



Interview with Peter Krotkovsky
by Peter Nevolny



**Peter Krotkovský: "If we lose the wolf's appearance, we lose the entire breed."
When your weakness for the breed forces you to keep working!**



Koro, Baccara Kalimero Bohemica (archive of S. Šnajder)

Some hang up their trade after retirement and do not even think about work. There are those whose weakness is a love for something that compels them to continue working, even though they could peacefully sit and reminisce about their successes, quite a few of them!

To those whose weakness and simultaneous love for the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak compel them to continue working, belongs Peter Krotkovský. He befriended and trained German Shepherds with their well-known breeder Eugen Richnovský. Under his influence, he established his breeding kennel with the protected name "z Krotkovského dvora" in Hodruša-Hámre as early as 1973. However, as soon as he became acquainted with Dedo (Grandad) Rosík, he "*discovered*" the emerging national breed, the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak, and began to specialise in breeding only this breed.



Agi z Baništa CR in 1983

Peter remembers: *"The first litter I raised was here at my home, and the mother was AGI z Baništa, which Pavlík Rosík raised. I brought her home as a three-month-old. She was scared in the unfamiliar environment, and after a week, I could barely get her outside. It took her almost a year to get used to it – Czechoslovakian Vlciaaks with different temperaments than they do today! Her mother was TOLA z Pohranicnej stráže, and Grandad Rosík wanted Tola to give birth in the den we dug for her. We built the den with stones to withstand the rain, lined it with old boards, and covered the roof with plastic to keep it dry. We also wanted to make a fence, but didn't manage to do it in time; the female gave birth while tied to a chain. We were worried that a puppy might get tangled up in it, but everything turned out well!"*

He raised his first litter of Czechoslovakian Vlciaaks in 1985, and to this day, he has successfully "turned" the alphabet twice. Thanks to his vast experience, he laid the foundations for establishing a wide range of breeding kennels, which gradually became bearers of the highest exterior and performance awards. He continues to offer his expertise in the form of free advisory services. Animals bred by the kennel "z Krotkovského dvora" have received high accolades at regional, national, state, and international exhibitions.

Peter Krotkovský, at his breeding facility, possessed several top-quality dogs and bitches that significantly influenced the breeding of Czechoslovakian Vlcia.



Hura z Rosikova - born 11th September 1985

Peter remembers "The first types of our puppies resembled German Shepherds more in appearance, and initially, Grandad Rosík and I could not figure out why! We observed and evaluated several factors – ears, tails, colouring, but they were still shepherd types, not wolf-like as REP z Pohraničnej stráže! I noted all the traits transferred into breeding, until I finally convinced Grandad Rosík to try close inbreeding, so we bet everything on Rep's daughters and obtained not exemplary, but balanced offspring! We distributed the puppies almost throughout the republic, but after a year, we found that they somehow 'disappeared', so we decided to keep the most beautiful pup from each litter!"



Peter relaxing with dogs -

But we have woven a whip for ourselves – there were more and more puppies and more and more work around them, because after a while we had – Grandad Rosík 20 dogs and I 60! We were no longer breeders, but slaves to these dogs.

One-and-a-half kilometres up the hill on Pečelovská, where no car could reach, I manually carried 800 kg of meat weekly, and similarly a kilometre up and down the mountain to Grandad Rosík! But finally, we managed to create Kajko's, Cézár's, Omar's, Orlík's breeding lines and a direct line from Rep.

In the morning, I ran to feed the puppies, then off to work, and I would come back in overalls, because I was the "director" – I went straight to manage and feed all the dogs!

I achieved a significant success in 1990 at the World Dog Show in Brno, where my stud dog CÉZAR od Pavlišína won three victories and became the world champion! Another memorable success was in 1995 at the 1st Danube Dog Show in Bratislava. My breeding kennel was represented by the following animals: OMAR z Krotkovského dvora in the champion class, the female MOŇA z Krotkovského dvora in the open class, VLK z Krotkovského dvora in the open class, and the female ANDY z Krotkovského dvora in the young class. All of them won their classes, OMAR z Krotkovského dvora received an excellent 1, became the winner of the champion class, and obtained the titles of Class Winner CAC, Breed Winner BOB, became the Danube Winner and a beauty champion!

