

## RÜDIGER MAI

### Federal group Hessen/South mourns the loss of Ruediger Mai ...

20th April 1943 – 26th February 2026

#### In quiet mourning and gratitude, we bid farewell.

With Ruediger, we not only lose a dedicated dog sport enthusiast, breeder and judge, but also a person who carried our club with heart and passion.

Today we take you into the world that profoundly shaped Ruediger's life – the world of the German Shepherd.

It all began in Wiesbaden-Bierstadt. In his early youth, Ruediger became a proud owner of a German Shepherd. With his dog Hasso (without pedigree) he took his first steps in dog sports. He joined the local group Wiesbaden-Bierstadt and became a member of the largest dog breeding clubs in the world, the 'Verein fuer Deutsche Schaeferhunde (SV) e.V.'

From that moment on, Ruediger had been fully committed. With great dedication he worked as a decoy and dog trainer. His enthusiasm for dog sports, and especially for the German Shepherd, grew year by year. In only five years, he was able to reach the 'Großes Sportabzeichen' – a great success in such a short time.

But his passion went far beyond sport. At the young age of 20, Ruediger had his kennel name "vom Bierstadter Hof" registered – a name that became known far beyond regional borders in the following decades.

With great devotion, expertise and a sense of responsibility, Ruediger dedicated himself to breeding. In over more than 50 years, 1365 puppies were born in his kennel. Many of these dogs significantly shaped the development of the breed. Twelve percent of his bred dogs passed the 'Koerung'.

They were also very successful at shows and awarded the highest evaluations more than 1,000 times, thirteen of them even 'Vorzueglich Auslese'. In 2003, "Kora vom Bierstadter Hof" became the winner of the German Sieger Show in the working class females.

In addition, his dogs took part in countless utility dog trials, which impressively demonstrated the strong performance of his breeding.

For his outstanding breeding work, Ruediger was awarded the 'Zuechterabzeichen in Gold' in 1987, although receiving awards was not his main goal. They were rather a recognition of this passion that accompanied him throughout his life and motivated him to develop new ideas and to continue working together with friends and fellow breeders.

A special highlight followed in 2004: With his breeding group "vom Bierstadter Hof," Ruediger won the breeding group competition at the German Sieger Show. For this extraordinary result, he was honored with the 'Walter-Freytag-Medaille' by the 'Verein fuer Deutsche Schaeferhunde (SV) e.V.'

In 2012 he received the 'Baron – von - Gingins – Medaille' from the VDH – an award given to only a few breeders for outstanding achievements.

However, Ruediger's commitment was not only restricted to breeding. Right from the start he took on responsibility within the club.

In 1968 he was appointed trial judge.

In 1973 he was appointed show judge.

In 1981 he was finally appointed 'Koermeister'.

In 45 years as a trial judge, 40 years as a show judge, and 32 years as a 'Koermeister', Ruediger influenced the club in a very special way. His competence, experience and above all his fairness made him a judge who was highly respected nationwide.

His work took him to many countries on almost all continents. Everywhere he was a welcome guest – someone connecting expertise with modesty and humanity.

Twelve times he was nominated for judging at national events. As a sign of special recognition, the 'Verein fuer Deutsche Schaeferhunde (SV) e.V.' consequently appointed him as an honorary judge.

Ruediger's commitment to his local group was also extraordinary: He served on the board for 62 years. He was active on the board of the federal group of Hessen/South for 36 years.

He fulfilled his honorary positions with great dedication – as deputy breeding warden, ID commissioner, federal group breeding warden for 20 years and in the honorary council of judges.

When it came to organization, Ruediger played a major role in all federal events of the federal group of Hessen/South.

A special highlight was the 'Bundesleistungshueten' in Hoernsheim (Huetttenberg) in 2012, where Ruediger served as head of the event which meant a lot to him as he was able to experience it with his friends Wilfried Scheld, Heinz Seitz (master shepherd), Juergen Hess and his wife Margit by his side.

For that great performance, Ruediger was awarded the 'Goldene Schippe' as well as the 'SV - Nadel in Gold' followed by the 'Verdienstspange in Gold' handed over by his federal group Hessen/South in 2025.

But all these awards only describe a part of what Ruediger was like.

He was a remarkable personality in the 'Verein fuer Deutsche Schaeferhunde (SV) e.V.'

A person who always treated the members of our community with friendliness, politeness, helpfulness, and great respect. His interaction with others was marked by appreciation and humanity.

Ruediger was part of the SV family. He was an important link in the 'Verein fuer Deutsche Schaeferhunde' – not only here in our federal group and not only at the national level, but far beyond. Worldwide he was an ambassador of our exceptional breed, a reliable pillar of our club and a person many relied on.

We are grateful to have had the chance to get to know Ruediger and to have been able to experience him as a mentor and to have accompanied him on his journey.

The time with you, dear Ruediger, was great and instructive. It was marked by fellowship, helpfulness and many shared moments – always accompanied by your smile.

Our deepest sympathy goes to his family, especially his wife Margit, who significantly supported him in his work.

**Rest in peace – we will never forget you!**

Landesgruppe 08 – Hessen/South

