

## Editorial

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Just start.



Are we already doing everything that is possible? Far from it! But we're taking the first steps. And we want to do so together with you, our members.

Preserving traditions and keeping an eye on modern life in order to ensure the club's future: I consider that my job as the Sport Representative at *Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde (SV) e.V.* It's all about progress, adapting to change, looking for new goals and maintaining existing structures. SV must always be seen as a whole: it is the breeding association of a working dog, the characteristics of which must be preserved. It would also be wrong to fully equate the definition

of working dogs with Schutzhund sport. The nature of dogs is more complex consists of more than just tracking, obedience and protection. It requires physical and mental skills to take on new tasks and be good at them. The term working dog also includes herding, rescue and sport dogs. It has already become vital for the survival of many local to offer several dog sports in order to give members a diverse range of activities as an incentive to keep them in the group. There is enough space for this both in SV and its base, the local groups. And German Shepherds don't care what they do. What they don't like is doing nothing.

Over the past 100 years, our breed has had to adapt and reinvent itself again and again. The pure herding dog turned into a versatile service dog, which in turn developed into the guard dogs, sport dogs and leisure and family dogs that we know today. In many places, the pure working dog that stayed out with the cattle to guard the house and the farm became a member of the family with a permanent place in the home. This development not only changed the breed image, but also the nature of German Shepherds, presenting them with new tasks. You can't grow without adapting.

At the moment, SV is experiencing stagnation in both membership and breeding. The breed, but also some officials, are no longer keeping up with change. In addition to the SV board, this is a job for federal and local group boards too. Do German Shepherds have a place in the new dog sports and are the local groups ready to go along with them? When we are ready to positively present German Shepherds at the numerous tournaments in the new dog sport trends of agility, obedience and rally obedience, demand for our dogs will once again increase.

Who, if not us, trust German Shepherds to prove themselves in sport?

Who, if not us, is convinced that we have the best working dog in the world? Why don't we show it?

Who, if not us, can get other dog sports participants excited about our breed's ability to perform?

Who, if not us, can change something?

Yours truly,  
Björn Bröker  
SV Sport Representative