

8th ECDC meeting on the 7th June 2007 in Zagreb-Croatia, organised by the Croatian Dalmatian Club 'Atila Dubac'

Minutes of the ECDC Meeting of Delegates 2007

Chair: Mr. Frans de Ridder, chairman of the ECDC

ECDC-committee members present:

Chairman: Frans de Ridder (Belgium), secretary Annemiek Morgans (Netherlands) and treasurer Alfred Ronneburg (Germany)

ECDC-delegates present:

Åke Cronander from Sweden, Helle Høie and Tyge Greibrokk from Norway, Sören Jacobsen from Denmark, Sanna Heikkinen and Jonna Niemenperä from Finland, Frans de Ridder and Liliane de Ridder-Onghena from Belgium, Sally Ann Clegg from France, Erna Kuipers and Rhys Morgans from the Netherlands, Herbert Nagel and Alfred Ronneburg from Germany (DDC), Gerhard Herbst and Jörg Haeseler from Germany (CDF), Ursula Voitle and Tryn E. Borckenstein from Austria, Pia Pedercini from Italy and Ivana Bakal from Croatia (Atila Dubac).

ECDC-observers present:

Nina Fleming from Great Britain (BDC)

Delegates new candidate members present:

Stipe Gorenjak and Dean Radosevic from Croatia (HKPDP Dalmatinac), Tibor Takacs and Fehér Gábor from Hungary.

Also present from Serbia: Nenad Dević

ECDC-delegates unable to attend:

Simone Zollinger from Switzerland, Katerina Malovic from Czech Rep.

ECDC-delegates absent without apology:

DVD from Germany

ECDC-observers absent:

North of England Dalmatian Club

New candidate members absent:

Maria Elena Altuna de la Peña from Cuba

1. Arrival of the participants. Welcome + coffee.

At nine o'clock the chairman mr. Frans de Ridder opened the meeting and welcomed the official delegates of the member clubs and all other guests. He addressed a special 'thank you' to the Croatian Dalmatian Club 'Atila Dubac' for organising the ECDC event 2007.

2. Welcome from the Croatian Dalmatian Club 'Atila Dubac'

In his opening speech mr. Damir Skok, president of the Croatian Kennel Club, thanked everybody for finding their way to Zagreb: "Welcome to the country of origin of the breed, we all love so much. By sharing our love for the breed, we all have very much in common. Special thanks go to Ivana Bakal and

her team for making this event possible. We wish you a very successful meeting, congress and show and welcome you to the Euro Dog Show in Zagreb.”

3. Presentation of the delegates from the member-clubs and observer-clubs

The delegates, official observers and delegates new candidate members introduced themselves. (See mentioned above)

4. Chairman’s Report (Frans de Ridder)

“Two years ago when I was nominated as chairman of the ECDC, I promised to make this organization more active. Serious health problems early this spring prevented me from doing this. The only items I can present to you will be a proposal for new rules for the ECDC in order to make our organization more world wide. The new status will give us the possibility to sign a contract with the FCI, which means that we will be regarded as an official discussion partner and therefore will be able to have direct contact with the FCI. Another proposal could be the change of the name of our organization to make it more clear that the Dalmatian is well known worldwide and that we accept non-European members in our cooperation. At a committee meeting last year, we discussed the financial situation of the ECDC and came to the conclusion that it would be possible to reduce the membership fee (agenda point 11). This is not only interesting for the existing members but will also encourage smaller clubs to become members. Another proposal is that the secretary of the organizing (host) club should be a member of the ECDC committee. This will allow us to have better contact with the club, organizing the next event. Special thanks go to the committee members Alfred Ronneburg and Annemiek Morgans and our translators Sally Ann Clegg, Mme. Ricou and Stephanie Yates.”

5. Secretary’s Report (Annemiek Morgans)

- Minutes of the meeting 2005: There were no remarks and the minutes were agreed upon.
- Secretary’s report Period 2005-2007: See report attached.

6. Treasurer’s Report (Alfred Ronneburg) – see report attached

The financial report was sent out before the meeting. After answering questions by the treasurer, the delegates gave their approval to the report. All clubs (except Germany DVD) had paid their membership fee for 2006.

7a. Membership matters

- **From observer status to full membership?** Croatian Dalmatian Club ‘HKPDP-Dalmatinac’, the Hungarian Dalmatian Club and the Portuguese Dalmatian Club.

The above mentioned clubs have an observer status since the last meeting. From the Portuguese Club we did not receive any reactions to our mails, so it is not clear if this club wants to continue the procedure.

