This Is The Shorthair

By Jim McCue

Part I of "This is the Shorthair" covered the breed's early development in Germany and appeared in the March/April 1989 issue of Gun Dog *magazine. Part II covered some of the breed's early history in the U.S.A. and appeared in the May/June issue.*

The material presented here is not identical (although close) with that in Gun Dog. *Some copy and a few photos had to be omitted from the* Gun Dog *story because of the limitations of space and the lack of interest a general readership would have in early Shorthair pedigree data.*

— JGM

Part I

In less than 50 years the German Shorthaired Pointer has become one of this country's most popular gun dogs. He earned that reputation gradually — without fanfare or ballyhoo — on his own merits alone. The Shorthair is capable of a finished performance in a variety of hunting situations. He has a great nose along with much desire and ability, coupled with speed, stamina, style and guts. Intelligence and desire to please are two of his most valued assets. He is a near-perfect all-around gun dog for the foot-hunter as he adapts his range to the cover and the terrain. His versatility in no way interferes with his companionship around the home. His affectionate and playful nature make a big hit with the kids, his intelligence and shorthaired cleanliness is appreciated by the lady of the house.

All dogs which point owe that instinct to the Old Spanish Pointer, directly or indirectly. His tendency to pause at bird scent (as does the hunting wolf, coyote and fox) was a great asset and much appreciated by the nobility of the day but his surly attitude and his slow plodding ways left considerable room for improvement. Whether the bird hunter used net, hawk or flintlock, he wanted a more pleasant and friendly companion. With the passing of "net hunting" he wanted a faster and more agile hunter too.

To that end — even before the shotgun — the bird hunter crossed the Spaniard with a couple of Spaniel types (Water and Springer probably) and the Setter was born. The English, Gordon and Irish Setters all had their beginnings there. When the Old Spanish Pointer was crossed with a mixture of Foxhound and Greyhound the result was an English Pointer with great speed but too much killer instinct and not enough nose. The Setter was then crossed in many times to improve temperament, Bloodhound was added for nose and more Foxhound provided greater stamina, a slicker look and a still better nose.

While all of this was taking place in the British Isles bird hunters on the Continent were not sleeping; each was developing their own pointing breed. They started with the Old Spanish Pointer too, there was no other place to start. Any differences between these breeds depended, in the beginning, upon which scent hound breed the Spaniard was crossed with. All of them were some variation of the now extinct Hounds of St. Hubert, the 8th century staghound, cold-trailer and ancestor of all bloodhounds. The Old German Pointer of the early 1700s was the result of one or more of these crosses all aimed at a better nose. There is little doubt that the Old German Pointer's forebears were actually as much French as German and had originally come into the country as merchandise or as royal gifts from France and Spain.

With the social changes of the 1800s came great changes in hunting opportunities. It was probably at this point that the conception of a multipurpose dog *(Gebrauchshunde)* first came into the mind of some thoughtful German huntsman. The name would be — for a brief time — the German Shorthaired Pointer *(Deutsche Kurzhaarige Vorstehhund)*. The last word of the name was dropped as soon as its significance became clear because the German Shorthair *(Deutsch Kurzhaar)* would not be just a pointing dog any more. The same name problem would face the new breed when it came to America. The Shorthair was the first of the versatile breeds and in time became the most popular of the versatile breeds in this country.

Although the smooth bore was the first firearm and came into existence in the 14th century, it wasn't until the 16th century that it had developed that it was *possible* to take birds on the wing with it. It was another 200 years before wing shooting really came into vogue (1700s) and another 100 years after that before sportsmen had breech-loading, two shot (double barreled) shotguns. As the shotgun developed so also did the demand for the upland game bird specialists.

It was at about this time on the Continent that the right to hunt, heretofoe reserved solely for the nobility, became slowly available to the middle class. The professionals, the merchants, teachers and the like became able to own, or at least lease, hunting lands — preserves. This changed the whole complexion of the hunting game. A variety of game, both large and small, was available on these preserves, much of it hand raised and all of it carefully managed and protected. In a matter of a few hours a German and his dog might hunt Huns and rabbits, a roe buck, a wild boar or a fox and maybe some ducks. An Englishman — even if he could participate in such a hunt — would require *four or five* separate specialized breeds to handle the job — including a Bloodhound to trail his wounded buck.

The practical Tutonic mind wanted none of that. He said the man who had many dogs had no dog. He wanted a full-time friend, one that would be by his side at all times, a single canine hunting buddy with whom he could share *all* his hunting days afield and who would join him by the fireside at night as companion and protector. And to this day the Shorthair is a better family dog than a kennel dog.

He wanted a dog who would put his good nose deep to the ground to trail furred game, yet hold it high searching for the scent of Huns or a running pheasant; a dog with plenty of pointing instinct and birdy desire; one who would retrieve fur or feather from land or water. He must have the size, strength, build and courage for any hunting task. His coat must be short but dense, lay flat and have a firm, coarse surface texture to protect his body in heavy cover and to shed burs, he must have a fine dense undercoat for protection from the cold. The fur of the head and ears should be shorter, thinner and softer. He must be good looking, intelligent, alert, develop early and be easily trained. He must have a friendly, pleasing temperament but be tough and sharp on predators. Many of these characteristics were enumerated early as goals to be achieved. The task the German huntsman set for himself was a tough one. It would require years of breeding and testing, of trial and error, of sweat and frustration —

and for success, considerable breeder cooperation and not a little luck.