(cont) MOŇA and VLK z Krotkovského dvora both won their respective open classes with an excellent 1 rating and received CAC titles, with MOŇA additionally becoming the Winner of the 1st Danube Show. And finally, the young hope ANDY z Krotkovského dvora became the Winner of the Young Class with an excellent grade 1. This success was also significant because four other dogs bred by my kennel participated in this exhibition, all of which also won their classes! In the late eighties, we organised two breed evaluations (bonitations) in Hodruša Hámre and Kopanice, where the most experienced breeders assessed the physical and mental abilities of the bred animals and evaluated whether they were suitable for further breeding!



Moňa Maxa z Krotkovského dvora

Peter had several top-quality dogs and bitches at his breeding kennel significantly influencing the breeding of Czechoslovakian Vlcaks. After a long break, Peter resumed breeding - having kept the female MAXA z Krotkovského dvora, the dog PAX z Krotkovského dvora and the purchased female HERA z Ro-Fa. Toying with getting a new puppy for a long time, he admits he has high expectations so searched for a long time.

He began cooperating with a kennel "z Dubničanky", where he discovered breeding bearing the appearance of his old lines, so very difficult to find today! A young HERMIONA Oskár Dór caught his eye and when bred with CARR Malý Bysterec, he showed interest in this litter. He ended up buying young AMBRA z Dubničanka, who seemed a very promising puppy with a good character, and he was not wrong...



Unique z Krotkovského dvora

Please tell us what you consider the basic attributes of the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak beauty?

"The Czechoslovakian Vlcíak must resemble a wolf rather than a German Shepherd - if we lose the wolf's appearance, we lose the entire breed!"

"Of course, the foundation is the approved standard, but the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak must not resemble a grey German Shepherd; it must appear like a Wolf."

This means it must possess distinctive features that no other dog has – a robust wolf-like mane, small ears, slanted, amber-coloured eyes, with short, furry, blunt-ended, tail, carried in a sickle shape.

This must be complemented by lively expression and gesticulation, combined with graceful, light, and agile body movement, typically greyish and enhanced with suitable coat patterns.

I prefer four key characteristics – a well-furred, short, and upright wolf tail with good expression, a rich fur mane and a closed coat on the back, but not with overly furry sides. The eyes must always be amber in colour, lively - one might say sparkling significantly contributing to the wedge-shaped head of the predator. Additionally, the predator's appearance must be complemented by blunt, slightly slanted ears that should not exceed 1/6 of the dog's height and are partially covered by a sufficiently robust fur mane.

Of course, the pear-shaped body must have a wolf-grey coat with a saddle pattern in the shoulder area, the colouration of which depends on the environment in which the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak lives. For instance those with lighter colouration reside in cities while in contrast, darker ones are found near nature, as evidenced by wolves living in coniferous forests who are darker than wolves living on plains.

(cont) We will safeguard these fundamental traits by maintaining them solely by creating lines that will carry them, as we must remember that the Carpathian wolf is significantly variable and diverse! Therefore, the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak must resemble a Wolf and not a German shepherd – if we lose the appearance of a Wolf, we lose the entire breed! Appropriately formed lines help us maintain the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak that most closely corresponds to the approved standard, which already emphasises in its preamble that the Czechoslovakian Vlcíak must appear like a wolf! I prefer an animal with five minor faults but with the appearance of a Wolf, rather than a perfect individual that mimics a German Shepherd!

I think it would be a mistake to reintroduce the Carpathian wolf into breeding – hence I support the so-called sperm banks, which would allow for a potential necessary return. However, no one knows where it is stored today!"



Vrchlabí Krkonose 100 km Hura, Hesy a Chlapík z Rosíkova CS r. 1987

From a breeder to an athlete at the same time...

Peter Krotkovský has transitioned from one endeavour to another – to sled dog racing!

He reminisces: *"Since we already had the opportunity to select quality animals from our breeding, Grandad Rosík wanted to promote them as a newly recognised national breed as much as possible! Therefore, he persuaded me that if we failed in service dog training, I should try competing in sled dog competitions. He travelled to Austria and purchased sleds, harnesses, and a book in English for fifteen thousand korona. I did not read a single line from it, but based on the pictures, we slowly began to train the selected dogs to pull – firstly tires, later a cart, and finally sleds. The dogs were initially puzzled, but they got used to it!"*



