

## **Minutes, Members' Meeting 02. 05. 2015 Sornetan**

### **Members present:**

Axel Weber  
Heidi Schwörer-Weber  
Claudia Moser  
Marianne Rentsch  
Birgit Röschard  
Saskia Holderegger  
Christine Szakacs  
Sandra Schneider  
Sandra Berger  
Jessica Rolfini  
Debra Benard  
Doris Mensch  
Christa Riedl-Thorn  
Dagmar Milde  
Petra Funk  
Carmen Mayer  
Regula Albisser Strom  
Jana Lorenz

### **1. Welcome to participants and opening of the meeting**

*Election of the person to chair the meeting: Claudia Moser is chosen unanimously.*

*Election of the minutes-taker: Carmen Mayer is chosen unanimously.*

*Election of the election supervisor : Christine Szakacs is chosen unanimously.*

### **2. Announcement of the quorum**

*The meeting has a quorum*

A vote count is determined: 18 members are eligible to vote.

### **3. Report on the past year of the association**

#### Public utility status

attained as from 01. 01. 15.

The new corporate headquarters of the association are in Emmendingen.

Advantage of public utility status: donation certificate for sponsors can be issued.

Possibility of subsidies for judge's education.

Sponsorship by Animonda is administered in future through the association, the members can better profit from it.

#### OEC final accounts

Income: 8,185.00 €

Expenditures: 7,339.86 €

Profit: 845.14€  
Again thanks to the sponsors!

### Outlook: OEC 2016 to be held in Austria

### Overview membership list, May, 2015

Total members: 273  
Members from  
Germany 160  
Switzerland 64  
Italy 21  
Austria 16  
France 4  
Denmark 2  
Hungary 2  
The Netherlands 1  
Czech Republic 1  
Slovenia 1  
England 1

### Overview licence issuance

Since 16.06.14, a total of 213 licences were issued. Of the 141 licences issued in 2015, 63 were for HTM. 98 licences went to members, 115 to non-members, 3 were duplicates for lost licences and 1 was a secondary booklet because the first booklet was filled up. The licences were awarded to 123 bitches and 90 dogs. All together, 2 licences went to Belgium, 1 to Denmark, 113 to Germany, 14 to France, 20 to Italy, 2 to the Netherlands, 20 to Austria, 25 to Switzerland, 5 to Slovenia, 5 to the Czech Republic and 8 to Slovakia.

### Annual report by Vice president in 2014

#### Evolution of Dogdance

The OEC in Stuttgart was definitely the high point of Dogdance. Well organised, well integrated in the exhibition hall and with really unique achievements of the teams in Freestyle as well as in HTM and the unique experience of the choreography of the winner Sandra Roth.

The sport is evolving both at Fun level as well as in tournaments, especially at the levels of Class 1 and 2. We have seen that HTM is progressing well, and additionally, it leads to nicer transitions in Freestyle, which is very pleasing. I have seen this as a judge in tournaments in Switzerland, in Germany and in Italy.

Trick training courses are offered increasingly; sometimes they lead to Dogdance, sometimes also to very creative interaction between handler and dog.

All in all there is a very good development in dogdance and I thank all trainers, the dogdancers, the organizers and my board of directors quite warmly.

Christine Szakacs, May, 2015

*The annual reports were approved unanimously.*

### **4. Cash audit/approval of financial management by the board of directors**

Treasurer Jana Lorenz states that financial management is correctly carried out. Auditor Judith Loy agrees in writing.

Jana Lorenz requests that the financial management board of directors be approved:

*14 members are in favour, the board of directors abstains.*

## **5. Amendments to the agenda**

Proposal by Debra Bénard: Item 16 should be discussed between items 8 and 9.

*Unanimously accepted*

Proposal: Possible Proposals are discussed always suitably to the item.

*18 votes in favour*

## **6. Election of the board of directors and its advisory committees**

### Election 1. Chairperson

Proposal of the reelection of Axel Weber by Christine Szakacs:

*17 members are in favour*, Axel Weber having withdrawn during the voting.

Thanks from Claudia Moser for the great management of the association during the last 3 years. Axel Weber thanks everyone for the trust in him.

### Election 2. Vice-Chairperson

Proposal of Christine Szakacs by Axel Weber

*17 members in favour, 1 abstention*

### Election of Secretary

Carmen Mayer would not like to continue the work for professional reasons.

