trained for and cannot be covered with one assessment.

Dr Karen Hedberg enlightened us with information that impacts on pure bred dog breeding in closed populations. For example, the more characteristics you test for and eliminate from breeding programs further limits the availability of lines within a breeding population in a country. The limitations are manageable in a larger population but can have significant impact in smaller populations. This was a good segway into the controversial topic of inter-variety breeding later in the day.



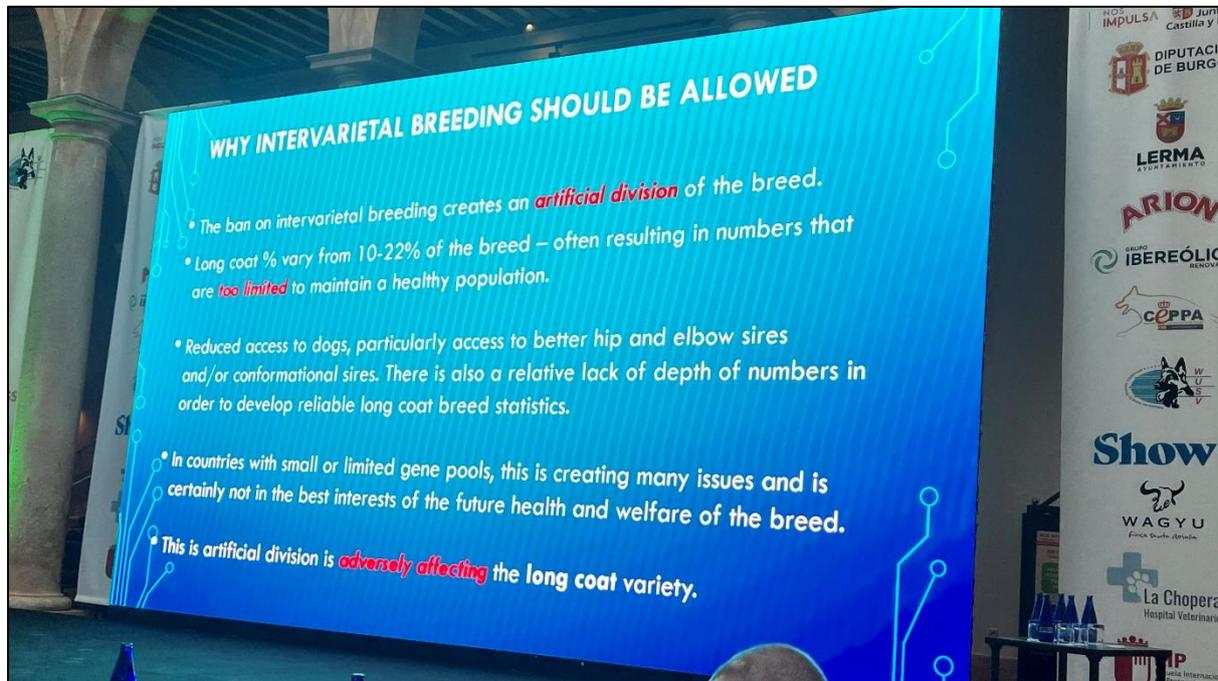
Costa Rica's Dr Alerto Gamboa presented the Congress with some interesting points regarding the introduction of Artificial Insemination (A.I.). He offered contrasting information that impacted on the hard rules around the non-promotion of A.I. and canine welfare regarding the closed population of purebred dogs in countries. He highlighted issues around vast countries and the inability to travel dogs on planes limiting access to sires.

The SV's leading Radiologist Veterinarian, Dr Bernd Tellhelm spoke about advances in hip diagnostics, explaining the benefits of National and International hip schemes that will enable and enhance the collection of data for analysis.

The final session of the day was a combined presentation from Louis Donald and Karen Hedberg who were tasked by Prof. Messler to challenge the notion of inter-variety breeding.

Louis presented research of coat varieties from the formation of the GSD in Von Stephanitz' era. This was thought provoking and enlightening about the types of coats that were eliminated from the initial standard. It was established that at that time Von Stephanitz described three coat varieties; curly/rough coat, bearded shaggy and short coat. He discarded the curly/rough coat and bearded/shaggy coats leaving the breed with the stock coats of varying lengths. This was a light bulb moment for many of us. The SV's interpretation of this action was to discard LSC, and this was written into the standard.