- **New Candidate: Club Dalmata de Cuba.**

The Dalmatian Club of Cuba is the first club outside Europe. Its delegate was not able to attend this meeting, but promised to come to the next meeting. According to the present rules new clubs have an observer status for one period until they are nominated as full members at the next meeting. Frans de Ridder: “In our concept for the new rules we propose not to have the observer status anymore for the simple reason that, as there are meetings only once every two years, nobody is controlling the clubs in this period. Under these circumstances a test period does not make much sense.”

Åke Cronander asked to postpone the vote on this agenda point until after the discussions about the proposals for the new statutes under agenda point 11: “In our Nordic countries we are allowed to have only one breed club per country. If we allow more clubs per country in our organization, that country will have many votes. Therefore my proposal is: “in case there are more clubs per country, they have to share the votes”. Ivana Bakal mentioned not to see the point as Germany already has three clubs within the ECDC. After a discussion the delegates agreed to postpone the discussion about membership matters until after agenda point 11.

7b. Membership fee

Also postponed to point 11

8. Health and Breeding committee report (Tyge Greibrokk)

The following subjects were reported: mega-oesophagus and epilepsy.

-Mega-oesophagus (mega-o): Tyge Greibrokk referred to his article about mega-o that was sent to all members in three languages: “In the last meeting we decided that everybody should try to send in reports on incidents in litters regarding mega-o. I must admit, that in these two years I did not receive much. Today we have reports of 71 litters in Europe and 10 litters in New Zealand. Not all cases are verified by vets, but all have been reported by breeders. After studying the pedigrees it is not possible to make a conclusion as to how mega-o is inherited, but with no doubt, there is an inherited trait. The question is: how mega-o is inherited and what we can do about it. Litters of puppies can be X-rayed at four weeks of age and dilatation of the oesophagus can be seen. At the age of eight weeks you might not see anything at all. You might think you have healthy dogs, but that is not necessarily the case. Mega-o can also appear later on in life. It is my recommendation that a dog, which has been diagnosed in having mega-o at an early age or later, should never be used in breeding, as now you have the inherited genes in the dog. What more you want to do, is up to the clubs and the breeders. But in my opinion mega-o is a disease with a polygenetic inheritance and is more common than we think. As we have no DNA markers so far, we are dependant on reports from breeders to get more knowledge. Breeders should be honest and report when cases occur. At the moment there is not much more we can do.”

- Epilepsy. Tyge Greibrokk referred to a conversation with a German breeder, bringing up the subject of epilepsy: “According to this breeder there is more epilepsy among Dalmatians in his country and other countries than officially acknowledged. Many veterinarians know about it but the breeders do not want to talk about it. Shortly after this I received a report from the Finnish Dalmatian Club saying that at the University of Helsinki they had started with an attempt to look for the genetic inheritance of epilepsy among Dalmatians in cooperation with the Finnish Dalmatian Club and the Dalmatian Club of America. There have been some incidents of epilepsy in Finland but the Finnish Club does not consider epilepsy to be a major problem and I can say the same for the situation in Norway. We do not know how the situation is in other countries and I would like to ask: Do you consider epilepsy no problem, a small problem or a big problem in your countries? In case you consider epilepsy to be a real problem, we have to think what we can do and one possibility is to follow up the Finnish initiative. Prof. Dr. Hannes Lohi, Professor of Veterinary Molecular Genetics and leader of the Canine Epilepsy Consortium in Europe, started with DNA research concerning epilepsy and other genetic diseases among dogs in order to get a better understanding of the much more complicated genetic inheritance in humans. He is interested in doing research on Dalmatians and, as it is very difficult to find someone who really wants to spend time on genetic research on our breed, we should use this possibility.” The genetic research on epilepsy in Dalmatians is called the EPIDAL-project and a short presentation was given by Jonna Niemenperä, delegate from Finland. For all information about the project (in English and German) see www.epidal.dalmatiner.org. Also important for the project and one of the persons to contact is Bettina Hutz, Research Assistant Dept. of Discovery Biology, from Germany, now living in Finland and responsible for running the study in Finland.

According to Åke Cronander the name of the project has a negative sound for the breed and he recommended the Finnish Club to change the name into something more positive.

Tyge Greibrokk warned not to be too optimistic about the results of the project: “We should be aware of the fact that the Dalmatian club of America has been busy for six years trying to get a solution of the inheritance of epilepsy. The research was almost closed down, but was started again at the University of Missouri, which dr. Lohi is cooperating with. Epilepsy is known among humans to be a very complicated disturbance where, may be, more than 200 genes are involved. When sending a blood sample to dr. Lohi’s research lab in Finland, you can not expect to get very much out of it until a much later time. To have a family background, it is very important to send samples of the entire family and

not from one single dog. How many dogs are needed, is difficult to say. May be 100, may even be up to 400 dogs. For 100 dogs we are talking about costs to the amount of about 30.000 Euro. The ECDC does not have the money to pay for this research. The initiative has to come from the member clubs, when considering this project is important enough to donate money to.