Sledding with dogs Kokava Haj - 1987

We utilised the endurance and speed of the Czechoslovakian Vlciak. Thus, I became the first musher in Slovakia to train these dogs for racing in the same manner as northern sled dogs. When I needed three good pullers, I had to run as many as seventeen dogs from which we selected! According to the pictures from an English book, I made my own, I would say a better and more stable cart, as it handled turns better and suited our conditions more. When I compared the data on handling competitive tracks, I found that my dogs achieved a time that was even fifteen minutes better! However, I was surprised when the time did not improve at all. I examined the reasons and discovered that I must not consistently run on the same track, but I need to seek out others and alternate them. Changing the 12-kilometre tracks was also financially demanding, as I travelled with the team over a wide area. Nevertheless, I identified fifteen tracks that I gradually alternated. The Czechoslovakian Vlciak is, however, so clever that it could remember the previous tracks!

I fully utilised the endurance and speed of Czechoslovakian Vlciak. As the first rider in Slovakia, I began training them as sled dogs for racing in a style that mimics the sledge dog teams of northern working dogs. Initially, I competed only in category C, which involved a team of two to four animals, but gradually also in category B, with five to six dogs on 12-kilometre tracks. However, my dogs and I also managed a hundred-kilometre track, such as the winter crossing of the Krkonoše! In 1987, we participated for the first time in a race in the Ore Mountains at Moldava, where 36 mushers competed, utilising typical working dog breeds – Siberian Husky, Samoyed, Alaskan Malamute, and Czech Mountain Dog! In category C, we successfully concluded these races, achieving 7th place in an extreme competition of Czech racers riding with Nordic sled dogs.



At the finishing line 1987 / 1988

In Harrachov, we participated in the races with foreigners, such as Austrians, who were simultaneously in the national championships, and once again, we finished in a commendable seventh place! At that time, I was riding with Hura z Rosíkova, Hesa z Rosíkova, and Chlapík z Rosíkova, but I replaced Chlapík, who was strong but not fast enough, with a dog named Alf z Rosíkova, whose owner was Soňa Bognárová.

At my suggestion, the Czechoslovakian Vlciak Breed Club in Slovakia organised similar races as early as 1988 in Kokava – Háj. Marián Balaj, the owner of the Bal-Mar CS breeding kennel, resided in Poltár and secured the entire event through the Agricultural Cooperative Union. Slovak mushers, such as Jozef Heršl, Ján Komisár, Daniel Filo, and I, achieved numerous successes in dog sled racing. For instance, we won the Slovak Championship twice in a row in the competition of northern breeds, and these successes did not go unnoticed – a separate competitive category for the Czechoslovakian Vlciak was created in the Czech Republic to prevent these teams from competing against northern breeds. It is a pity that such races are gradually disappearing, as they allow for suitable work-sport utilisation of Czechoslovakian Vlciak, contributing to enhancing their quality!



Litter W z Krotkovského dvora 8 weeks / Contessa Kalimero Bohemica x Eron Lupus Ardor 2021

The puppies of Peter Krotkovský live all over the world, even in places where Peter has never been. They represent not only him but the entire breed of Czechoslovakian Vlciak admirably!

Peter worked his whole life as a bonitation breed evaluator and thus, he thoroughly and diligently prepared for the examination of the breed's exterior evaluator at the appropriate time. He achieved a 100% score on the written part of the exam. Still, during the oral section, when asked about the correct ratio of phosphorus to calcium in puppy nutrition, he stated that this ratio is balanced when the puppy is fed suitable soft bones and cartilage along with meat – the body will take care of the balance.

However, the examiners did not accept such an answer and required him to provide the percentage composition of these significant nutritional elements. Peter commented that if he needed to know this, he would consult a veterinarian; thus, his oral answer was not accepted, resulting in no outcome from the judging examination!

As an experienced breeder, he continues to serve as a breed advisor throughout his life, sharing his extensive breeding experience with participants in breed evaluations in Slovakia, Italy, and Great Britain. For this reason, he has been recognised multiple times by breeding clubs both domestically and internationally for his breeding activities! Peter is not a person who is closed off; therefore, he is preparing a book in which he will share his insights and experiences from a challenging lifelong breeding journey, as Czechoslovakian Vlcíak, being a breed closely connected to nature, increasingly attracts the attention of passionate dog enthusiasts from around the world!



Harrachov 100km -1987



Harrachov 100km -1987



Harrachov Podium - 1987



Peter Krotkovsky ~ Photo S. Šnajder



History of The Czechoslovakian Vlcíak Breed - by Peter Nevolný
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