Right from the beginning, the goals shared by most Shorthair breeders were pretty much the same. There was, however, no unanimity on *how* they would be accomplished. There were two schools of thought on the subject. One group felt they could reach the desired versatility by starting with, and emphasizing, physical appearance, form, conformation. The other group felt the path to success lay by field testing for all of the desired working characteristics and breeding only the animals which proved to be the best for those characteristics — "through efficiency to type," they said.

The "form" group, led by Karl Brandt and Samezki, were nationalistic and wanted nothing British. They wanted to use only German stock. This group knew that to retrieve a fox over an obstacle, for example, the dog must stand taller, have a bit longer neck and a lot stronger neck and back. And they set out breeding toward that conformation. Trying to get function to follow form. They favored the long, dangling, circular ears and the stopless or Greek profile as indications of a purebred German precisely because the English pointer's ears were small and tight, and his dish face had a definite stop. This small but vocal faction held the upper hand in the beginning and as a result progress was much delayed because many fine performing specimen went into discard because they failed to exhibit the "legendary" ancient German conformation.

The "function" group was led by Prince Albrecht zu Solms-Braunfels and Baron von Zedlitz. Solms was a pioneer breeder, had a fine kennel of pointers and setters (and some experimental breeds), pushed for the introduction of Pointer blood. Zedlitz was a sports writer using the pen name "Hegewald" and was of the same mind. This met with considerable opposition from the patriotic, "form first" boys. It is difficult to know exactly what breeds produced the Shorthair because of this conflict. In the beginning, many German breeders were secretive, intentionally vague and evasive about their breeding stock to avoid being labeled Anglophiles. In those early days it was mostly talk, most of the discussion centered on the multipurpose dog to come, the Pointer debate, what tests (field trials) should be set up, the strange results of various crosses and "what should we try next?" Because in the beginning "pointing" was about all one could count on, the "pointing" instinct seemed to be dominant and hold up through most crosses.

Of course everyone knew that bringing in Pointer blood would be hazardous. The question of the day was: was the improvement in nose, pointing instinct and slickness worth the loss in versatility? Pointer blood reduced trailing ability, dampened enthusiasm for water work and brought cowardice before predators. It decreased interest in retrieving and it thinned and softened the protective Shorthair coat.

The Germans make a point of the fact that there is no (English) Bloodhound in the Shorthair but freely admit the role of Bloodhounds. There were plenty of bloodhounds (*Schweisshund* — scent dogs) around at the time, the Germans themselves were breeding three types. *Hanoversche, Jagerhofrasse and Harzer Rasse* they called them and the French next door also had three different types — the Gascon, Normandys and Talbots. Actually the French seemed to have the edge in appearance, but most all stood taller and were faster than the Bloodhound. The French Gascon hound may have been used, he was the first tall, good-looking, smooth-faced bloodhound, although he still had the long dangling ears.

We read about as frequently as the "Bloodhound" error that it was the German *nobility* who originated the Shorthair. Such was not the case. A study of those involved in the foundation of the breed reveals very few "high born." Most were middle class — those who had just gained the right and the wherewithal to own, or at least lease, hunting rights. The "nobility" error may have crept in because of the later development of the Weimaraner by the Royal Court of the Weimar Republic.

It was the 1872-whelped, brown and white Hektor I ZK I (ZK, *Zuchtbuch*, stud book) still showing his Old German beginnings many generations back, who was dog Number 1 in Volume I of the German Stud Book. The Karl Brandt crew set the Breed Standards to withhold registration in the Stud Book to any dog lacking *their* idea of a good German head. And they often did just that, discarding many fine performers and slowing effort toward versatility. It is no

K.S. Terz Rothenuffeln, DI, SI, VGP Ia, Vbr, Kleem, Fw V, mS, is a typical modern day Shorthair in Germany. He is just a bit heavier than his U.S. field counterpart and his tail is a bit longer. Germans usually dock half the tail. The American Standard says to leave 40% but most Shorthair fans will go another inch or two to get a white tip. Few things detract more from the overall appearance and class of the Shorthair than a stub tail. Be sure your Vet knows the Standard.

wonder there was a great deal of squabbling, the wonder is that the program survived at all. The fact is that it almost didn't. Many of the early generations experimental crosses produced little beauty and even less signs of suitability. Often those few which did show signs of suitability were not permitted to be registered. There was lots of breeding and there was lots of bucketing. Frankly, it was discouraging almost to the point of despair. Some did give up. Prince Solms withdrew from the *Klub Kurzhaar* because of the bickering, although he did stay in dogs.

Fortunately the "conformation boys" finally got bogged down chasing stopless faces and long, round ears. Those breeders with open minds eventually saw the folly of "function follows form," finally saw the virtues of Prince Solms' advice to use the best dogs (of any breed) wherever they were found. Test them in the field for all the desired characteristics. Then use for breeding only those dog which perform best in the field. In the beginning, do not worry about appearance, he told them, forget about form, type, it will take care of itself with time. Eventually the Prince's admonitions were accepted, followed and appreciated. Years later we read (idiomatically) in the official Shorthair Studbook, Volume VI (1902), "The Type is evolved from among breeding stock by continuously using the same dogs at stud that are most efficient in hunting." "Through Efficiency To Type," it said.

Few realize how close we came to never having a *Deutsch Kurzhaar.* Thank God for the enlightened and dedicated few who hung on despite the odds against them; they will never know what pleasure they have provided generations of American hunters.

