



## IRO Rescue Dog World Championship 2011 in Belgium

On Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup> of June 2011, the 17<sup>th</sup> IRO world championship for rescue dogs started in Chastre/ Belgium. 116 rescue dog teams from 20 countries gathered together in the soccer stadium in Chastre, the starting point for a half hour parade through the city of Chastre.

The teams came from Argentina, South Korea, Japan and from nearly every European country. The biggest contingent came from Austria (21 teams), followed by Slovenia (15). The Czech Republic sent 14 Teams, Germany 11 and the Netherlands 10. 53 participants started in the category Rubble Search, 50 registered in Area Search, 8 for Tracking and 5 in Water Rescue.

Led by a local music group, the rescue dog teams, team leaders and the delegations of their organisations walked through the streets of Chastre. It was a tremendous picture for the spectators. The persons and dogs proudly presented their national flags and colours – such a variety of nations and the huge amount of different dogs were never seen before in the city.

In the grand courtyard of the historic tow-hall of Chastre, coming from the 17<sup>th</sup> century, all participants were welcomed by the mayor, Mr. *Claude Jossart*. *Bruno Barras*, president of Veille & Protège Rescue then forwarded his wish of a successful and fair World Championship to all. He then also welcomed the head of the director's commission in the name of the Belgium Ministry of Interior, Mrs. *Monique De Kno*. The general director for civil protection in Belgium, Mr. *Jaak Raes*, then also greeted the participants. The official opening of the World Championship was then finally done by Dr. Wolfgang Zörner, IRO-President.

Despite a little malfunction at the beginning of the drawing it then went on smoothly under the lead of supervising-judge *Otto Lanz*.

All work-sites for nose work were rated manageable throughout. At the end of the first day of competition though there was big disappointment since no team passed in area search as well as tracking. On the other hand, spectators at the rubble area could watch very beautiful results. As the negative trend carried on in area search, good results were shown in tracking even on not habitual grounds (beet-acre). The weather conditions were almost ideal at these World Championships so that this couldn't be used as affecting factor.

The friendship-evening on Saturday, 2<sup>nd</sup> of July, was a big success. A good mood emerged in the pavilion on the trainings area with „Porchetta“, beer and wine. Even dancing along Disco-music was on the program. One of the hi-lights was the music performance of the host of the next IRO World Championship when *Wiktorija Pachcovskaja* from the Ukraine surprised everyone with a wonderful song from her home.

Also this World Championship came to an end once. A buzz of activity dominated on the premises! All participating organisations marched to the closing ceremony on the grounds where obedience and dexterity had taken place before. Children of Veille & Protège Rescue members carried signs with the relative name of the country. Bruno Barras thanked all participants, all sponsors and partners, especially *Eukanuba* and the *Loterie Nationale*, for their financial support. He also thanked the company *Béton Lemaire*, who made the grounds of the rubble area available, and *Mrs. Feyerick*, whose wonderful forest could be used for the area search. Big thanks was pronounced to all 120 voluntary helpers of Veille & Protège Rescue. Since the supervising-judge, *Otto Lanz*, was not able to attend due to his health, *Resi Gerritsen* read out a personal letter from him to all participants. Before starting the actual award ceremony, *Tineke Timmermans – Eukanuba*, forwarded greeting words and made a gift of a 15 kg sack Eukanuba dog food to all participants.

The big winners of the 17<sup>th</sup> IRO rescue-dog World Championships were teams from the Czech Republic standing on the podium on Sunday, 3<sup>rd</sup> of July 2011. The Czech Team Svaz záchranných brigád kynologu CR (SZBK), won the team-competition. Tracking was won by Miroslav Cenek (SZBK CR/ CZ ) ahead of Iveta Matenauerova (ZBK JmK CR/ CZ). 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> place was taken in water-search by Eva Kacerkova and Petr Katrev, both from SZBK CR/ CZ. They were only defeated by Nicola Carrara from X-Plorer, Italy, who already won this title in 2010 at the World Championship in the Czech Republic. Gold medalist in rubble search was Tanja Pommeranz from HS Frutigland, Switzerland. Silver medalist Dr. Isabella Kühn (BRH/ Germany) and Bronze medallist Andrej Zunic (KVRP Kranj/ Slovenia).