Proposal: Reiner Birkmeyer (in absence, consent is given)

*Reiner Birkmeyer is chosen unanimously*

### Election of Treasurer

Denise Nardelli would like to leave this post.

Proposal: Jana Lorenz

*17 votes in favour, 1 abstention*

### Election of auditor and person responsible for judge's education

Proposal: Claudia Moser

*17 votes in favour, 1 abstention*

### Election of Public Relations Officer

Matthias Beirer has withdrawn from his office 1 month ago.

Proposal: Carmen Schmid (in absence, consent is given)

*18 votes in favour*

### Licence books

Jana Lorenz will continue to make herself available until someone else can, but will be handing over the task at the end of the year / beginning next year

Proposal: Marianne Rentsch

*unanimously elected*

### Membership lists/association software

Linking membership lists with the association software Lexware seems reasonable.

Proposal: Sandra Schneider and Manuela Galka

Petra Funk offers Sandra Schneider support.

*Sandra Schneider is chosen unanimously.*

#### Sponsorship

A new partnership, with Uelzener Insurance, has been established. The existing partner Animonda, is thanks to Horst Gehrke.

Proposal: Horst Gehrke

*Horst Gehrke is chosen unanimously*

#### Judge's representative

Judge's representatives may carry out the judge's education in their respective country.

Hungary: Fruszi Wilhelm, Nora Karlyik *(18 votes in favour)*

Italy: Jacky Beninini and Christine Szakacs *(18 votes in favour)*

Paola Costantino's consent to her re-election was not given at the members meeting in Sornetan, because it was sent by e-mail very late. The Chairpersons were already on the way to Sornetan so they were unaware of her positive response.

Therefore, Paola Costantino was included after consultation with the board of directors as a 3rd judge's representative for Italy, because she would have certainly been chosen with knowledge of her consent.

Germany: Carmen Mayer as supplement for Claudia Moser *(18 votes in favour)*

Austria: under discussion, still no specific names put forward, so it is proposed that board of directors may decide this. *(17 votes in favour, 1 abstention)*

#### Auditors

Proposal: Denise Nardelli and Judith Loy as auditors *(18 votes in favour)*

Denise, Manuela and Matthias are thanked by the board of directors very warmly for their commitment to their work.

Suggested and accepted as a contact person for their country

Italy: Chiara Meccoli

Hungary: Nora Karlyik

#### **7. Proposal Britta Kalff:**

The registration for dogdance tournaments should not be opened earlier than 8-10 weeks before the tournament.

Reasons: Many dancers are not able to make entries 6 months in advance (e.g. Osnabrück tournament: announcement was on the 12.01 the tournament is in July) but 4 hrs. after the announcement the tournament was full. Then, however, the organizers stressed in their announcements over and over again how complex it is to change constantly the lists etc... I think the whole annoyance can be avoided if the time of the registration is officially limited. There will be enough entries either way.

#### Discussion points:

- Organizers could feel this as a strong restriction, the financial aspect must be taken into

consideration, also the payment in advance.

- To register 7 months in advance is for many starters hard to plan.
- Beginners get no start places, problem for newcomers
- 8-10 weeks is too short, periods for registration so different – question after standardization.
- early deadline incites to "just register", and is also difficult for organizers
- if the organizer is determined to accept that a lot must be changed, he has to do it.
- There are changes always, no matter what.
- Reglementation is not seen with pleasure.
- Proposal: Registration beginning approx. 3 months could be put into the Organisation manual not in the Regulations.
- Idea: free places for younger generation (Beginners)
- Remark: in Munich there were still fun places available
- Mandatory field on homepage for announcement: Start of registration?
- different registration times would be necessary for title competitions etc..

*18 votes against*

### **Follow-up proposal:**

Recommendation to be inserted in the Organising manual: Start of registration 3-5 month before the event, leave free spaces for Beginners.

Announcement as early as possible with a definite beginning date of registration not to be changed.

*Unanimously approved.*

### **8. Proposal Cornelia Demling:**

Admittance of bitches in heat, Class 3 German Open.

I propose to let ALL bitches in heat start in FS 3 and HTM 3 after all the starters of BOTH classes.

