

Interview with Andreas Quint, Representative for Special Dog Training

# ‘RD SPORT IS ABOUT INTERACTION AND TACTICS’

Fire brigade and rescue dog work defined Andreas Quint’s career. Now a pensioner, he is also SV’s Representative for Special Dog Training. In this interview, we spoke with him about his goals and about retirement, a life he still hasn’t got used to.

by Roswitha Dannenberg

**You’ve been in office since the beginning of the year. What was the orientation period like?**

As the former chairman of the working group for rescue dogs and detection (AK-RHOT) in the German Fire Fighters’ Association (DFV), working with a large umbrella organisation is nothing new. The rules are similar – that innovations in a specific area can only be brought forward in cooperation with the executive committee. For me, that means that I recommend the conditions for a specific area, in order to be able to give our SV local groups a reliable system for rescue dog sport.

**As the SV Representative for Special Dog Training, you’re walking in the footsteps of Walter Hoffmann. What is your relationship like?**

Through an article in the *Hessen-Spiegel* of the Hesse-South federal group that I wrote in 1999, the SV executive committee became aware of me and encouraged me to get involved in developing rescue dog sport at SV. The project was led by Wolfgang Henke und Hans Rüdener from the executive committee. In this project group, I also met Walter Hoffmann, who was later appointed SV Federal Representative for Special Dog Training. My role was to provide expert advice. In this constellation, a very harmonious

cooperative relationship evolved with

Walter Hoffman, which exists to this day.

**What jobs need to be done now?**

I have to do the splits! On the one hand, many members are involved in SV’s rescue dog sport in the local groups that don’t have German Shepherds but are enormously important to the association life of each of these groups. On the other hand, the task in a dog breeding association where the objective is to solidify the characteristics of the German Shepherd in its multi-faceted use as a ‘working dog’. Offering both interest groups prospects will be one of our main tasks. People looking for working dogs will only be able to find them in the local groups. For this reason, the conditions in the local groups must allow for active training. The prospect for association members with German Shepherds is laid down by the LG-RHM, BSP-RH all the way to the world championship. We need to see what prospects there could be for association members without

German Shepherds. This question has to be dealt with in order to prevent an exodus to other VDH working dog federations. It will be difficult, but not impossible.

**What does your work involve specifically?**

Special dog training means the training of special capabilities. It is these capabilities acquired through training that allow the public to make 'use' of our breed.





**TOTAL COMMITMENT** Above: Andreas Quint with Kansas von Beluga. Right: Team leader at RH-WM 2016 with world champion Christa Steinborn and Walter Hoffmann.

## **'MY ASPIRATION IS FOR A VERSATILE AND ADAPTABLE WORKING DOG.'**

According to FCI, working dogs are all dogs that belong to breeds and for which a working test is stipulated for breeding. This is recorded in each breed standard. There are different working tests. The first working or working dog test in our association was the herding working dog test. This is what our breed was bred to be 'used' for.

### **What does that mean for us today?**

Over the centuries, our breed has been used in multiple ways by society and even today, it is adaptable for tasks in public life. This underpins the German Shepherd's claim of being a versatile and adaptable working dog. While, for instance, until just a few decades ago, aside from herding working dogs, watchdogs were in demand as home guardians, nowadays it's the service and therapy dogs that the public need to help people in everyday life. Following social developments and training dogs through qualification to meet social demands is a central task that I wish to devote myself to.

### **The rescue dog field is still being developed at SV. How would you rate the current status quo?**

Rescue dog sport is linked to the requirements of each operation, but it also serves the sense of community within our organization. Rescue dog sport demands complex activities involving more than a simple measurement of strength in the sense of 'faster, higher, farther', instead placing more emphasis on interaction and tactics. Based on the concept of goal-oriented performance, extensive proposals for training design and methods have been developed in our association. In preparation, this deployment-oriented content is essential to the useful design of a high-level deployment-oriented training programme. Consequently, deployment-oriented performance tests have been developed in recent years that are primarily carried out on the basis of actual work. The physical and mental performance necessary is put into relation with different goal-oriented parameters. Meaning that current training is at a very high level. To reinforce that: a dog trained at a high level in rescue dog sport is always capable of passing the requirements of an IRO deployment (MRT in area search or rubble)!