For the first time in the history of the World Championships no participant passed in area search. Please find below a report of the IRO spokesperson for training and judges about that.

*Dr. Wolfgang Zörner* emphasized in his closing words that the reasons for the unsatisfying results in area search have to be analyzed. He then closed the 17<sup>th</sup> IRO rescue-dog World Championships. *Bruno Barras* then handed the IRO-flag over to the Ukrainian delegation who is hosting the 18<sup>th</sup> IRO rescue-dog World Championship in the Ukraine from 26<sup>th</sup> to the 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2012.

#### Report IRO Spokesperson for Training and Judges World Championship Chastre, Belgium 2011

Due to the fact that no participant passed Area Search during the World Championship 2011, the department for training and judges would like to analyze the situation and forward the conclusion to all NRO's.

Description of the Area Search work-site:

The area was rather clearly arranged, partly until the limits of 50 meters left and right. There were small paths again and again which were easily accessible by the dogs. Natural vegetal cover consisted of trees, bushes and there were partly blackberry- and raspberry bushes on the ground.

The size of the area was displayed with GPS and was then also paced off.

The middle path was a widened forest road.

Position of the victims (hiding-persons):

For all participants one victim was positioned in the first part (up to 120m left or right) and both other victims in the last third between 200 and 300m. All victims were found in the different hiding-places.

The persons laid on the outer limits of the area. Each hiding-place was accessible for a dog, mostly accessible through more than just one way. The victims were not covered and were sitting there, not laying.

Carrying out of the Area search:

Each participant was offered the same conditions and the Area Search took place according to the testing standards.

Some infirmity of the teams was already registered during the event

1. Most dogs do not have the shape to search an area up to 300m covering all. Some dogs were already worn out at 150m.
2. Most dog handlers make tactical mistakes, e.g. sending their dogs repeatedly into the same area which means a loss of time and a loss of energy for the dogs.
3. Many dog handlers are not able to portion the 300m timewise. They stay too long in the first part of the area and then time is over before they are at the end.
4. Most dogs are unable to go out far enough. They reverse at 30m.

After the Area Search was over within the event, the department for training and judges did the Area Search one more time with three dogs to find out why also those dogs which were in the past years known as top dogs were not able to deal with the task.

Three searches were done with three different combinations of hiding-places which were also offered to the participants during the World Championship. The three dogs were known principally for their shape and their abilities to manage an Area Search Level B. At this test, 2 of the 3 participating dogs were not able to locate all three victims

Experienced trainers were used for victims also being able to monitor the dogs once coming near the hiding-place. The result of this monitoring was that both hiding-places in the rearmost part partial delivered little scent. The dogs were very close several times, but weren't able to get the scent of the person. One dog was there four times only at the fifth time was he able to locate the person. The victims also stated that the air was close and there was no wind sometimes. This was then affirmed by testing with a smoke device.

Argumentation:

Following factors are to be mentioned for the results of the Area Search of the World Championship 2011:

1. Most dogs do not have the shape to search an area up to 300m covering all. Some dogs were already worn out at 150m. This also seen under the impact of stress of the dog-handler during such an event. Also strongly affects the search-condition of the dog.
2. Most dog handlers make tactical mistakes, e.g. sending their dogs repeatedly into the same area which means a loss of time and a loss of energy for the dogs.
3. Many dog handlers are not able to portion the 300m timewise. They stay too long in the first part of the area and then time is over before they are at the end.
4. Most dogs are unable to go out far enough. They reverse at 30m.
5. It was also noted that the hiding-places were partly difficult due to wind conditions. The dogs had to exactly get to the victim to being able to alert. None of the participating teams searched the area so exactly that it could have been mastered. The conditions for this area were very demanding in the end which couldn't have been noticed from the very first.

It is important for the future that NRO's carve out the infirmity shown by dogs and dog-handlers in their area training.

Dogs should be more worked on condition – physical as well as mental condition and also search condition.

The search tactics must be improved which will also be most important for the carrying out of the search work of the revised testing standards.

In this revised testing standards also the demand for 50m running out does no longer exist, so the dog-handler can adjust his search tactics to the dog.

The IRO department for training and judges will increasingly speak up for support of the NRO's.

Resi Gerritsen, IRO Spokesperson for training and judges  
Katzelsdorf, 12.07.2011