Rhys Morgans asked about the costs for a breeder, when sending a blood sample to Finland. Jonna Niemenperä: “If samples are sent now, there will be no charge for the analysis. But that will not last forever. For now only the local costs of taking the blood sample and sending the material to Finland have to be paid. When the target has been reached in developing the gene test and you ask to verify if your dog is a potential carrier, then the costs will be around 300 Euro per dog.”

Persons to contact for more info: see website www.epidal.dalmatiner.org

Jonna Niemenperä (Finnish and English): dalmatian@jippii.fi

Bettina Hutz (German and English): bettina.hutz@orionpharma.com

Liisa Hällström (Swedish, Finnish and English): liisa.hallstrom@netti.fi

Rhys Morgans proposed that the ECDC should try to develop a research fund so that clubs can donate money, when they wish to support the Epidal-project and mentioned that not only the research for epilepsy is important but also the mapping of the Dalmatian genes. The delegates of both German Clubs (DDC and CDF) said not to regard epilepsy as a problem in their clubs. Frans de Ridder expressed his wish, that there will be communication and cooperation between study groups in different parts of Europe, working on the same subjects. Tyge Greibrokk mentioned that Åsa Boholm wishes to withdraw as a member of the Breeding and Health commission and that the Swedish Dalmatian Club proposed Lena Erlandsson, a genetic specialist, to take her place: “If she would be elected as a new member of the commission, I suggest, that she is given the possibility to handle this matter on behalf of the ECDC and to investigate what our organisation should do and, based on the information from Germany and Finland, to come with recommendations regarding epilepsy.” Helle Høie: “Everybody should support the project by sending samples of affected dogs, as for a breeder it is very important to know if your dog is free or a carrier. The good thing is that your privacy is guaranteed, so nobody has to know that you are doing this.” Tyge Greibrokk: “The estimated costs for the first phase have been suggested to the amount of a minimum of 15000 Euro and may be up to 30.000 Euro. So it will take time for a research fund to accumulate sufficient money.” A discussion followed. Frans de Ridder: “Based on the future recommendations from the Health and Breeding commission and the reactions from the member clubs, the ECDC can decide to help financially. Coordination of information and cooperation between the different universities by putting databases together is very important. This will provide more information and more possibilities for research, not only on epilepsy but also on other diseases.” The delegates reacted positively to the proposals put forward.

Tyge Greibrokk asked if there were any more proposals for subjects to bring up in the next two years. Sören Jacobsen mentioned ‘temperament’, as he has the impression that more and more Dalmatians are put down due to bad temperament. “In Norway we are collecting data on Dalmatians in order to make a breeding index, based on information from questionnaires. Temperament is included as well. So far we have information of approximately 300 Dalmatians and we will continue to go on in the future”, according Tyge Greibrokk.

9. Judging Committee Report (Åke Cronander)

There was no report, as nothing had happened in the past two years.

10. Website report (Rhys Morgans)

Rhys Morgans asked the delegates to report changes of addresses. Frans de Ridder asked to publish a list of Dalmatian judges per country, but only those who are members of the ECDC member clubs and to add a special mark to their names in case they are qualified to judge more breeds. All delegates

agreed. A yearly reminder will be sent to ask for changes in committees, (e-mail) addresses etc. The chairman thanked the webmaster for his work.

11. Proposal for change of Agreements + change of name: “European Cooperation of Dalmatian Clubs” into “International Cooperation of Dalmatian Clubs”.

Frans de Ridder: “In order to be officially recognised by the FCI, our organization has to sign a contract (Cooperation Agreement) with the FCI. There are two important conditions in this contract. Firstly: all of our member clubs have to be from countries who are members of the FCI. We are allowed to have contact with other clubs, but they can not become full members. Secondly: we should have at least one member outside Europe. According to the model agreement we received from the FCI, the new name of our organization should be ‘World Association for Dalmatians’. Tyge Greibrokk: “Being a ‘World Association’, I suggest that we try to maintain control in Europe, as we do not want people in other parts of the world to tell us how a Dalmatian should look like.” According to the chairman, there would be no risk to this as there are not many countries in other parts of the world who are members of the FCI. Our only aim is to be able to have direct contact with the FCI. Sanna Heikkinen asked why this is important. Frans de Ridder: “For all kind of discussions about the breed and most important about health problems. In general only National Kennel Clubs are allowed to have direct contact with the FCI. If our contact can only go via all these different kennel clubs, it will be a very slow process.”

