

# The German Korung

By Vicky Brachfeld

## PINNACLE OF ACHIEVEMENT AND THE MOST PRESTIGIOUS TEST FOR THE EUROPEAN DOBERMANN.

On June 23, 2007, in Nurnberg, Germany, **Multi Ch Bell'Lavoros Dio Di Giove, CGC, TDI, VCX, ZTP1A, FH, VPG#, Korung 1B**, Fondly known as "Giovanni," became the **FIRST AMERICAN DOBERMAN** to participate in the most prestigious breeding test in the European Dobermann Community – **The German Korung!** "Gio was expertly handled by proud co-owner and trainer, Dean Calderon.

### ***What is the German Korung?***

**"THE KORUNG**, established in 1969 by Ottmar Vogel, is the pinnacle of achievement for the German Dobermann and is used to identify the dogs that are "elite" in both character and conformation.

Under the leadership of Hans Wiblishauser, both the German Dobermann Club and the International Dobermann Club have developed character, health, and conformation tests, research, legislation, and guidelines. The Korung is a test of health, character, and structure all together in on "Zentralkorung." To date, all of the registration and breeding programs remain in the hands of the European Dobermann clubs themselves, not within a large all breed organization such as the AKC. Such a consistent system preserves the quality of the genetic background and soundness of the breed. The German system is designed to cover not only the physical aspects of the breed but also the working ability, with a strong emphasis on genetic makeup and health creating **THE TOTAL DOBERMAN!**

To pass the Korung, the dog has to endure a supreme test of character and conformation. The test is designed to be taken twice. The first time the dog must be over the age of two and complete all prerequisites. The first rating, "Erstkorung," is valid for two years. The rating given two years later at the send test (ZVA), if passed, is valid for life and called the "Angekort." The test is always judged by the Korung Kommission. This consists of the Club's President, the Chief Breed Warden, and the Chief responsible for the working qualities of the Doberman.

Before any dog/handler team may enter the Korung they must meet the following requirements: HD hips results of HD1 (=A or free) or HD2 (=B or transitional care); an eye exam showing the dog is free of PHTVL/PHPV a congenital eye anomaly' echocardiogram (effective July 2006); 2 CAC Rating (Certificate of Achievement in Conformation) with minimum rating of SG (Very Good); Ausauerprufung (ADPr) – Endurance test; ZTP (Zuchttauglichkeitsprufung) Zucht means "breeding," Tauglichkeits "fitness" and Prufung is trial or "test" translated as the "fit for breeding test" and IPO/VPG1.

The ADPr is not a training degree but a test that is used for show and breed requirements. It provides documentation that the dog is physically able to endure a certain amount of physical stress without showing significant fatigue. This challenges the heart and lungs as well as the rest of the body. Other characteristics such as spirit and hardness must be present. Successful demonstration of the test will provide proof that the desired characteristics are present in a healthy body.

The dog will run a total of 20 kilometers while on leash at the right side of the handler and move in a normal trot next to a bicycle. There will be three rest periods at which time the judge will inspect each dog. Signs of fatigue or sore feet will excuse the dog from completing the test. Dogs that lack proper spirit and hardness, cannot keep up the required speed or need extra time will not pass the examination. Upon completion of the 20 kilometer run, the handler assembles with his dog and goes through the heeling exercise according to IPO rules, then completes the exam by jumping a 3 meter hurdle. In addition, the judge must verify the psychological condition of the dog.



To date, the German ZTP is the best known and most widely used “fit for breeding” test in the Dobermann world. The purpose of the ZTP is to identify those Dobermanns which are, according to the breeding standard, suitable for breeding, eliminating unsuitable dogs from the breed selection. The minimum age to participate in the ZTP is fourteen months. The ZTP puts a dog in various provoking situations in which he must act in a desirable fashion. If he acts in an aggressive, shy, or fearful manner, he will fail the test and be excluded from the breeding program. To participate in the ZTP one must submit a letter of request and three-generation pedigree including tattoo/microchip number to the DV. On the day of the test, you must provide proof that the dog has obtained a BH (Begleithundprüfung “traffic-sure companion dog test”), that one parent has a DV ZTP, sire and dam’s HD results, dog’s HD results, a current eye exam, and a current echocardiogram. The ZTP rating is applicable during the dog’s breeding age, unless revoked by a DV committee, because of newly discovered or earlier concealed genetic faults. The test itself consists of two sections, conformation and character.