Reasons: Present mode: bitches in heat start as last to FS3 or HTM 3. If there are bitches in heat in both classes, it is determined by drawing a lot who is starting first. So a disadvantage originates to the following class, because already a bitch in heat was in the ring.

#### Discussion points:

- Judge's difficulty, according to the size of the class it is difficult to value the bitch in heat then properly.
- German Open: Bitches in heat begin point of the country, with OEC etc. on one day at the end, the next day begin then all dogs in this ring
- for organizer extremely difficult: Judge's breaks, time of the classes; number of judges
- Disadvantage: promotes castrating.
- Other view / idea: bitches in heat can start in their class, but with panties – this can be trained before.

*0 votes in favour, 17 against, 1 abstention*

**New Proposal:** At title tournaments bitches in heat start at the end of their class with panties

*13 votes in favour, 2 against it, 3 abstentions*

Further discussions:

- In the case of doubt the start of a bitch in heat can be prohibited – tip in the organisation manual – passage should be specified p. 19 „start of bitches in heat“

## **8. a (formerly 16) Proposal Christine Szakacs on behalf of the board of directors:**

Friendly touching of the dog, a friendly interaction between dog and handler after the end of the choreography is permitted in the ring.

### Discussion points

- Explanation as to the origin of this deduction point (pedagogic value), but this is now superfluous, because if in the past a uniform approach was desired, judges are now trained well enough.
- friendly interaction may also be seen by the audience
- where begins where ends „friendly“? – Idea: the reaction of the dog indicates the limits.
- Stress: if the dog shows negative reaction, this should be penalized.
- Tip judge's education: take the body language of the dog again into consideration.

### Responsibility of the judges

- Idea: Points should be deducted directly from the entering of the ring
- Training for tournaments: it should be same for the dog as at home, where one praises if necessary also physically
- Proposal: amend the text which says that, manipulative behaviour should always be penalized.
- The wording „touching the dog is permitted at no time. “ – should be deleted. instead, „manipulative touching of the dog, like.... is not permitted.
- In paragraph on „Behaviour towards the dog“ this point should be listed.
- There are still definition problems: what is friendly, what before / after and during the dance?

*18 votes in favour*

## **2. Carrying the dog out of the ring**

The following proposal is voted upon:

Carrying the dog out of the ring after the choreography ends is permitted.

*14 votes in favour, 0 against it, 4 abstentions*

### Discussion points:

- Carrying out is not always positive for the dog, therefore a combination with proposal 1 is necessary.

## **3. Touching of the dog before the beginning of the choreography**

Short friendly touching of the dog before the start is permitted.

Also while removing the lead – like for the lead for agility - in the ring, friendly touching of the dog is permitted before the start.

Reformulated as:

„Friendly touching or a friendly interaction between dog and person from the entrance into the ring up to the start of the choreography, which is felt by the dog as positive, is permitted. “

*18 votes in favour*

### **Proposal:**

„All contradictory regulations are to be eliminated from the regulations. “

*18 votes in favour*

**Proposal:**

„The judge's panel is to find an unequivocal formulation.“

*18 votes in favour*

**Proposal:**

„These regulations for Proposal 8. a (formerly 16) are valid from the 01st of June“

*18 votes in favour*

**9. Proposal Jessica Rolfini:**

Herewith I propose that the membership list should be made accessible for all DDI members

Grounds: To improve the contact among the members at home and abroad, I propose that a membership list - with restricted data as for example name, country, mail address - with the DDI can be accessed. This would simplify the establishment of contact and communication of inquiries about international events etc.

In making up such a list using the specific member's data, e. g. , in the form of an easy xls list or association software, I will help with pleasure, if no one else volunteers for it.

Discussion points

- Data protection: Consent should be given
  - To be marked on registration form
  -

**Supplementary motion** to add „taking into account national data protection regulations, and with the approval of the members concerned“

*18 votes in favour*

**10. Proposal 1, Sandra Schneider:**

Leaving the ring

Disqualification only if the dog runs out during the dance, helps himself to the jackpot or shows stress! Reasons: it is a pity if teams are disqualified for little things like e.g. the steward opens the exit / entrance too early, the dancer hands the steward the lead and the dog eventually steps over the border line etc. Since this has nothing to do with dogdance, I find the punishment unreasonably hard and also hard for the judges to decide whether they turn a blind eye! Furthermore pressure on the teams is built up needlessly!