With morale at a low ebb in 1881 there appeared on the scene at a Pointer/Setter trial in Buckow a glimmer of hope. Julius Mehlich of Berlin brought his liver coated Shorthair, Nero 66 (Hoppenrade), and made a remarkably fine showing which sparked future expectations. In 1883 Nero 66 and Treff 1010, a solid liver Shorthair, tied in the German Derby (this was a pointer-setter type, natural ability trial for young Shorthairs where nose, speed and stamina were tested), further boosting expectations. Of course the nationalists cried, "Pointer, pointer!" and the charges were never denied and Dr. Paul Kleeman, the Father of the Shorthair, tells us it was a fact. (Kleeman was the first and long-time president of the *Klub Kurzhaar.* He died during WW I.) How far back the Pointers were used in this case will never be known, but these two dark dogs are outstanding pillars of the breed.

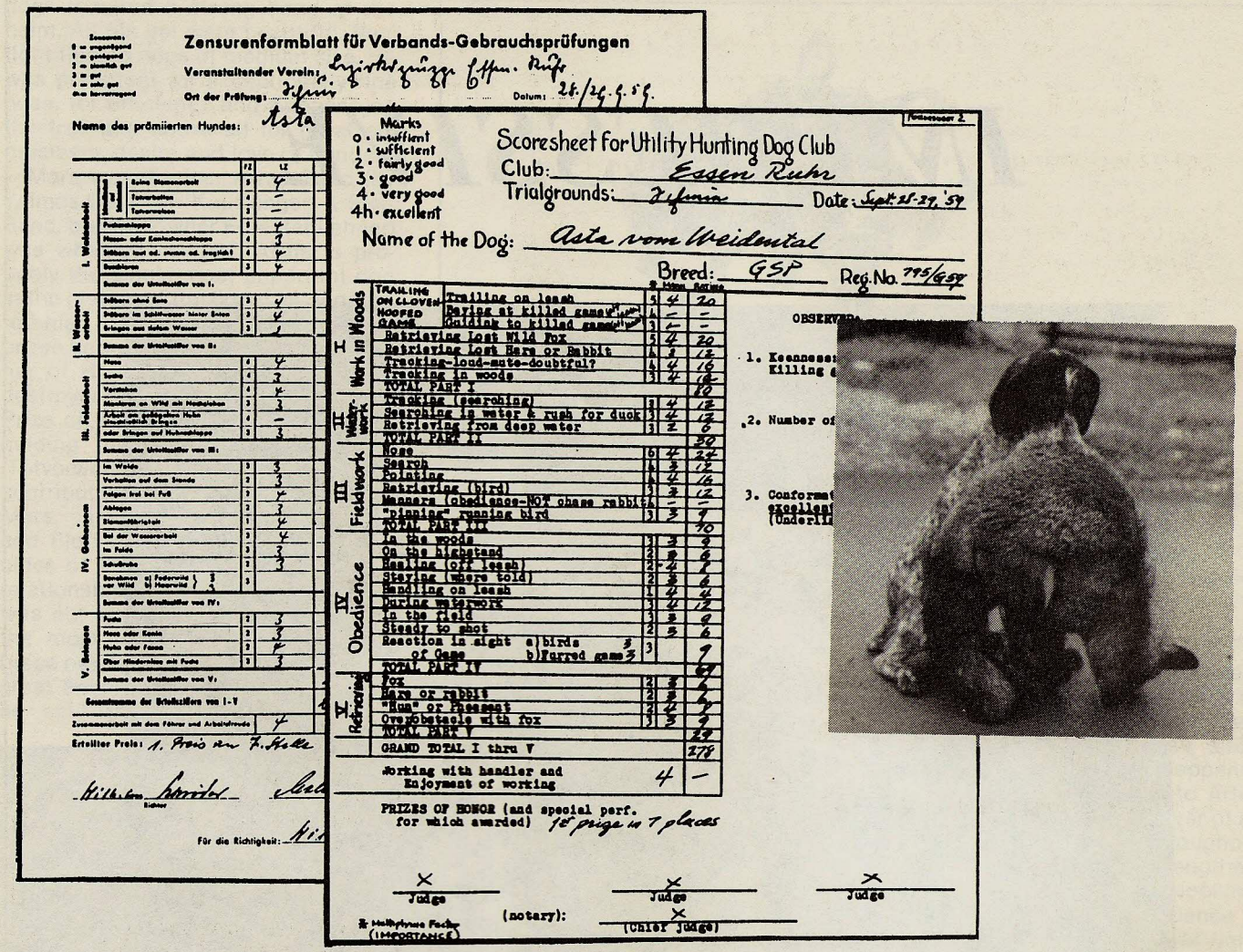
S.K. Remo Rothenuffeln demonstrates how he "calls" his master to the kill. The wounded deer could very will have been lost without Remo. Shorthairs saving cripples doesn't apply only to birds — and "baying" is not the only way to get the hunter to the kill (Totverbellen). The second way is for the dog to lead the hunter from the shot to the kill by leash (Reine Riemenarbeit). The third method is the most interesting: the dog carries a leather "tag" on his collar, if he finds the dead or wounded animal he returns to his master with the tag in his mouth and leads him back to the kill (Totverweissen). Such exercises may seem irrelevant until you personally lose a big six-point bull elk.