Point 2e: ‘Membership ends when the membership fee is not paid after two reminders.’ After a discussion it was decided to add the following: ‘The membership ends officially at the next meeting.’ To be sure that nothing can go wrong in contacting the clubs it was also decided that the committee will send e-mails to at least four persons per club: the chairman, the secretary and the two delegates. In our mails we will never send more than three attachments, to be sure that all information will be received. Tyge Greibrokk proposed: “To become a member of the World Association a Dalmatian club should have a certain minimum number of members, for example 30 or 50.” Alfred Ronneburg: “We should accept any club as a member, as long as the club is officially recognised by its own national Kennel Club.” Helle Höie: “In case a club has a lower number of members than the minimum, the club should have ‘observer status’ until it reaches the necessary number to become a full member.” A discussion followed and resulted in a vote: In favour of a minimum number of members: 6 votes, against: 6 votes + 1 vote of the chairman. It was decided that ‘the membership ends when a club is no longer approved by its National Kennel Club.’

Point 2d Membership fee (point 7b of the agenda): After discussion the following was decided:
130 Euro per year if the club has 500 or more members (at the end of the previous year)
100 Euro per year if the club has 200 to 499 members (at the end of the previous year)
50 Euro per year if the club has less than 200 members (at the end of the previous year)

Point 5d Number of votes per club:

The original proposal: ‘Clubs with 200 members or more have 2 votes. Clubs with less than 200 members will have 1 vote.’ Åke Cronander proposed: ‘Clubs with less than 200 members should have 1 vote, with more than 200 members 2 votes and with more than 500 members 3 votes. Each country should never have more than 3 votes. In case there are 2 clubs per country, the largest club should have 2 and the smallest club should have 1 vote.’ Herbert Nagel proposed to stick to the present rule of 1 vote per club.

The proposals included in fact 4 questions and were voted upon with the following results:

- One vote per club or more votes per club? One vote: 4 / more votes: 7 / 1 abstention
- In case of more votes per club, a maximum of 2 votes or 3 votes?
In favour of a maximum of 3 votes: 11 votes / 1 abstention
- Is there a limit per country? In favour of limit: 5 votes / against limit: 7 votes
- If yes, how many votes per country? No need to vote.

Having discussed all points of the concept 'New Rules and Regulations', the delegates agreed unanimously (see attached file)

7a. Membership matters

New candidate clubs, from observer status to full membership?

- **Croatian Dalmatian Club 'HKPDP- DALMATINAC'** Website www.hkpdp-dalmatinac.com

The Croatian delegate Dean Radosevic introduced the club, which was established in 1991 and was the first Dalmatian club in Croatia. The club counts 36 active members. It is difficult to get more members as there are two clubs in Croatia and not so many litters. Health and breeding records are being registered.

- **Hungarian Dalmatian Club**

The Hungarian delegate Fehér Gábor introduced the club, which counts 35 members. So far the club has no website and there are no breeding- or health records as yet. Contact address: tdalmata@t-online.hu or gabcsi@t-online.hu

- **New candidate: Club Dalmata de Cuba**

As the delegate from Cuba had been prevented from coming, Frans de Ridder presented the club. The club counts 158 members, the number of litters born in 2006 is 10, all puppies are hearing tested.

Planned activities: 4 meetings and 2 specialty shows a year. So far the club has no website. Contact address: cdc@enet.cu

Åke Cronander proposed the Croatian and Hungarian club to stay observers for one more period and try to get more members in the next two years, the reservation for these new members being only due to their low number of members. Frans de Ridder asked the delegates to realise that we need all the candidate clubs as members, in order to get our contract with the FCI. After discussions the voting was carried out according to the just accepted new rules. The delegates gave their votes, based on the number of members in their clubs: Sweden 3 votes, Norway 3, Denmark 2, Finland 3, Belgium 2, France 2, Netherlands 3, Germany DDC 3, Germany CDF 3, Austria 1, Italy 1, Croatia Atila Dubac 1.

- HKPDP-Dalmatinac Croatia: accepted as member with 17 votes in favour – 10 against

- Hungarian Dalmatian Club: accepted as member with 16 votes in favour – 11 against

- Club Dalmata de Cuba: accepted as member with 27 votes in favour – 0 against

The chairman welcomed the three new member clubs in the organization under applause from all present.

