

## Cornerstones

All serious Boxer breeders pay tribute to the breed's four foundation sires that were imported to the United States from Germany in the 1930s: Sigurd von Dom of Barmere, Dorian v. Marienhof of Mazelaine, Lustig von Dom of Tulgey Wood and Utz von Dom of Mazelaine.

Most of us know their names, but very little else. Yet almost all modern Boxers trace their pedigrees back to at least two of these animals. As horse breeders say, "Blood will tell." And so it is with dogs-- even as far back as 60 years or more.

Sigurd von Dom of Barmere was whelped in Germany in 1930, bred by Mr. and Mrs. Philipp Stockmann. He was imported to the United States in 1934 by Charles Ludwig for Miriam Breed of Barmere Kennels. Already a double Sieger in Germany, Sigurd was a fawn, beautifully balanced animal with an elegant arch of neck and excellent shoulders. He won two Best in Shows in this country, while the Boxer was still in the Non-Sporting Group. (The breed was transferred to the Working Group in October 1935.)

But it was as a sire that Sigurd made his great contribution to the breed. He sired 26 champions at a time when the Boxer was still relatively uncommon. It is of special note that he is the grandsire of the other three foundation sires--they all trace back to him in their immediate ancestry. (Sigurd's son Xerxes was the sire of Dorian, and his son Zorn was the sire of Lustig and Utz.) Together these four dogs shaped and forever changed the Boxer in America. Sigurd lived to a grand 12½ years.

Dorian v. Marienhof of Mazelaine was whelped in April 1933 and was imported by John and Maizie Wagner of Mazelaine Kennels in 1936. He was bred by Frau Tehekla Schneider. His show career was spectacular--he won Best in Show 22 times and won the Working Group at Westminster in 1937. He was a golden brindle with a black mask and four white feet, standing 24 inches at the shoulder and weighing about 70 pounds.

He was extremely square in proportion and had an especially beautiful head and eye. He was also a superb showman, and never forgot his early Schutzhund training in Germany. Dorian sired 40 champions. It is said that he was Jack Wagner's favorite Boxer.

Lustig von Dom of Tulgey Wood was whelped in December 1933 and purchased by Erwin Freund's Tulgey Wood Kennels of Illinois in 1937. He finished his championship in six days, won 13 groups, and two BIS. He was a particular favorite of his breeder, Mrs. Friederun Stockmann.

Lustig means "happy" in German, and so he was. He was only sold due to hard economic times in Germany, and he arrived in America wearing a collar bearing the inscription in German, "I am the magnificent Lustig." He was a flashy fawn, very smooth, with a beautiful topline and lovely type. He sired 87 litters and 40 champions in the United States, and died in June 1945.

Utz von Dom of Mazelaine, Lustig's younger full brother, was a tall, smooth fawn whelped in April 1936. He was imported by the Wagners in 1939 and won 25 groups (including the group at Westminster), and four Bests in Show. He was a great companion and the Wagner's house dog after Dorian's death. He was retired from the show ring in 1940

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because of a broken toe; this limited time frame makes his ring record all the more remarkable. He sired 37 champions and was especially prepotent when bred to Dorian daughters. Unfortunately, he was lost to cancer on his ninth birthday.

All of us owe a great debt to these four magnificent animals and their breeders. Far from being viewed as shadowy figures from the past, we might be wiser to think of them as the building blocks of the modern Boxer. They were the progenitors of the breed's style, substance and type, and they enjoyed the special status of dominant sires, no small feat in any era. Their influence is surely felt today.

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