### **The BSP for rescue dogs takes place in July of this year. What awaits us in Arnsberg?**

The first National Champions Test in rescue dog sport was an excellently organised event which had a lasting influence on rescue dog sport in our association. In Arnsberg, too, we will have outstandingly suitable competitive facilities available to us. An event like BSP-RH connects people. It imparts a feeling of togetherness among those working towards a common goal. People meet each other at the event that never would have otherwise. Personal horizons are expanded, many things are rediscovered and sometimes prejudices are corrected. In this sense, BSP-RH is good for both sides. BSP-RH is the highest national cynological event in RD sport for German Shepherds at SV. The 'best of the best' are presented and prove their special aptitude in each discipline. The 'top' dogs will go on to represent our association at the world championship in Vienna-Neustadt. The path to the world championship only passes through BSP-RH!



**ALWAYS ON TOUR** Left: Andreas Quint (left in photo) at the European Mission Readiness Test (MRT). Above: Everyone on the coach: Team photo at RH-DM 2014.

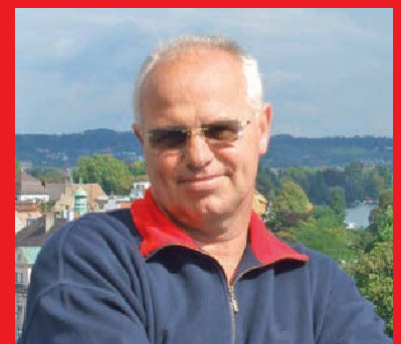
**What are your hobbies?**

Active performance sport influenced my life until 1986. Aside from football and volleyball, I enjoyed athletics and American football. But – in performance sport, you get old quickly and you’re already considered a senior in your mid-30s. I was forced to look for alternatives. Starting in 1992, rescue dog work took over my free time. Fire brigade and rescue dog work at the national and international level have influenced the last two decades of my life. Whether as a team leader in the INSARAG advisory group of the United Nations (UN INSARAG), as deployment advisor for the International Rescue Dog Organisation, chairman of the working group for rescue dogs and detection in the German Fire Fighters’ Association or as the state representative for rescue dogs in the Hesse State Fire Fighters’ Association (LFV Hessen), my job was always to combine the emergency-response deployment systems with the abilities of the rescue dogs. A good balance was and still is volunteer work for my SV local group, a place with an all-round feel-good package when it comes to sport and people.

**What is a typical day with your dog like?**

I share my home with Zack vonBeluga, a nine-year-old German Shepherd. Zack has been selected for breeding for life. He has also been trained in rescue dog sport in accordance with RD 2 FI B and RD 2 T. If everything goes well, a little puppy will be moving in with us soon. Since my career with the fire brigade ended on 28 February this year, the two of us are going to dedicate ourselves solely to rescue dog sport. I still have to organise my new-found time thanks to retirement. Get up a bit later than usual, walk the dog, have breakfast, check my email, go for an even longer walk with the dog in the lovely Odenwald at lunch, office work and evening training in the local group – that’s what my days are like right now. The weekends are mostly consumed by RD-2 tests. I continue to make myself available as a moderator or consultant in international bodies in the field of urban search and rescue (USAR). The system of ‘helping people help themselves’ will continue to influence my life. This also includes working out concepts as well as trips to all five continents to teach the system on site. I’m guaranteed not to get bored!

**PROFILE**



**Experienced rescuer** Andreas Quint has been active in the fire brigade since 1977. In order for his German Shepherd Gido aus der alten Reiterklause, aka Gustav, to be admitted to the Rescue Dog Test of the Fire Brigades in Hesse in 1986, he had to have a VB (today, the BH) and SchH 1. That is why he joined SV in 1986, where since then, he has been active in various capacities. Since 2017, Andreas Quint has been SV’s Representative for Special Dog Training. In this capacity, he created the Facebook platform [www.facebook.com/Rettingshunde.Infoportal](http://www.facebook.com/Rettingshunde.Infoportal) as a site for all SV members interested in rescue dog sport.