

Wow, if I am to give a testimonial to Broadhead Kennels, let me lead off by tipping my hat to a German system designed to create the best versatile gun dogs on the planet. In my opinion, the effort put forth by the VDD to create and maintain high quality versatile hunting dogs enhances the sport of hunting. The system does this through a valid (real world) hunting ability testing system involving a series of mandatory tests prior to breeding (and selling) a DD. These efforts maintain, and improve the huntability of the DD breed over time. The drive to both honor and conserve game, and to instill those drives in the hunters lucky enough to partner with a DD on a hunt, and in the home, are the biggest reasons I chose to purchase a DD pup. Your hunting life will change for the better. While a DD will require considerable time, money, and effort on your part- the team that develops will be efficient in the field, will create fond memories, and will promote the sport of ethical hunting. The needed genes are all there I promise, in your pup and in you! The rewards will be large indeed. Your life as a hunter will be richer. I am so happy that I chose purchase a DD pup.

Randy and Karen Mabe, owners and operators of the Broadhead Kennel, are some of the first breeders I talked to about the breed. Both are avid sportsman, and I really felt like they knew what was behind most of the questions I asked about raising a versatile dog and living with him. They were able to answer the questions with honesty, integrity, and a genuine concern for what I wanted. My main concern was that I wanted a dog that got along with other dogs, other animals (horses and cows, maybe a cat or two), and people. I have had dogs my whole life. I have a wife, two children, and friends. Many of those friends have small children and dogs too. I wanted a dog that could be with me in any situation, a dog that I could relax around, regardless of my circumstances. I wanted a dog mostly as a companion that could camp, hike, hunt, and play with other people (children included) and animals with equal aplomb. After reading about the DD and their fantastic hunting abilities, I did have concerns about my hopes; could I have all of that in one dog I wondered?

Indeed, in my research I found that some people have written that, while these dogs are extremely capable hunters, these dogs can be fighters and biters, and they are high horsepower animals, and can be hard to control. My concerns were relayed to Randy, and he put me at ease about the breed, specifically about what his goals were in breeding his bitch to the stud he chose. His reasons for choosing the stud's abilities and characteristics to blend with his bitch's abilities and characteristics were both thoughtful and purposeful. And because of the testing system, his goals were probably attainable, and surely would be measurable. His goals in the litter lined up with the dog I imagined myself partnering with for the next 12-14 years.

On the day after my birthday, August 11<sup>th</sup> 2010, Arrow V. Broadhead (aka Wyatt) was born. I immediately received notification (and pictures) of the situation. I had put a deposit down, and was third or fourth on the list as far as pick of the litter goes. Randy and Karen were very good about keeping me updated on the conditions and progress of the mother, and her litter. They really did a great job of caring for both the mother and the pups. It was a really warm summer and the mother and pups were taken inside when it got exceedingly hot (which happened often that summer). Due to occupational hazards and timing issues, I was probably the last buyer to get up there to meet the pups and pick mine out. I had expressed a desire for sex (male), and color (black), but made it known that my primary choice was in the breed. Randy and Karen honored even my smallest

wish even though I was probably the last to show up and pick a pup. This was a very professional and ethical act, one that I am appreciative of to this day- it gave me my Wyatt.

Wow, so now I had my pup, my first versatile gun dog, and this was to be the first hunting dog I trained. I had never heard of force fetch prior to researching a hunting dog, and honestly was intimidated by the prospect. Let me say this to potential buyers pondering this scary proposition. Do it! The bond that you will form with your dog will be very much worth every ounce of energy (a significant amount mind you) that you put into the equation. Wyatt has been such a blessing; I have never been closer to another dog. I am learning as I go. This process has taken me down many roads, none of them were unrewarding. The great thing about having and training a DD pup is the sense of community that the testing program brings. The breed is not well known, but the owners, breeders, and fans are die-hard and will bend over backwards to help you on your way. As mentioned before, I have never trained a hunting dog before. Before Wyatt's first test, we were having some problems with pointing, as there are not many wild birds to get him on in NC. Because of Wyatt's date of birth, he would be very young when he took his VJP test, which only compounded the issues we were facing. As Randy was frequently calling to check on our progress, I told Randy about these issues and he invited me up to his house to work with Wyatt and I. He showed me some things to try. He took an interest in our progress and Wyatt did really well in his VJP test- good enough to get invited to the Armbruster for his next test, no small feat for a very young pup with a first time handler. Good genes indeed!

Wyatt is WITHOUT a doubt the most stable dog I have ever had, and the most focused. He has an enormous prey drive. He is a hunter, without question. First and foremost though, he is looking towards pleasing and being with me: he wants to do a job, whatever that is. He gets along with other dogs and people, is very gentle with kids (though his tail shaking happiness can be jolting to really little ones. He has been exposed to cats and was amenable to one, not so much the other. He is always the most stable dog in the dog park. You cannot leave him with a rabbit or a guinea pig (sorry). He will bring them to you (and want your approval). These are high-energy dogs, with lots of need for exercise and jobs to do. Wyatt will just about kill himself to retrieve or track. He is aloof to strangers, though will not bark unless something seems strange. He will bark at someone on crutches going through the parking lot, but not a person going through the parking lot. He has a sense of normalcy that is pretty phenomenal, what fits, what doesn't.

My bottom line is this. If you put time and energy into the dog from day one, I can't see how you could go wrong with the breed. You can't go wrong with the German testing system. You can't beat the sense of community gained from training with other DD owners, nor the bond you will form with your dog in training and hunting together. Broadhead Kennels is what brought all these unbeatable things together for me. Randy and Karen are two really solid people who care about the breed. They are honest and very upfront with questions about the breed, about how things work within the organization, and about what to expect and how to best prepare for your pup. I encourage you to read, read, read before the pup arrives. If you can, go to a VJP test before you

purchase a pup to see the pups in action, and to hear and watch the owners. I wish you the best of luck. I would highly recommend Broadhead Kennel to anyone considering a DD pup. My phone number is 828-773-1758. If you have any questions, feel free to call me.

May your experiences in the field and at home be memorable.

Chip L. Parrish