

# MUNICH CUP 2009

**Quality At Its Best!**



Above: *The event's surroundings*

Left: *The judges with dogs*

*by Helene Leimer*

If the first Munich Cup in 2008 was a successful start of a new tradition, the Munich Cup 2009 certainly fulfilled its original promise. Behind it all we find Simone Heissmann-Ramge and her team of many helping hands, who should receive a quality seal that has not been created as yet. She is an organiser who is not only listens to advice from experts but puts it into practice as well! Throughout the event she oversaw everything with heart-warming friendliness and calm, always caring for judges, participants, spectators and helpers alike.

Where would I start describing quality at its best?

Why not with the team of judges, made up of five British A-panel judges with more years of experience behind them that they would care to say. Roger Tozer, Mark Bettinson, John Stubbs, Phil Parkins and Rupert Hill all are active handlers, breeders, judges and trainers, a fact that

became visible in every test set, and in every judgement given. As a starter in both novice and open class I can say that the demands made on the dogs certainly corresponded to the performance a dog should be able to achieve in his class.

Even if a number of novice dogs failed, it was not because of tricky tests. On the contrary, most zero marks were much rather due to insufficient basic training. At the Munich Cup 2009 particularly the younger dogs were required to show appropriate basics. Excellent heelwork would have guaranteed half the test! For the other



*Judge Mark Bettinson with participant Sandra Scheuerle*

half a well-tempered, well-bred retriever with all the desirable natural abilities was good to have. The judges wanted to see dogs able to do the job for which they were bred. They wanted to see retrievers who will work at full speed in the heat or cold, in sunshine or rain, always ready to listen to their handlers and obey their commands. All judgements were given in accordance with these expectations. Well settled basics, good temperament and the right natural abilities such as drive, style, nose, the correct balance of independence and control, all of it embedded in good handling perfectly timed to wind and scent just as much as ground and cover conditions. Throughout the weekend the judges displayed their deep love of gundog work. They praised good work, comforted unlucky starters, gave lots of advice, and on top of their professional performance they always had a cheerful or humorous remark ready – altogether a lovely demonstration of "positive judging"!

As quality of judging draws special international attention, this time 151 teams from seven European countries came to Munich to compete. Many had the chance to refresh past acquaintances, and old friends enjoyed comparing their dogs in the working test. The tasks were always appropriate yet on a high level for each class, the judges were firm but always on the side of the dogs.



No test or trial would work without good helpers. We had 51 of them, and many names were very well known in the retriever scene. If novice starters get open class handlers to throw dummies for them, these will fall precisely in the right place or area every time, drawing a high arch easy to be marked. Good marking ranges amongst the most important abilities a retriever should have – the helpers at the Munich Cup made sure the young dogs were given the best opportunity to show their best abilities.

Aside from the competition we caught scent of the Munich way of life from the delightful titbits and the wide range of refreshments including the famous local beers. Even a couple of sales booths with good selections of training gear and general dog sports equipment were put up. Wherever you went, you met members of the organisation team, all nicely dressed up in country style during the day and in local costumes for the prize giving ceremonies in the evening. As if this were not enough, Oda Lipowsky, with her black Labrador at her side, very skilfully



*Above: Participants Martine Alt-Tebacher and Barbara Campi*

*Left: Judge Mark Bettinson with participants Helene Leimer and Francesca Navratil*

Right: *Labrador at the water test*  
Below: *Participants Edith Vetter and Helene Leimer*



*The judges at the awards ceremony*

caught the best moments with her high-tech cameras, and presented a selection of them in a very nice little photo booklet!

After some consideration Simone Ramge will organise the next Munich Cup on August 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> 2010, this time under the auspices of the German Retriever Club (DRC).

There will again be five Panel-A judges from Great Britain, plus one German judge, as is required by DRC-Working Test rules.

I have already noted down the date in my calendar of dog events and am looking forward to competing in at least two, maybe even three classes. With my novice and open Goldens, and my little black Labrador in beginners class! It will be fun to meet Italian, Hungarian, Swiss, German, Austrian, Dutch, French or Belgian retriever aficionados and happily chat away in several languages ... including body language.

## Helene Leimer



*has owned and hunted with Golden Retrievers since 1986. She has been a FCI-Field Trial and Working Test judge since 1998. She gives training courses and seminars in Austria and many European countries, and is the author of books and a video on her training methods, with particular emphasis on communication between people and dogs. She has also worked with wheelchair-dogs, mainly for disabled children, and created the "Vita Charity" Working Tests.*