

## THE VERSITILE WORKING BORDER TERRIER

We considered ourselves fortunate to own a very useful and versatile Border bitch called Porche (Badgerbeck's Porche) who was not only able to do the general work we expected from a Border such as hunting and flushing from cover/below ground but who with some dedicated training equated herself very well as a gun dog, retrieving all manner of shot vermin and game including rabbits, pheasants, rats, squirrels, pigeons, crows, magpies etc. Porche was one of the most trusted and obedient dogs in the beating line and also "picked up" (retrieving birds shot by people paying to shoot who do not have a dog of their own for the purpose) on a proper shoot retrieving pheasants, she even "eye wiped" (found a bird the previous dog couldn't find) one of the shoot's best spaniels! Not only that but she became an extremely competent ferreting dog who would "mark" occupied warrens so you didn't waste time on the empty ones, clever enough to wait in a hedge or ditch so rabbits would be forced out into the open where the long nets were waiting for them. She was clever enough to know not to try and kill and subsequently damage any rabbits that had already been dispatched and was so obedient you could stop her chasing a rabbit that crossed your path, something you couldn't do with any of the others.

Porche is twelve now and semi-retired, she enjoys some cover hunting and joined us ferreting last season (her favourite I think) and still gets to retrieve some of the rats and squirrels shot in the garden but has to share this task with a young whippet in training. Fortunately she's somewhat hard of hearing now so is often unaware of the shot and sleeps throughout so the whippet can get some practice in without Porche feeling left out most of the time.

As much as we are proud of Porches accomplishments it is almost impossible for a dog to gain official recognition for any of its sporting achievements in the UK, the only exception being the working certificates issued by the masters of foxhound packs recognised by the Masters of Fox Hounds Association and with the guidelines being only the hunt terrier man and a helper are to be present at an earth when a dog is worked the opportunities for trying to gain one of these by members of the public get less each year. This is not the case in other countries however, Europe in particular has a large range of hunting/sporting based challenges where if good

enough, your dog can gain official recognition for its achievement/s with letters added to its name indicating the test/s it has been successful in.

A few years ago we received a puppy enquiry from Germany for a bitch puppy which they hoped to show but most importantly, work. I was asked if the puppy was likely to speak on scent, an unusual question as most people were only concerned about whether a terrier spoke when facing its quarry below ground, it actually turned out that the owner wanted to train for the speaking on scent test among others which I had never heard of. By pure chance I'd mated Felix to a bitch and he was the only dog I had at the time who was guaranteed to speak on scent, and he was known to pass that trait onto some of his progeny. Obviously it was impossible to say with any certainty whether any of the pups would follow their father, their mother for the main, only giving tongue when she had the visual on her quarry. For this reason selection was based on conformation and inquisitiveness and the test was in the lap of the gods as they say.

Badgerbeck Mousai, or Berti to her friends has gone on to achieve everything her owners hoped for and more! We'd love to take the credit for breeding such a talented and versatile Border but most of the praise must go to her owners, particularly Christin Falke who put so much work into her, dogs don't train themselves!



**Badgerbeck Mousai (Berti)**



Here is a list of her achievements with a brief description of each working title/award.

German Champion Badgerbeck Mousai SfK, sil, SP, BP/SW, BP/ST, BP/bau, Wa.T, BhFK/95, ESw, StiJ, KSchlH, SchwK, SchwK/40, SchwKF/40, Vp, BHP1, BHPS1

**SfK** (gun steadiness).

**sil** (certificate for giving voice when chasing).

**SP** (certificate for speaking on scent).

**BP/SW** (hunting aptitude test for blood tracking of hoofed game) *400m blood tracking (overnight track with two bends and 250ml blood) gun steadiness, behaviour on the stand, walking at heel in the forest, general obedience.*

**BP/ST** (hunting aptitude test for flushing hoofed game and predators) *hunting wild boar, gun steadiness, behaviour on the stand, walking at heel in the forest, general obedience.*

**BP/Bau** (hunting aptitude test for ground work) *Finding the predator and being present with voice (artificial compound) gun steadiness, behaviour on the stand, walking at heel in the forest, general obedience.*

**Wa.T.** (water retrieve).

**BhFK/95** (aptitude test for fox trial work).

**ESw** (aptitude test for hunting wild boar).

**StiJ** (flushing game during driven hunt) *Dogs can get this certificate for successful work without the support of other dogs and only during a driven hunt.*

**KSchlH** (rabbit trial) *tracking a rabbit trial, (250m) with and without a lead, and pulling it out of the hole.*

**SchwK** (blood tracking test) *1000-1200m blood tracking (20hrs overnight track with three bends and 250ml blood).*

**SchwK/40** (advanced blood tracking test) *1000-1200m blood tracking (40hrs track over 2 nights, 3 bends and 250ml of blood).*

**SchwKF/40** (advanced blood tracking test with tracking shoe) *1000-1200m blood tracking (40hrs track over 2 nights, tracking shoe, 2 bends, and 100ml blood).*

**Vp** (versatility test) *600m blood track, flushing game, obedience (behaviour on the stand, walking at heel in the forest, down stay in the forest, 5 min out of sight (2 shots after 2 minutes) voice on scent).*



**BHP1** (accompanying dog test) *obedience*.

**BHPS1** (advanced accompanying dog test) *obedience*.

As far as we know Berti is one of the most highly certified (working) Border terriers in Germany, the hard work has certainly paid off.

Many of these tests could be done in the UK but neither or KC or those running most of the breed clubs are interested in organising them, such a pity as our super intelligent Border has so much more to offer than just being purely an exhibition animal or lapdog/furbaby. Such tests don't have to be all about hunting either (which isn't for everyone) as our deer population increases year upon year it is inevitable that accidents will happen and thousands are killed or badly injured every year. Wouldn't it be wonderful if our breed was able to keep a registry of certified blood tracking dogs that could be called upon to help locate deer wounded in vehicle collisions in order that they could be dealt with humanely?

We are pleased to say Berti's daughter is starting to collect her own working awards so the qualities look to have been passed on. Now a new Berti puppy has joined the team, this time sired by a close relative of her father Felix, lets hope he proves just as clever and full of natural ability as his ancestors.

**Lisa Jenkins**