In conformation, the dog is compared to the “ideal” Dobermann in the breed standard. The judge will give one of five conformation grades: Excellent (V=Vorzuglich); Very Good (SG= Sehr gut) Good (G=Gut); Sufficient (Befriedigend) or Not Sufficient (Ungn Ungenugend). Dog with a “G” conformation rating are not eligible to participate in the Korung. To pass the ZTP, females must achieve a minimum rating of “Good” and males a “Very Good.” All dogs must have a correct bite and 42 correctly placed teeth. Each dog will be placed on a platform and measured using a wicket. If a dog is 2cm oversized (according to the standard), he will be set back one level in the conformation rating (V dogs becomes a SG). Any dog more than 2 cm oversized will be excused from the test and deemed unsuitable for breeding. The second part of the ZTP involves the temperament testing of the dog. This ascertains the dog’s level of self confidence, recovery from shock, protection instinct, fighting spirit, courage, hardness, sharpness, willingness to work, irritation level, response to owner contact, and gun-shyness. Testing all these parts give a full picture of the character and temperament of the tested dog. The Temperament rating is expressed using the combination of 1A or 1B. 1A means the overall temperament is Excellent; 1B means that the temperament is of an “acceptable” level to pass and the dog has the right to produce puppies. A dog may receive a three-month hold back (Mon-Zuruckgestellt), in which there is sufficient doubt about the dog’s behavior as it relates to soundness of temperament and breeding suitability. A dog with this rating may not be shown to another judge until the expiration of a three-month waiting period. A dog can only be “held back” one time. Any failure and the dog is out for life as “Not Fit for Breeding.”



The temperament test is comprised of surprises and situations for the dog to cope with. The type of reaction and recovery are taken into account. The social aspect is covered by the dog having to mingle among groups of unknown people who apply various psychological pressures to the dog. The dog should not look anxious, worried, or unsure, and should not act in a dangerous manner. Any display of nervousness, insecurity, misbehavior, or incorrect responses to the stimuli applied, are all noted on the test form. The most difficult part of the test for the dog is then the owner ties the dog to a stake in the middle of the field and then leaves the field and the dog’s sight. Obedience commands like ‘sit’ or ‘down’ are not allowed to be given.

Approximately 5 minutes later, the judge will go out to the dog, walk around him, stand in front of him, drop a magazine, and observe the reaction of the dog while the owner is still out of site. This part of the test measures the dog’s self-confidence and temperament. The dog should remain stable and hold his ground. The dog should not move backwards or be aggressive or fearful. When the judge has completed this portion of the test, he will signal to the handler to come and pick up his dog for the guard-and-protection part of the test. The psychological stress is unique in that it reveals all manners of strengths and

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weaknesses. Naturally, many owners prepare their dogs as much as possible to cope with these tests. Best there are certain subtests that no amount of conditioning can overcome; therefore the end results are revealing, to say the least.

The IPO/VPG Test consists of three phases: tracking, obedience, and protection. A dog must pass all three phases in one trial to be awarded an IPO/VPG title. Each phase is judged on a 100 point scale. At any time, the judge may dismiss a dog for showing poor temperament, including fear or aggression. The IPO/VPG is a triathlon sport of balance designed for the dog with working ability.

With all the preliminary requirements met, team Dean and Gio head for Germany. They have one month to compete in four trials located in different parts of the country at different clubs with different helpers. The first stop was Rottweil, located in Southern Germany, to compete for the IPO 1.

Giovanni made history as the first Dobermann ever to trial at the oldest Rottweiler club in Germany. The team successfully completed the IPO 1 earning a perfect score of 100 tracking and Giovanni was the only dog in the trial to receive a "V" in protection. This accomplishment earned the team High in Tracking and High in Protection.

During the second weekend, Gio and Dean earned an IPO 2, High in Trial. On the third weekend, the team took a break from the rigors of three phases and earned the FH with flying colors!!

During the fourth and final weekend, the pair took a VPG 3 with a Protection score off 99 'a' (pronounced). Dean and Gio went on to win High in Trial Protection by beating out the five-time Bundesieger German Shepherd!!! Go Team Dobermann!!!



Dean and Gio worked diligently and fulfilled all requirements; and they applied and have been accepted in the most prestigious of all tests, The Korung.

Ottmar Vogel states, "the Korung Temperament Test is more difficult than the ZTP or Schutzhund 3, with emphasis placed on choosing outstanding examples of courage, hardness, and fighting spirit."

In conformation, the dog will be compared to the "ideal" standard and given a rating of either I (Excellent) or II (Very Good). The physical aspects are strictly graded, including detailed measurements for the entire dogs. The measuring phase is a very important part of the character evaluation, and a dog that will not allow measurement or shows aggression or avoidance will be dismissed as 'nicht korfhig' at this point.

When the dog is presented for the tattoo control, the character evaluation begins. The psychological and physical stress for the dog is severe and he must depend on innate instincts in addition to formal training. Next, two dogs are pared in the down position for the evaluation of steadiness to gun shots. The dog must not show any unsteadiness. The dog and handler must walk though a crowd of people moving at various paces, opening an umbrella, and shaking a bag of bottles. During this part of the test the dog should not appear to be under any stress and should behave with self-confidence. The dog and handler now go directly from the 'social' evaluation to the protective instinct phase – there is no chance to 'warm up' the dog for bite work, as in a VPG/IPO trial.