12. Elections

Committee members: chairman Frans de Ridder, secretary Annemiek Morgans and treasurer Alfred Ronneburg. As no new candidates were proposed, all committee members were re-elected.

Auditor: Herbert Nagel. As no new candidate was proposed, Herbert Nagel was re-elected.

Health and Breeding subcommittee: Tyge Greibrokk (chairman), Åsa Boholm, Radana Zachova, Rhys Morgans and dr. Dominique Vincent.

Åsa Boholm had sent a message, expressing her wish to resign from the subcommittee. New candidates proposed: Lena Erlandsson from Sweden and Sally Ann Clegg from France. Both candidates were elected and the remaining subcommittee members were re-elected.

Judging subcommittee: Åke Cronander (chairman), Liliane de Ridder-Onghena, Åase Jakobsen, Alfred Ronneburg and Radana Zachova.

All subcommittee members were re-elected.

13. Recommendations for breeding (see minutes meeting 2005)

At the meeting in 2005 the possibility of creating common breeding rules had been discussed. Frans de Ridder asked the delegates to realise that the structure of the canine organisations per country varies enormously: "The National Kennel Clubs in general are very powerful, they develop rules for breeding and organizing shows, they issue pedigrees and nominate their own judges, all according to their own

rules, which vary very much per country. Some breed clubs are very powerful and issue pedigrees, others have no influence at all, depending on the situation per country in relation with their National Kennel Clubs. This situation has consequences for our organization. We are not able to create general rules for our member clubs, as our rules may conflict with the rules and regulations of the different National Kennel Clubs. Therefore our aim should be to have 'common recommendations', we can not go further than this. The Health and Breeding subcommittee should come with advice and ask for comments from the member clubs. The clubs should discuss this advice at a national level with their breeders. It will not be easy to reach a common point of view, as clubs might have very different ideas about what is important for the breed. Finally the recommendations will be published on the website."

Tyge Greibrokk mentioned that so far the ECDC only has one specific recommendation on breeding and that concerns ARDS: "We are not supposed to use dogs of the first five generations after a known carrier. However, not all clubs follow this recommendation. Whether they do not know or just do not care, we don't know. It is not clear to me to what extent we will be able to come to other recommendations, as we do not get the breeding results of all clubs every year. So far from Germany, Finland and The Netherlands we receive the registration results every year and occasionally some results from other clubs. Therefore it is very difficult to be able to trace incidents or problems in breeding. Secondly, from most of the clubs we collected information about what kind of rules and regulations they have regarding hearingtests, hipdysplasia, ARDS etc. There is a large variation in how the different clubs deal with these subjects. It is clear to me that it is very limited what we can recommend in general." Frans de Ridder: "What we can achieve, very much depends on the breeders, if they are willing to give information. However, there are many subjects to discuss in the future like deafness, mega-oesophagus, epilepsy, size, temperament etc."

14. Planned actions for the next two years

Frans de Ridder referred to the items mentioned under agenda point 8 of the Breeding and Health subcommittee: "We can also discuss the possibility to put money aside for studies on subjects like epilepsy, as we discussed before. For the Judging subcommittee, I would suggest to start a real discussion about the breed standard and contact all clubs for their comments to the standard, also from breeders and judges, if this is possible. Every club should collect information. We can compare different breed standards such as the FCI- and the English standard. Our aim should be, not to change the standard, but to come to a more common view."

15. Proposals of dates and places for future meetings

- ECDC event 2009/2010 in Norway

Tyge Greibrokk announced that the next event will take place in Oslo/Norway in august 2009. The chairman aired his preference to have a three days event with the meeting on the Saturday or eventually on the Friday.

- Next meeting

The Dutch delegates proposed to organize the event in 2011 in The Netherlands. All agreed.

Alfred Ronneburg proposed Germany (DDC) to organise the event in 2013, as the DDC organised the first ECDC show and it will be the 10th show in 2013.

16. Diverse questions

Åke Cronander asked to word his reservation regarding 'new member clubs' as follows: "The reservation for new members is only for a low number of members. We think they should be observers for one more period until they have reached a higher number of members." Tyge Greibrokk and Sören Jacobsen mentioned that Norway and Denmark support this reservation.

Rhys Morgans congratulated the Croatian Dalmatian Club HKPDP and Hungarian Dalmatian Club for becoming members: "As your member numbers are very low, I hope we can stimulate you to try to enlarge the numbers of your members, so you can become really good and active members of the new association." Applause followed.

17. Closing of the meeting

As there were no further questions, the chairman closed the meeting and thanked all delegates for their contribution to the discussions.

Vollenhove, February 2008

Annemiek Morgans,

WAFDAL (former ECDC) secretary