These minor wins appear insignificant until we compare the cloddy Hektor I ZK I of 1872 with Nero 66 and Treff 1010 of 1881 and realize that we're looking at a time span of only *nine years.* The conformational changes were not quite as spectacular as the working characteristics but after all, form follows function, it does not precede it. Dr. Kleeman tells us the real change came six years later at the same English-type field trial at Buckow where Nero 66 (Hoppenrade) had produced the first spark, his grandson Waldin, 175, made his mark in 1887 against a field of more than 30 Pointers and Setters. Remember, this was a pointer-setter type trial, there was no testing for versatility. Waldin was out of a Nero 66 Hoppenrade daughter, Flora.

Waldin, 175, was bred to two beautiful bitches. With Holla Hoppenrade, 395, who won top honors in exhibition in Altenburg in 1886, London in 188 and Frankfort in 1888 he produced Morell Hoppenrade, 444. With Juno, 191, another beauty who attained top honors in Vienna, Leipzig and Copenhagen in 1886 and in Hannover in 1887, he produced the handsome Marki 322.

Morell and Marki were half brothers and sons of Waldin. Their much improved sensitivity of nose was accompanied by improved beauty, too. But although they were another generation from their English (and French) Pointer beginning — they still looked pointerish and they were still weak in trailing, weak in retrieving and weak in water work. They trailed, retrieved and worked in the water but not well and not with gusto! Breeders immediately went to work to improve the utility characteristics of their offspring.

Through Treff 1010 we come to Woden Hektor I von Lemgo 1275, the foundation of the Lemgoers of J. Engler of Lemgo. He was by Treff 1010 X Diana (?). She was unregistered, probably the daughter or granddaughter of a Pointer. She had been bred twice to "1010." Woden Hektor II v Lemgo 1276, was by Woden Hektor I X Juno v Lemgo. When Woden Hektor II was bred to Herta Schmidtmeiers 1432 (by Woden Hektor I X Juno v Detmold), both sired



Zensurenformblatt für Verbands-Gebrauchsprüfungen

Name des prämiierten Hundes: Asta

Scoresheet for Utility Hunting Dog Club

Marks
0 · insufficient
1 · sufficient
2 · fairly good
3 · good
4 · very good
4h · excellent

Club: Essen Ruhr

Trialgrounds: Xanten Date: Sept 25-27, '59

Name of the Dog: Asta vom Weidental

Breed: GSP Reg.No. 795/659

I Work in Woods	TRAILING ON CLOVEN-HOOFED GAME: Trailing on leash	5	4	20
	Baring at killed game	4	–	–
	Guiding to killed game	3	–	–
	Retrieving Lost Wild Fox	5	4	20
	Retrieving Lost Hare or Rabbit	4	3	12
	Tracking-loud-mute-doubtful?	4	4	16
	Tracking in woods	3	4	12
	TOTAL PART I			80
II Water-work	Tracking (searching)	3	4	12
	Searching in water & rush for duck	3	4	12
	Retrieving from deep water	3	2	6
	TOTAL PART II			30
III Fieldwork	Nose	6	4	24
	Search	4	3	12
	Pointing	4	4	16
	Retrieving (bird)	3	3	12
	Manners (obedience-NOT chase rabbits)	4	–	–
	"planing" running bird	3	3	9
	TOTAL PART III			70
IV Obedience	In the woods	3	3	9
	On the highstand	2	3	6
	Heeling (off leash)	2	4	8
	Staying (where told)	2	3	6
	Heeling on leash	1	4	4
	During waterwork	3	4	12
	In the field	3	3	9
	Steady to shot	2	3	6
	Reaction in sight a) birds 3 of Game b) Furred game 3	3		9
	TOTAL PART IV			69
V Retrieving	Fox	2	3	6
	Hare or rabbit	2	3	6
	"Ente" or Pheasant	2	4	8
	Over obstacle with fox	3	3	9
	TOTAL PART V			29
	GRAND TOTAL I thru V			278

Working with handler and Enjoyment of working 4 –

PRIZES OF HONOR (and special perf. for which awarded) 1st prize in 7 places

Judge Judge Judge

(notary): (Chief Judge)

by I, the result was the fabulous Woden Hektor III v Lemgo 1277. III was whelped in 1887, only 15 years from Hektor I ZB 1 and according to all reports his field ability was 30 years ahead of his time. That is, it was not until the 1920s that other Shorthairs reached his plateau of proficiency. No little credit for this belongs to Diana, who is behind both the sire and dam in the important third generation.

The apparent half-brother to half-sister mating that produced III was actually closer than that because Herta's dam was likewise a Woden Hektor I daughter, making Herta three-quarter sister to II and putting 1010 into the mix three times in four generations. Inbreeding at its best — using exceptional stock.

Nidung was also a Lemgoer being bred by Professor Engler (of Lemgo) by Woden Hektor II v Lemgo and suspected of carrying some Irish Setter blood, which gave him added height and his beautiful, self-colored, solid liver coat. And certainly that was not the only Setter blood ever to course in Shorthair veins, which only rarely shows up in a longer-coated Shorthair because it takes two of the recessive long-hair "k's" to show.

