



The History of the Swiss Boxer Club

Today – in the age of electronic exchange – information, occasions of every nature can be announced immediately, so that virtually everything about current club affairs is available. However, what was it like 100 years ago? Were records kept just as diligently? What do we know about the early years of other clubs or of our club?

It was therefore that the Swiss Boxer Club wanted to mark the occasion of its 100th anniversary with a book and someone had to be found, who would trace back on the tracks of our great grandfathers more meticulously than Sherlock Holmes. We can acknowledge with appreciation and also with pride that no one described the story of the origins of the Swiss Boxer Club so well and humorously as Martin Schläppi did in the anniversary newsletter on the 100th birthday of the SBC.

Please allow us to make use of some of the passages therefrom; we assume that you will also be fascinated by this story:

“Why? – The cardinal question with which small children exasperate adults, with which we are also always faced when we try to understand what it is about. Why do people want to breed and own dogs that in our eyes only have to be very beautiful, very good or even better “excellent”, healthy, well-behaved and come when they are called? Why do we establish an organisation or club, when we want to acquire a dog for the purpose of amicable companionship?”

Why did one want to start to breed BOXERS in Munich 110 years ago? And why ultimately did exactly 100 years ago 11-14 enterprising persons from Zurich decide on 7 September 1906 to found the Swiss Boxer Club? One of them, for us obviously the most important one, is Mr J. Stähli-Rebmann. He had good contacts in Germany and also good friends in Zurich who shared his passion for the new breed, the BOXER. He purchased his first Boxer in 1897 from Mr F Gartner of the kennel “von Fidelitas” in Karlsruhe. The “fawn male with lots of white”, born on 16.09.1897, was “Prinz Fidelitas” and became the first prominent Boxer in the SBC. A second enthusiast had obviously acquired Boxers in Germany even before the founding of the club in Zurich. He was the legendary Otto Mayer, later known as “BOXER-MAYER”. 1904 he acquired the Boxer female “Mirzel v. Haidhausen” for his kennel, which later on was called the “vom Limmattal” kennel.

It all sounds so easy for us, one gets into the station wagon, loads the Boxer into the travel cage and within one to three hours one is everywhere in Switzerland and in the cities of the adjoining foreign countries. This was not the case at the turn of the century 1899/1900. Everything moved very slowly and was cumbersome in comparison to our thinking today. Therefore, if at that time one wanted to travel “quickly” to a dog show in Munich, Stuttgart or Mannheim and was also prepared to buy a dog there, one had to be extremely committed besides being financially well off.

Everything peaked in 1906. It started with the International Dog Show (IHA) of 31 March and 1 April in Basle. Jakob Schwarz, Boxer judge from Karlsruhe, mentioned at the beginning of his comprehensive judge’s report: “If the picture was throughout not uniform, the stock for Swiss Boxer circumstances was very lovely. Especially the exclusive appearance of progeny of well-known parents instead of the predominantly inferior offspring of obscure origins seen earlier is a gratifying sign that the Swiss Boxer friends strongly endeavour to import the best blood. The door has opened for the Boxer and it is now only a matter of a few years until his exceptional qualities will also give him the right of naturalization in Switzerland that he already enjoys greatly in Germany and Holland. However, we would remind the German breeders to support this

interest wholeheartedly by sending really good animals and not to – we admit at times to have had the impression – to rely on less intimate knowledge and critique to palm of second grade animals.

In June 1906 the imminent establishment was optimistically published in the following words in the Central Paper:

“Swiss Boxer-Club. *The undersigned announces with great pleasure that to date 14 gentlemen have agreed to join the Swiss Boxer-Club. The formation of the Club is ensured and also the possibility of joining the Swiss Cynology Society (SKG) as a section”. From there on everything happened very quickly. On 31 August the Central Paper published the official invitation to the founding meeting on the evening of 7 September at 08h00 in the Hotel Limmathof in Zurich to which all Boxer enthusiasts were invited.*

On the 10th September 1906 the Central Paper published shortly, to the delight of all Boxer aficionados that the Swiss Boxer-Club had been initiated.



Shortly after the foundation, the need for “dressage” on instruction of the members was expressed, respectively the training of their Boxers. Soon “dressage exercise” commenced locally which – we would soon see – were not very different to present working disciplines. Some of them were even more demanding than those today. The first “dressage” test presented by the Swiss Boxer-Club was held on 24 April 1909 in the afternoon on the premises of the former Union Beer Brewery in Zurich.