Karen's' presentation of a simplified version of the genetics of breeding SC and LSC along with a close look at the data from NZ, Australia, and Germany (+20 years) amplified the notion that the LSC population were currently stable at around 20% and had remained that way for close to 20 years. Thus, indicating in this example, that inter-variety breeding would not adversely affect the population of stock unless there was a shift in approach by breeders to select for LSCs and dismiss SC in their breeding programs.



It was unfortunate that the WUSV IGP Championship was held on this day as many of the presentations would have been of much interest to the Dogsport enthusiasts.

Friday

Friday morning many of the breed enthusiast went to the show to participate in or watch the individuals of the puppy classes. Presentations continued at the Parador Hotel for the dog sport enthusiasts. The afternoon session covered animal welfare, legislation, association trademarks and compliance.

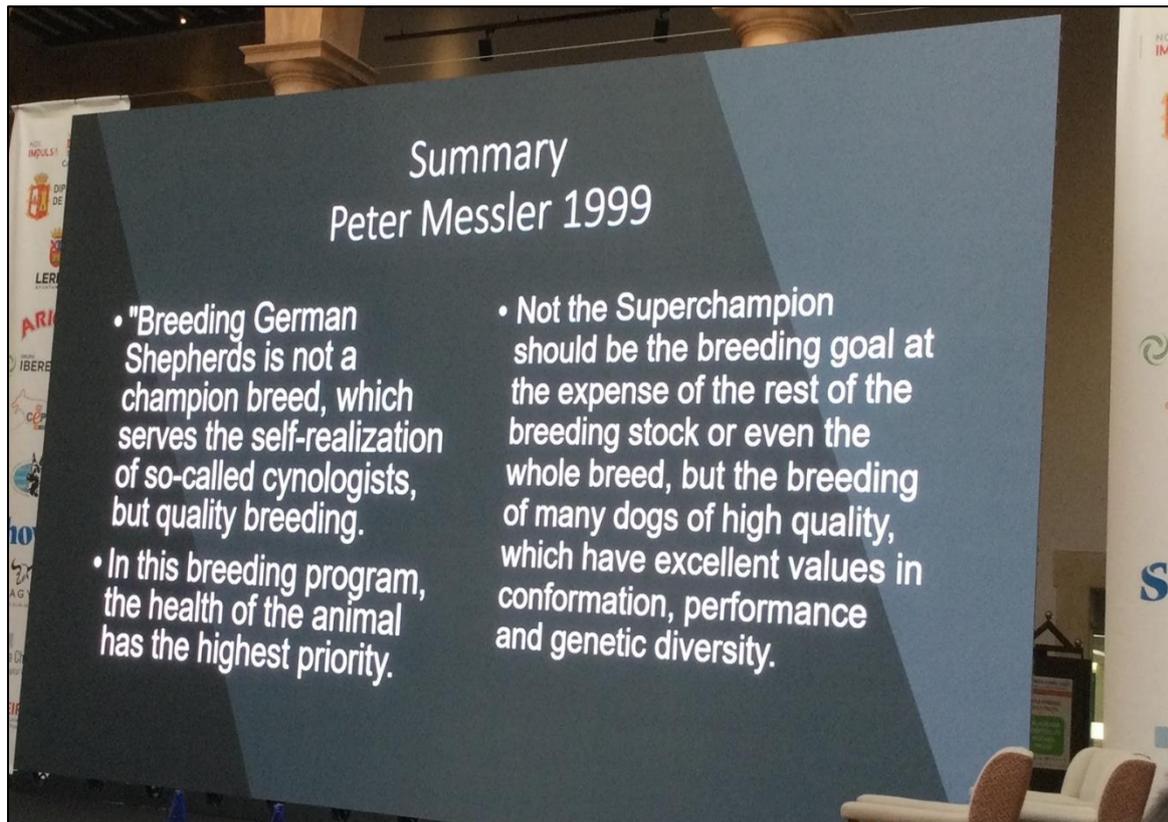
Saturday

TSB training for judges and helpers took place in the morning, followed by the TSB tests for working class males and females, and then the individuals for the male and female 12-18-month, 18- 24-month and the working classes.

The draw of the judges of the senior classes took place at the Parador at lunchtime.

The seminars continued, starting at 8:30 am with Prof Messler challenging the beliefs around deep hind quarter angulation. His presentation was aptly titled 'Over typification' of the Hindquarter. Utilizing Louis' work and images and that of Prof Fischer, he presented an excellent overview covering anatomy, examining the impact of over long bones in the hind quarter and the impact on the lateral and cruciate ligaments of the knee joint during movement and walking. He also examined the effect of the curved back, lower hip position, long femur and tibia and challenged the notion of endurance versus sprinting. He spoke about the judges needing to control the ring and limit the normalisation of the sprinting GSD.