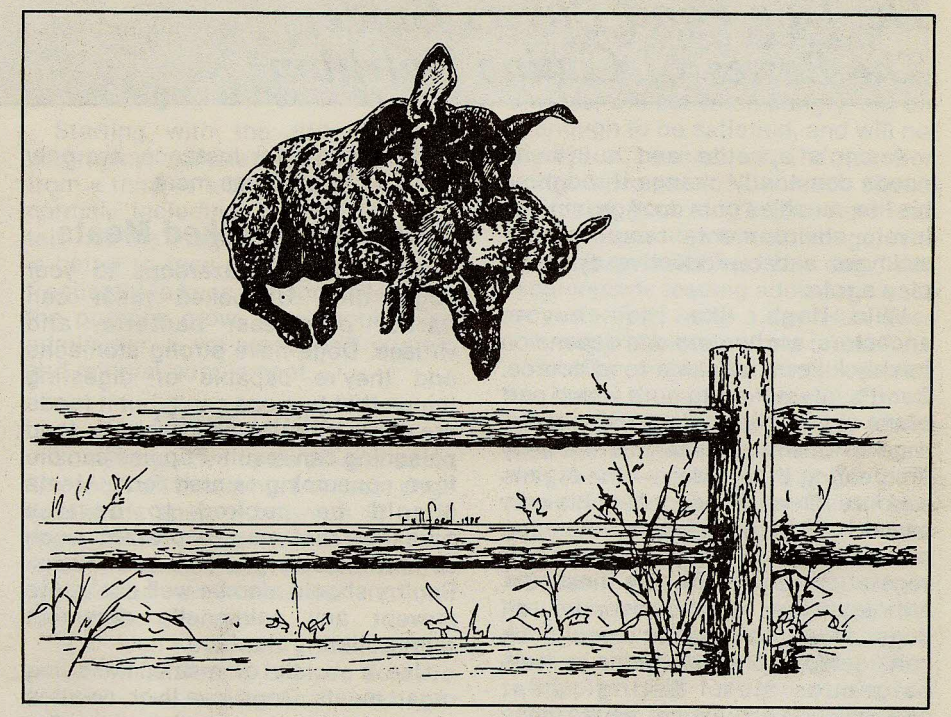
Then there was Tellus von Freudenthal (by Woden Hektor II X Juno v Detmold, mother of III), too, the "Medal Dog," so called because of the many prizes, medals wons, in all-breed competition throughout Europe. Tellus was the foundation of the v.d. Maylust and v.d. Burgerwiese strains, as well as Dr. Kleemann's famed "Mauderole" Kennels.

Christian Bode of Altenau, master breeder, greets us early in the twentieth century, a merchant who did business in England and appreciated the Pointer nose. It was his great desire to produce a Shorthair that could compete equally with the Pointer on birds and still do very well in the woods and water work to which the Pointer had an aversion. His beginning stock came down from "1010" through the Lemgoers and from Nero 66 (Hoppenrade) via Morell Hoppenrade (by Waldin 175, remember him, X Holla Hoppenrade). Bode bred his Bessie Altenau to her son, K.S. Flott Altenau, who was also her grandson and the result was the outstanding Rino Altenau. Rino was light in color and his exceptional field work seemed to lend credence to Pointer ancestors. Bode denied this and pointed to Rino's great sharpness at destroying foxes, his fabulous water work and exceptional work on the trail. Such work could not possibly have come from a Pointer sire or dam. Most now seem to agree.

And in mid-1914 out from Altenau comes MARS, the greatest of the Altenauers. The Mars Altenau pedigree does not reveal it, but it was not Rino Pfaffendorf as shown, but a good working pointer that covered the outstanding Elfiede v.d. Hardt and sired Hassen Altenau who was the grandsire of Mars. Neither his beautiful conformation or his most efficient work in field, woods and water give the slightest inkling of the 12.5% Pointer blood. Mars won the Derby, the Solms, the annual fall breed search and the working trial too. He had great desire and like most such

dogs required a strong hand at the helm. All his get were beautiful, fine, tight fibered dogs of medium size. He was prepotent for exceptionally fine nose, for efficiency and firmness on the trail and above all for great enthusiasm, desire and love of hunting.

Mars was 7 when Artus Sand (by Yelmos-Gotz von Kauffungen X Ella-Sand, breeder/owner Forester Lehner) was whelped in 1921. Artus is probably the single most important dog in the history of the breed. In addition to his many search and Solms prizes he was also five times the Winner of Honor for the most efficient destroyer of beasts of prey as well as Prize of Honor for excellent work in guiding the hunter to dead game (Totverweisen). His most important contribution, however, and as with Mars, came through his get. Bessie and Flott Altenau show up on both sides of Artus but well back, so the relationship between Mars and Artus was not close. These two pillars are the most important stud dogs the breed has ever had. H.F. Seiger, of the great Seiger strain, put it best when he said their blood flowed "into each other like champagne and Pilsen beer. Mars provided the prickling ardour and Artus the well-balanced and more even temperament." Mars passed his greatness on to his sons while it was the daughters of Artus that exhibited their sire's greatness. Good things happened when Mars sons were bred to Artus daughters. That great, rich river of inheritance flowed strongly throughout the breed, improving and strengthening it. The practical, good-looking, utility dog, capable of excellence in all the hunting requirements of field, woods and water was no longer just a dream, it was a fact. The traits were fixed, the impossible had been achieved. The first versatile hunting breed had been born. And it was at about this time that some of the best of those were being exported across the Atlantic to the U.S.A.