In the last phases of the war, in February 1918, the founding father and engine of the Boxer-Club, J. Stähli-Rebmann stood down from his position. He had done and achieved much and during the war the membership reduced by half. The new president, Carl Ernst, revitalised the Boxer-Club. Membership numbers improved.

1926 the Swiss Boxer-Club was transformed into a model of area groups with a central managing committee, so that presently through the formation of further area groups we are well represented throughout Switzerland (Aargau, Basle, Berne, Geneva, Kreuzlingen, Neuenburg, Solothurn St. Gallen, Tessin, Urschweiz (Central Switzerland), Waadt and Zurich.

The Swiss Boxer-Club was a founding member of ATIBOX (Association Technique Internationale du Boxer) when it was formed in 1950 in Strasbourg, France.

*In 1954 the SBC established its first "Selection- and Breeding Regulations". These regulations already determined that the temperament evaluation of every dog was a priority for breeding purposes. **Extremely timid and aggressive dogs were already excluded from breeding at that time.***

In 1966 the SBC celebrated its 60th birthday with a memorable working championship trial. The participation of 78 Boxers was a small sensation. The banquet thereafter with 250 guests apparently too!

In 1970 the area group of the Urschweitz (Central Switzerland) organised a Boxer breed show in Lucerne at which 160 Boxers were exhibited."

Here we leave Martin Schläppi's portrayal and briefly touch on events and improvements which have been of importance to the SBC:

- Since 1977 the "Veteran Vigour Competition" ("Alters-Frische" Wettbewerb) has become a permanent part of breed shows in Switzerland
- In 1988 the "Boxer-Bulletin" was initiated through Doris and Martin Schläppi
- 1997 resulted in the restructuring and extension of the temperament test at breed evaluations in classes 1 and 2
- Since 2000 - on the initiative of the SBC - the endurance test has been introduced as an official test by the SKG Technical Commission for Working Dogs.

From the annual pattern of all the breed shows that take place (be it in Aarau, Basle, Bern, Solothurn, Neuenburg, Lausanne, Geneva, St. Gallen, Tessin and Zurich) we have selected the following cherries:

- 1978 ATIBOX show in Stans (220 Boxers)
- 1986 ATIBOX show with the ATIBOX delegates' conference in celebration of the 80th anniversary of the SBC in Basle (300 Boxers)
- 1993 ATIBOX show in Basle (450 Boxers)
- 2001 ATIBOX show with the ATIBOX judges' meeting and delegates' conference in St. Gallen (450 Boxers)

Let's not forget that our groups have also organised the following working events in the ATIBOX:

- 1973 ATIBOX-IPO-World Championship in Geneva
- 1983 ATIBOX-IPO-World Championship in Neuenburg
- 1988 1st Endurance Trial in Bern (40 dogs of all breeds)
- 2008 ATIBOX-Tracking-World Championship in Emmen

Our working teams are strongly represented also at the ATIBOX World Championships or WUBOX-Championships, be it in the IGP or tracking event.

We are proud to be one of the founding members of WUBOX, which was founded on 8 February 2020 in Frankfurt/Germany.

Today, the Boxer Club has around 720 members with 12 groups in all part of Switzerland, who are also available as organisers for the "Annual Championship-Show" or working events. Every year, the so-called "5R championship", consisting of the Airedale, Boxer, Doberman, Giant Schnauzer and Rottweiler is organised by one of these breed clubs. Our Swiss champion in performance is also chosen there.



We have quite intentionally avoided mentioning names, as Martin Schläppi reported on “Heads that stamped the SBC” in a section of his book and the enumeration thereof would be excessive within the framework of this article. However, we do not totally want to overlook the blood of many notable Boxers of Swiss breeding which so to speak flows in the veins of our present generations which originate from the kennels “di San Leonardo”, “v.d. Klause”, “des Vernets”, “v. Wittwald”, “von Hofmannstal”, “von Falknisblick”, “von Poptime” and many others.

We would like to end the presentation of the Swiss Boxer-Club with the closing words from Martin Schläppi’s book:

“The SBC and his protégé, the Boxer, are alive and well and as the cause of the Boxer is presently anything but dead, it will prevail, hopefully “for all eternity” but at least for the next 100 years.

In this spirit!

SWISS BOXER-CLUB (SBC)

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