Discussion points:

- The point in the regulations „handler is at all times responsible for his dog“ states everything.
- basic approval, but responsibility is with the team: The regulations are clear in that point. To transfer the responsibility e.g. to the ring steward is unfair.
- Proposal: During the dance, disqualification, before or after, deductions at the discretion of the judge ( for " loss of control " )

*0 votes in favour, 18 against it*

**Reformulation of the Proposal:**

Leaving of the ring by the dog during the dance leads to disqualification, while the leaving and reentry of the dog before and after the dance leads to point deductions to be decided

by the judges. Rewarding the dog is permitted, as soon as the dog has entered the ring, in the official classes at no time.

*17 votes in favour, 0 against it, 1 abstention*

## **11. Proposal 2, Sandra Schneider:**

Change of the music lengths for Senior class: Fun to max. 3.15 (like class 2),

Official: 2.00 – 3.15

Reasons: Most seniors come from class 2 or 3 and are used to long music lengths!

So you can pay more attention to the flow, because you do not have to pack so much into 2 minutes.

Discussion points

- Enlarging the time span of other classes has lowered the comparative time limits for seniors.
- Comparability is difficult with big music length differences
- short music lengths: may be easier for seniors, ensure protection for the dog
- Experience shows that people keep to upper limit of the music length.
- officially seniors class is not obligatory, one can start in Open as long as one wants.
- Shortening the length can be also seen as a new challenge.
- Proposal: Length of time 2.30 min
- Age limit "is" to be replaced with "can".
- Tips to handicap, also these dogs would dance with pleasure longer
- Tip: good achievement does not necessarily call for a lot of content.
- Compromise: Length should be as in Class 1

*17 votes against, 1 member abstains.*

## **New Proposal:**

„Music length of official and fun classes for seniors may be 1.30 -2.30 min. “

*16 votes in favour, 1 abstention,*

## **12. Proposal 3, Sandra Schneider:**

Reintroduction of open judging

Reasons: Last year open judging was abolished because it was thought that Germany was not ready for it and the judges were more often attacked in comparison to other countries! Everyone having followed Crufts has probably noticed the comments about a judge! It is certainly no German problem, moreover the judges are clearly protected by the regulations (judgment of the judges is unimpugnable). Since the judging is done to the best of one's knowledge, judges should be able to be above such statements! Every judge must be able to defend himself against criticism and resign himself to a little bit of booing! For starters, this will lead to more transparency and better possibilities for training attempts!

Discussion points:

- A comparison of a choreography from one tournament to another appears to be only possible by open judging.
- Attraction of Crufts: open judging directly „live“
- open, anonymous judging
- higher or lower level of an individual judge
- The reaction of judges varies
- Trend: open judging will come, see other sports (e. g. , figure skating)

- Principle of judging is democratic, and the average mark is the most expressive one
  - Aspect of freshly qualified judges
  - Dissection of points will make judges eventually leave
  - Mistakes filling in result forms become evident faster.
  - Assumptions about who judges how are dangerous, but they existed earlier as well.
  - It is not easy for any judge to stand up for his opinion.
  - Trend of open judging: Judges tend to judge more leniently than they would anonymously.
  - Protection of the judges: To stand up for his opinion is one thing, to cope with it, another
  - Consideration: Development of a criminal perspicacity „which judge is which?“
  - As long as there is somebody who is not content with the system, you shouldn't change it. [does this mean if it ain't broke don't fix it?!]
- 7 votes in favour, 7 against it, 4 abstentions*

According to the statutes a repetition of the vote is possible in case of equality of the voices.

Renewed vote:

*9 votes in favour, 7 against it, 2 abstentions*

**Open judging is introduced from 2016 again.**

### **13. Proposal 4, Sandra Schneider:**

Change of the statutes to permit on-line voting as from 2016

Reasons: DDI is far spread, it is an international association mostly all over Switzerland and Germany! It is a pity that only about 10% of the members determine about the regulations! With the on-line vote a forum must be embedded on the home page of DDI for the exchange of opinions! The organisation of the technical and juridical side must not belong to a small team!

Johanna Schmid has agreed to help in the technical sector, however, there is still a need for software specialists! I have made juridical preliminary studies but still need support in this field.