He concluded with a summary that highlighted how these faults reduce GSD endurance and economy of movement.



Rene Rudin provided a brief overview of harmonisation levels, DNA and HD/ED. Our continental director, Heather McDonald, asked him about countries that have their own established schemes and whether consideration could be given to alignment with the WUSV/SV system. This was going to be raised with DR Tellhelm after the veterinary presentations.

Mr Chen, President of China delivered a presentation about the development of the organisation in China and highlighted their achievements since their formation in 2001.

Javier Nectali Diaz, from Spain, demonstrated an app that had been developed that could enhance data collection and analysis.

Thoughts

It was a full program of presentations over three 12-hour days. Thought provoking and enlightening.

The theme of ethics was evident throughout and the effects of ethics on every facet of the GSD community from breeding dogs, pet food companies, hiding faults, judge corruption, concerning trends of linebreeding depression, canine welfare and the importance of positive identification and its impact on canine health schemes and breeding programs.

Australia was well represented though its presenters Karen Hedberg and Louis Donald. Louis's material has been embraced by the WUSV and its president, Heinrich Messler. As a country and a GSD community we can be immensely proud of their contribution to the breed on a global scale. In all, seven Australians attended, paid their own way to contribute to this

amazing week of learning, collaboration, and innovation. As a country we have much to celebrate, and we felt the warmth and camaraderie from other countries who share our challenges. We share many common issues across our community of political agendas regarding canine welfare, health and diseases, and legislation.

The Australian participants were Louis Donald, Gail Donald, Karen Hedberg, Melanie Groth, Vince Tantaro, Fran Tantaro and Janet Haase

Presentations

All the presentations will be available online and we encourage you to view them as they become available.

WUSV Special Assembly

At the completion of the presentations the authors of this report represented the GSDCA as delegates for Australia at the WUSV Special Assembly.

This meeting was called to consider the working party's recommendations (formed in September 2022) for change to the bylaws and statutes to comply with new legislation. The changes outlined in the agenda 3.1 to 3.9 and 3.11 to 3.15 were passed unanimously. These were recommended by the SV lawyer; chair of the working party, to reduce discrimination and modernise the statutes to align with current laws.

3.10 The Board of Directors

The move to expand the Board of Directors involved some discussion, as the motion put, if passed increased the number and composition of the board members from 4 to 6/7 (depending on the President of the SV or past president). The board members elected will be proposed by the member clubs of each zone.

The zones are:

- Europe and Africa
- South America
- North America, Central America, and the Caribbean
- Asia, Pacific and the Middle East

Australia would be able to propose a nominee to represent the Asia, Pacific and the Middle East zone. Voting would be conducted by delegates of the WUSV member clubs at the General Assembly.

Australia abstained on this item. Item was passed.

WUSV Judges

The draft regulations were presented to the meeting. The revision of the regulations was required to remove any discriminatory factors that would not be allowable in many member countries. i.e., forced retirement at age 70. If passed these regulations would recognise judges training schemes and qualifications in member countries and open access to applications from members to become National or International judges. The draft was well received by member clubs. Feedback is required from member clubs on the draft is required by 15th May to inform the final submission that will be presented to the next General Assembly in September.

Takeaways from the WUSV Week

- The advantages in genealogy relating to health and character traits mean that DNA tools for identification and correct family may make it possible in the future to identify health and character issues.
- The presentation on LSC intervariety breeding has raised questions for the SV and WUSV to consider its current position.
- We must consider the character and working traits of our GSDs to preserve their inherent qualities as a herding, working, protective and social family pet. For this it means we need to implement a working assessment qualification that is proof the dog can use its brain if we wish an SV excellent in the near future (2025).
- Extremes in our breed are evident in both show dogs and working dogs. We must work towards balance.
- We met many qualified, enthusiastic breed judges that are not domiciled in Germany that speak English and could easily hold their own judging our events.
- There are many benefits for the GSDCA to remain as a WUSV member and rather than withdraw. The Congress proved that the WUSV can be an educator and binder of common goals to serve a diverse pool of GSD enthusiasts from around the world. The WUSV demonstrated it is an organisation that can serve the welfare and betterment of the GSD worldwide!

*Report compiled by Melanie Groth (GSDCA Judges Chair), Janet Haase (GSDCA Secretary),
24 April 2023*