THIS IS THE SHORTHAIR

Part II

By Jim McCue

From old studio photographs and dog-eared, family-album snap shots of German immigrants, we see the Shorthair pictured as a family member in this country within 20 years of the registration of Hector I (Vol. I, No. 1, 1872 German Stud Book). But the real beginning of the breed in the United States came with the importations of Charles R. Thornton, a physician, of Missoula, Montana, starting in 1925. He brought in only the best—all top German-Austrian bloodlines were represented. By that time the versatile characteristics had become fixed in the breed. For the first time the hunting qualities of a number of different hunting breeds had been successfully fused together, melded into a single all-purpose hunting dog—the German shorthair.

In a 1926 issue of the AMERICAN FIELD, Dr. Thornton discussed the new breed in some detail, "The coat is longer than our English pointer and very closely knit, resembling the coat of the hair seal. . . . They stand on strong legs and good feet, are short coupled, well muscled, deep barrel-shaped chest, characteristically expressive eyes and intelligent head; long, broad ears, regulation cropped tail; extremely elegant and smart in carriage and movement. On point they are strikingly beautiful. They begin retrieving as early as six weeks of age. . . . They are naturally staunch (on point) and require little or no training. On game they can give one a real thrill. They will point any kind of game that will lie to cover and tree those that flush and take to the trees, where, as a rule, they bark 'treed.' I've used them in packs on coons just that way. After once they start pointing they will invariably back any other dog they see pointing, sometimes honoring from a distance of 150-200 yards, remaining absolutely steady until the bird is flushed. This backing instinct comes naturally and puppies need not be trained to honor. . . . As to speed and range they compare favorably with our English pointers and setters of the shooting-dog class. They seldom range farther than a quarter of a mile from the gunner. I have hunted them side by side with some of my fast Llewellins and they invariably located more birds. . . . They hunt heavy cover with ease and eagerness, naturally adapting their range to suit conditions. As retrievers they are at home on land or in water and they will locate dead or wounded game in the heaviest brush or briar. . . .

"As a watch dog the German pointers possess a poise that is individual with them. They command respect at once and at the same time are not vicious; neither are they quarrelsome with other dogs, but they are more than able to take care of themselves if necessity demands. They are essentially a family or one-man dog, sometimes showing human intelligence in looking after small tots. When it comes to using them in water, snow or ice, their coats are highly resistant to our rugged Montana climate. I have used them when the temperature registered 15 degrees below zero for retrieving ducks, without any . . . suffering on their part . . . their webbed feet are closely put together and are, therefore, always free from ice or snow between the toes. When it comes to strength, health, vitality, endurance and resistance, they are equal to any dog on earth, pound for pound, and in the matter of general utility they will do anything your hound, airedale, spaniel, retriever, pointer or setter will do . . ." So spoke Dr. Charles Thornton, back when the Shorthair was the new kid on the block.

In 1931 in a Nebraska brimming with pheasant and sharptail, quail and prairie chickens, a couple of hunting buddies, Ernest Rojem and Walter Mangold imported a good pair of Shorthairs with the help of Rojem's brother, Peter, in Germany. Six month old Claus v Schleswig-Konigsweg and Jane v grunen Adler who was two years old and trained. Both were royally bred.

Walter Mangold was the postmaster at Bennington, Iowa, and Claus went to work with him every day. The dog's job was to ride the children around piggy-back. Although he was a gentle dog, he was a good watch dog and no stray ever bothered him twice. In a Nebraska where summers were often over a 100 degrees and winters to 30 below with 12 foot drifts, it took a rugged dog just to survive but Claus met the challenge at every level. Walt said that he was a fireball on land and didn't even let sand burrs stop him and that they many times sent him through drifting ice for duck and he never failed to get the job done.

A year later a former German gamekeeper, Joseph Burkhart, of St. Croix Falls, Wisconsin, brought in three outstanding specimens which will be found in most early U.S. pedigrees: Bob v Schwarenberg, Arta v Hohreusch and Feldjager's Grisette. All of them proved their worth. From the second mating of Bob & Arta, Jack Shattuck got a pup he named Fritz v Schwarenberg, widely and successfully campaigned, he became the foundation of the Schwarenberg strain in the USA. Arta was sold to New York and there bred to Hallo Mannheimia, a KS Frei Sudwest son, recently imported. From that mating Joe Burkhart picked Treu v Waldwinkel who became one of the top all-time producers in the USA. Most of the early imports proved to be top quality—and generally related. This meant that with only a handfull of mates to choose from, every breeding—in the beginning and for several generations—just about had to be good linebreeding. For pedigree details, consult "The New German Shorthaired Pointer" by C. Bede Maxwell, published by Howell Books. Much of the data presented here comes from that source.

The action took place on a beautiful Maine lake in October in the late 1930's. The faint babble of ducks came to my ears while I was still in the woods. When I peeked out I could see them. There was a nice raft of ducks, more than 60 yards from shore and a good 200 yards down the beach from me. In that area there was a brown dog trotting by the water's edge coming toward me. I took my eyes from the dog to the ducks and when I looked back at the dog he was going away from me. While I watched he turned and came back toward me and then he suddenly disappeared. It was baffling.

Cutting back around through the woods until close to where the dog, now trotting back and forth again, and the ducks, now closer to the shore, were, I saw the blind and recognized the hunter hiding there. I stayed hidden to watch. It was fascinating. This nice, dark brown ticked dog with a long cropped tail (no breed I had ever seen before) continued to trot back and forth several times—never apparently paying the slightest attention to the ducks—then return to the blind momentarily, then out again he would trot, each time a little further from the water. All the while the curiosity of the ducks—like a magnet—drew them closer and closer to shore—as antelope come to a waving flag—and they do! It wasn't long before the mallards were right along the shore. I couldn't believe my

eyes.

