

NATC ZUCHTSCHAU, 2014

(What it is all about.)

The North American Teckel Club "breed show" is something very different from the dachshund shows offered by the American Kennel Club and the Canadian Kennel Club. First of all the dachshund breed standard used is that of the FCI (sometimes referred to as the World Canine Federation), and it was designed by Germans who had the function of the dachshund, above and below ground, foremost in mind. The ideal FCI dachshund is not as extreme as the official American and Canadian version. The legs are longer and the length of body is more conservative. The ground clearance at the chest (Bodenabstand) should be 1/3 of the shoulder height of the dog, whereas American show judges prefer a ground clearance of 25 or 20 %. The maximum preferred weight of the FCI dachshund is 9 kilos, 20 lbs. If you have tracked wounded big game in rough terrain, you well understand why a smaller, more agile dachshund is best suited for this natural work. Since North American foxes are smaller than their European counterparts, a dachshund even smaller than the FCI 9 kilos is preferable for underground work.

The FCI breed show also differs from Canadian and American shows in that the dogs are judged individually against an objective standard. The judge gives each exhibitor, and the spectators, a verbal critique of the dog. A written commentary is also provided for the owner. The judge's opinions and judgments do not remain a mystery as is the case in AKC/CKC shows. A FCI Zuchtschau is a great learning experience.

The practical hunter/tracker may ask, "What does this show stuff have to do with what my dachshund does in the woods and fields?" The answer is "A great deal." A dachshund has to be put together correctly in order to work all day under tough conditions. And the goal of breeding is to preserve what is excellent in ability and improve what is less than ideal in conformation. "Never breed a weakness to the same weakness." The FCI judge will explain the strengths and any conformation weaknesses of your dachshund so that your next generation will be even better.