#### Discussion points:

- System according to the model of the political German party „Die Piraten“
- juridical help would be quite necessary
- Forum would be necessary, discussion terms & vote terms
- Member's numbers are necessary as well as individual identification
- Statute adaptation for MV 2016, then the first on-line vote in 2017
- Live discussion has other qualities, Internet voting does not fulfil this
- Attending a members meeting for many is "I want, but I can't" for various reasons.
- Proposals are not adaptable any more as we handle them in live meetings.
- A forum with an always present admin is necessary
- Idea: Group to begin with would have to formulate Proposals, then vote
- voting online visible during meeting
- Forum: excludes foreign-language members.
- Founding of a working group
- Call to members from a member: Engagement would be desirable!
- If you attend tournaments throughout the year, you can once in a year visit the members meeting.
- Need for a forum

- Forming of a workgroup, sorting all Proposals beforehand.

Founding of a working group which clarifies what is feasible prior to the MV 2016, because here an Proposal would have to be made to begin with the statute change.  
Help (above all juridically and IT) please to Sandra Schneider.

#### **14. Proposal 5, Sandra Schneider:**

Rewarding with toys!

If at a tournament no jackpot zone can be furnished and the way to leave the ring is rather long, the dog should get a chance, after the dance and after leaving the ring, to be rewarded after leaving the ring by a short play back in the ring. Sometimes exit and entrance to the ring are the same and dogs prepared to start are often distracted by the rewarding play of dogs who just left the ring. Taking this into consideration, sometimes rewarding your own dog as you want to, is not possible. It is also difficult with dogs who like toys more than food.

##### Discussion points:

- In official classes this should be possible outside the ring
- Problems with the timetable
- Either a dog likes toys or food, it will always be not equal for both types.  
e.g. is a dog discriminated who likes food during a ring inspection in official classes.
- With resource-aggressive dogs: Handlers would be put under pressure
- Dog should also be able to handle being rewarded later: training.
- Problem: the principle with official classes "no rewarding in the ring" will be softened up.

*1 votes for it, 17 against it*

#### **15. Proposal Christine Szakacs on behalf of the board of directors:**

Point equality in official classes in tournaments.

If two starters reach the same number of points in the results, the team with the higher number in "teamwork" will be preferred.

In case the teams are still equal, the next marks to distinguish the teams are: "flow", "dynamism" and "execution" in that order.

**Is valid from now on for all coming tournaments.**

*17 for it, 1 abstention*

#### **16. Was already considered as 8. a**

#### **17. Proposal**

2 starts in official class and 1 start in fun per day should be permitted.

*16 votes against it, 1 for it, 1 abstention*

#### **18. Miscellaneous**

##### **a) Christine Szakacs:**

**Picture of the future cooperation SKG (Swiss National Kennel Club) and DDI in**

## **Switzerland**

It could be an advantage to cooperate with the umbrella organisation of the respective country (e. g. Entry to World Championships) – foundation of an association „Community Dogdance Switzerland“ – as a separate section within the SKG – to statutes of the DDI (incl. regulations) no own homepage, later, perhaps, undersections on the homepage for every country. Aim: maintain the independence of DDI, synergetic effects – for Crufts, OEC, world championship etc. are facilitated thanks to national associations.

In Germany up to now there has been quite good cooperation between VDH and DDI. This Swiss approach could be a model for other cooperations.

### **b) New homepage**

Working group “Homepage”: interested members announce themselves please to Axel Weber.

We are looking for ideas to create more integration of the countries and to be more operator-friendly.

### **c) Increasing the attraction of the association**

Idea: Monetary sponsorship by DDI attached to advantages for members, e. g. , early registration possibilities for members,

Discounts on seminars for members, reduced entry fees for tournaments, a „free tournament“ per year, etc. . . .

Idea: DDI-Merchandising (T-shirt, sticker, key follower etc. ) – e. g. shop (Spreadshirt)

*Jessi Rolfini is in charge of testing*

### **d) Association software (Lexware )**

Manager (in) / responsible person (in) wanted for cooperation with the users/members and the steering committee.

### **e) Smaller regulation changes**

The proposal that Claudia, as responsible for judge’s education, is allowed to make the smaller text changes in the regulations which do not change the sense.

## **19. End of the meeting**

End of the meeting: 20h

**Carmen Mayer, secretary**