During the next part of the test, a 'decoy' hides himself behind a barricade. As the dog and handler walk close by, the decoy suddenly jumps out as if to attack the handler. The dog must immediately react and defend the handler from this attack by gripping full and hard on the protective sleeve worn by the helper. The dog must show courage, hardness, and fighting spirit by calmly biting the sleeve deeply and hard, and he must hold the decoy firmly without hesitation. The decoy will threaten the dog with a stick and strike the dog twice on the less sensitive parts of the body. The dog must "out" on command and guard the decoy. At all times the dog must be under the handler's voice control. If this is the dog's first attempt at the Korung and he come off the sleeve be re-engages the helper, the test will be stopped and the dog will be held back for six months and may

repeat the test one more time. If this is the dog's life Korung, he will fail. After the dog has sufficiently guarded the decoy, the judges will order the handler to pick up the dog and prepare for a 50 yard courage test, again testing the dog's courage and fighting spirit. The decoy comes running at the dog/handler team, screaming, shouting, and threatening with a stick. The judge orders the handler to send the dog. The dog must show power and courage as he runs down the field to make the grip. He will be threatened with a stick and the decoy will shout and try to overpower the dog. The dog must hold firmly. It is the job of the decoy to make this grip as difficult as possible. Again, the dog must hold without any hesitation and prove he can control the situation, then out on command and demonstrate his guarding instinct on the decoy in a strong and powerful manner until he is told otherwise by his handler.

If the dog makes both grips and has evaluated high under social behavior and stability, he will receive an "A" rating, If the dog comes off the sleeve in the courage test but immediately re-grips and has evaluated highly under social behavior and stability, he will receive a "B" rating. The Korung can only be passed by dogs with outstanding temperament and structure.

### ***Korung Statistics***

The 2007 Korung had 33 entries, of which 7 were not present. Out for the remaining 26 tested, 9 dogs were given a six-month hold back and two dogs failed, including one going for the life Korung. For the conformation ratings, 13 dogs received a II (Very Good) and 3 dogs received a I (Excellent). Giovanni was one!!! In the Temperament/Character evaluation 3 dogs received an A rating and 13 received a B. Giovanni received a B. Obviously, this test is not for all, and only the crème da la crème will pass.

- 33 Entries
- 7 Not Present
- 9 Six Month Hold Backs
- 13 "Very Good" Ratings in Conformation
- 3 "Excellent" Ratings in Conformation – Gio being the ONLY Erstkorung to get the Excellent rating
- 3 "A" ratings in Character/Temperament
- 13 "B" ratings in Character/Temperament
- 2 Failed

## ***Giovanni***

***World Ch. Gino Gomez del Citone*** SCH3, ZTPV1A, Korung **X** ***Cara's Matik Gift for Gab*** CGC, TDI, WAC, VC, CDX, ZTPVG1B, SCH3

From the moment Giovanni was born, we knew he was special and that his destiny was to do great things. Dean Calderon, a long time friend, GSD breeder, trainer, and World SCH Competitor, was working with Giovanni's brother Dante, in California. When Dean and his wife, Karla relocated to Oklahoma, it meant the end of training with Dante. One day while speaking with Dean, he told me how much he missed Dante, the Doberman in his life. I told him he was welcome to Dante's brother Giovanni. The relationship began. German Shepherd "Guru" Dean Calderon, and the Doberman "Giovanni" ... A PERFECT TEAM!!

In my opinion, these breed surveys are an extremely important tool that is necessary to evaluate our breeding stock! Specialized breed judges are involved and each dog is individually compared to the "IDEAL" standard as it is written. Utilizing STRICT GUIDELINES, every detail of the dog is recorded into a central data base for future statistical reference.



While there are many dogs that will genetically excel in a sport, what one is looking at on the field, in a ring, or a scorebook is the product of training, good or bad. Any sport we attempt is a test of skill and teamwork between the dog/handler team

judged on a point system. The German ZTP and Korung are a true test of genetics, innate temperament, character, and conformation based solely on the dog, a test that cannot be trained for in which no amount of training skill can hide the dog's flaws. The Korung is the most difficult test in the purest form. The Doberman can be a working dog AND a loving, devout family member, a dog that is clear in the head as well as balanced in structure and character. From therapy dog to Conformation Champion and finally the Korung – Giovanni has gone the distance to prove a dog can have it all. Thanks to the ZTP and Korung developed by the homeland of our breed, for our breed, we are better able to increase our knowledge and breed for....

### **THE TOTAL DOBERMAN...**

### **SOUND IN MIND AND BODY!!**

#### ***About the Author***

***Vicky Brachfeld*** has been owned by Dobermans since 1980 and has evolved from a doting pet owner to a competitor in schutzhund, obedience, and conformation. Her dedication and involvement with the breed has allowed her the fortunate experience of working with some of the best trainers in the country. The priceless knowledge shared by Sheila Booth, T. Floyd, Fabian Robinson, and Dean Calderon has given her the tools to build the solid foundation she utilizes in her dog training today.

Vicky is also an AKC CGC Evaluator, TDI Evaluator, and a professional member of APTD. Her enrichment skills include certification in Kennel Management, Adv. Instrutor Training under Pia Sivani and Sue Sternberg, Canine Behavior from Cornell University, and completion of graduate work at ACAS in Canine Behavior Counseling. Vicky has also served as a UDC board member.

Canine accomplishments include multiple HIT in AKC Obedience, 2X HPAA UDC Nationals, Top 20 Obedience, and multiple SCH HIT's.