At this point the hunter jumped up. The raft rose as a single duck, quacking loudly and clawing the air for altitude. Three shots rang out and four ducks, one a cripple, dropped out of the flock. "Fetch, Duke," the man hollered. The big brown dog raced for the water, leaped high and hit the water a full 10 feet from the shore and ignoring the dead ducks swam directly for the cripple which was very much alive. The duck dove and headed for the deep water with the dog close behind. The dog swam well (I later learned that he had webbed feet) but it took a good 15 minutes before the dog worked the exhausted duck back into the shallows and ran him down. Duke brought the cripple to hand then headed out for the three birds which hit the water dead. On one retrieve the dog brought in two of the ducks at once. Only after bringing in the last duck did he shake the water from his fur.

"That's one hell of a dog, Lawrie, what is it?" I asked.

"It's a German shorthaired pointer. It's new to this country and I can tell you it does a lot more than point. It does everything. Smartest dog I ever owned and you know I've owned a few. This morning on our way to the lake we picked up two partridge and a late woodcock. All pointed and all delivered quickly and tenderly to hand. I use him on everything."

"Well, what's this thing with the ducks, I've never seen that before?"

"Oh, that. It started back before the shotgun, in the 'netting' days. It's called tolling. The dogs were taught to lure the ducks into a funnel-shaped net trap. This Shorthair picked it up tolling so fast it scared me. They're very intelligent animals."

"How do they stand your rugged Maine winters—the short hair, I mean."

"No problem. 'Short' doesn't mean thin. This is no sparse English pointer coat. Feel that coat—it's heavy, dense, closely knit. Feel it, go ahead."

"It feels stiff, harsh to the touch—coarse."

"It is. It's tough—it's not the length of the coat that's important anyway, it's the texture and density that make the difference—arctic seals, for example, have short hair. Easier swimming—quicker drying. A long soft coat or a long wiry coat doesn't make the water a single degree warmer, they only mean more drag while swimming—ask the seal."

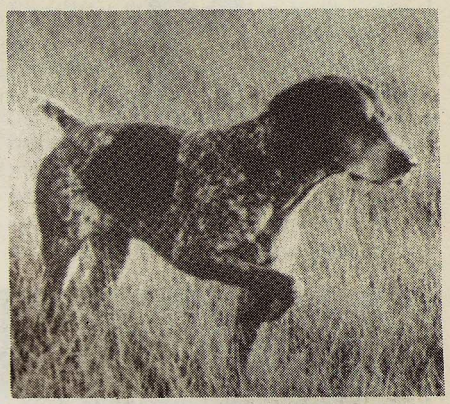
That was my introduction to the Shorthair. But it was almost 15 years before I got my own—there was high school to finish, college, grad school, war, marriage, kids, apartments, et al. But I've made up for it in the last 35 years and although I enjoy watching *all* dogs work in the field, I never met a Shorthair I didn't love.

The breed caught on quickly, in less than 15 years from Dr. Thornton's first importation, there were sufficient numbers to apply to AKC for recognition. The primary center of activity was in the Minnesota-Wisconsin area, another indication the Shorthair thrives in rugged country. The group had difficulty with the name. They wanted German Shorthaired Pointer-Retriever Club of America, Inc. AKC said, "No way." Pointers are pointers, retrievers are retrievers and never the twain shall meet. But the Shorthair is more than a pointer and restricting him has not been helpful. Even many Shorthair owners themselves, after calling the dog a pointer for so long, are unaware of the total versatility of their Shorthairs. Because there was no other choice, the "German Shorthaired Pointer Club of America" became the name of the AKC Parent Club. The National German Shorthaired Pointer Association is the name of the Parent Club to the American Field. The word "Pointer," in both instances—as "*Vorstehhund*" had been in Germany—was the culprit. It is too restrictive, it has hampered the growth and development of the Shorthair in this country.

At about the same time I met my first Shorthair in Maine the breed was moving into northern California too. Geoff Zander and his brother of San Rafael were some of the earliest Shorthair owners. Where they got their dogs is not known but they got Shorthairs because it was tough hunting and they needed a strong, rugged dog. They were not disappointed. Up in Napa Dr. Ted Werner, a dentist and practical hunter (who still plays a mean game of tennis) had Ch Iron v Schwarenberg, a Dual Ch. Rusty son bred by Nebraskan Walter Mangold out of a Claus bitch. There were no licensed field trials so they organized fun trials to train and work their dogs during the off season. By the early forties, Carl and Zelda Nussbaum were bringing top Shorthairs into the Salt Lake Valley.

In the San Francisco area at Saratoga, Don Miner, a professor of Banking & Finance at San Jose State started looking for a Shorthair because, as he said, "I heard they had a 'choke bore' nose, and I heard you could use them on *everything* and since I hunted everything that's what I wanted. My first Shorthair, Faustina v Schwarenberg, I got out of a local bitch, Sox v Ammertal owned by a guy named Abbott who had sent her to Jack Shattuck's Rusty in Minneapolis to be bred. That was before Rusty had gained his Dual title. Anyway, Faustina was a nice solid liver bitch and she did have a 'choke bore' nose and she did hunt everything."

"In 1946 three of us went up north of Tahoe in Carpenter Valley (in the Sierras) to hunt deer and I took Faustina (dogs were legal). I wanted to see what she would do. I didn't know what to expect. We arrived the afternoon before opening day and after setting up camp headed out to get the lay of the land and stretch our legs. We left the guns in camp but we took Faustina. In just a few minutes we could hear her giving voice, she sounded like she was over a canyon or two. As we listened we could tell she was coming closer and



This is old, grey-muzzled Greif (as in knife). Dave Hopkins was a dedicated California bird hunter who bought a Shorthair from a Fort Ord (CA) soldier because he liked the dog's looks and because he felt he might need a back-up. But every time Dave went hunting he took his "Old Reliable" Shorthair buddy and the new dog stayed home at the kennel of pro Stan Head. Stan saw the potential of Greif v Hundscheimer-kogel (Austrian imp.), even if he couldn't pronounce his name. He urged Dave to trial Greif but Dave had no interest in competition. Time passed and eventually Dave's "Old Reliable" fell ill. Dave was forced to take Greif hunting. What an awakening, what a surprise! Dave couldn't believe what he saw and just kept mumbling to himself over and over, "My God, I got me a real bird dog—a REAL bird dog!"

Dave put the dog in training with Stan and Greif soon had his Field Championship even though his toughest competition came from his own get. In a short career at stud and bred only to a few local bitches he proved to be the most prepotent sire (has the best batting average) the breed has ever known—here or in Germany. And the Greif strain is alive and well, still producing top Shorthairs to this day. He's probably behind your dog too.

closer, I figured she was running a deer. Was I surprised when a big black bear went flying by us with her in hot pursuit? I was able to call the dog off the bear—she was pretty well trained for only a year old. Anyway, we went on a little further and she slammed in to a classy point. We kicked around in the brush and flushed a covey of Mountain Quail. Not more than ten minutes later she put two deer right in front of us, we could have taken both of them easily.

"The next morning we hunted the rim rock around Carpenter Valley. By noon she had pushed four bear—two of them cinnamons—right to us. Later in the afternoon I heard her baying again and coming down the mountain closer and closer. I thought she was on another bear when out of the woods right in front of us appeared a beautiful big buck not more than 50 yards away. I shot it through the neck and it dropped dead. Moments later she ran up and jumped right on top of the deer and mauled it a little before I called her off. We dressed out the deer and took it back into camp and under similar circumstances filled our other tags that evening. I don't know to this day if that's the way Shorthairs are supposed to handle big game or not, but it was great for us.

"Since we filled our tags early we moved down to Grimes in the Sacramento Valley to hunt pheasant around the old Goodwin Ranch—much in rice paddies. It was tough hunting, the dogs would be in water sometimes up to their bellies. Her coat shed the water well—dried quickly—and the long, sharp briars in that area didn't bother her a bit. It was great not to spend hours picking burrs too. We got a few ducks that day. She brought them in right to hand, I had never trained her, it just came naturally. Nothing is sharper than rice stubble, it cuts. It would literally shave the hair right off her face—her nose would be raw, her teats bleeding, she never let up. This was tough hunting but she was tougher.

"I dropped an old cock pheasant that fell into a big brush pile. I sent her for the retrieve. She went right through the brush pile. I called her back and put her into the pile, she went right through again. I got disgusted, 'To hell with it,' and went into the pile myself—on my hands and knees. When I finally crawled out, there was Faustina sitting there with that big cock bird in her face. That's when I realized that even a year old pup knows more about hunting than any human. That's when I realized that we had finally found the perfect dog for our way of hunting.

"Each year she learned more and did better. We developed a real bond between us, she was a part of our family. Only the Lord knows how much game, furred and feathered, I shot over her. She provided me with some great pups too. I enjoyed her friendship for almost four years 'til someone poisoned her. I found her limp body by our stream and buried it. The grave is still kept and marked. That was 40 years and many Shorthairs ago—but there is still a very warm spot in my heart for my first and only Faustina."

The Shorthair is a versatile hunting dog. He was developed by the practical Tutonic mind for the foot hunter whose way of life is the "mixed bag." The upland specialist is the pointer, in the duck blind it is the retriever and on the trail it is the scent hound. How incongruous the sight of a Lab searching the broad, open expanse of Saskatchewan prairie for sharptail, or an orange and whte pointer shivering in a sleet-drenched Maine duck blind. Yet the Shorthair is a *natural* in both areas—and, indeed, in the woods or on the trail as well, if we chose to use him there. One of the great charms of the Shorthair lies in his practical, utilitarian inheritance which permits him to join his master and family in all their hunting adventures. You need not hunt every species the Shorthair can handle but it's nice to know you have that option should the occasion arise.

JGM

The first National Championship for Shorthairs was held in 1953 and Dandy Jim v Feldstrom owned by Dr. Clark Lemley of Detroit was the winner. Dandy Jim was also a Dual Champion, that is, he held both a Field Championship and Bench Championship—he was built right to work right.

***The first National Amateur stake was held** in Denver in 1966 but the Championship title was withheld. Fld. Ch. Moesgaards Coco was declared the winner and the stake was considered as a regular Amateur stake. The following year the National Amateur Championship was held in California and Coco put on a truly national caliber race and was awarded the Championship. Coco was owned, trained and handled by Lloyd Sanders of Woodlake, California.*