

## **‘Grandad’ Rosík – Remembering A Canine Legend**

**František Rosík (23.11.1927 – 1.7.2015)**

**Mgr. Peter Nevolný, 1.7.2020**

This year marks the fifth anniversary of the passing of Major v. v. František Rosík, passionate breeder and co-founder of the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak breed. He served as a senior officer and canine commander in the operation department of the 11th Brigade of Border Guards, located in Bratislava, for twenty-eight years (1951 – 1979), and was known by nearly all dog enthusiasts as ‘Grandad’ Rosík.

Rosík was born on 23rd November 1927 in the Moravian village of Malenovice, Zlín, and considered himself Moravian to the bone. Whenever I came to visit, he would produce a bottle of his own brew, Rosíkovica, so he could toast me with a shot. His wife, Anna – who he used to call Grandma – was not always pleased with this, but appreciated the bottles of barrel-aged Cabernet I would bring from the local wine merchants, because wine caused Grandad (or ‘Dedo’) less harm than his homemade Schnapps. Eventually, when Anna lost her sight to diabetes, Rosík made coffee in her stead. He would pull out his treasure box of documents, newspapers, magazine clippings and photographs from the early hybrid breeding of German Shepherd Dogs and wolves, which led to the development of the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak breed, and our conversation would begin. He liked a little opposition – it gave him the opportunity to discuss and defend the steps he took to stabilise the breed.



*Photo: Malenovice in 1947*



*Photo: The wedding of Anna  
Kadnářová and František Rosík  
- 5th December 1951*

On his eighty-fifth birthday, his family bought him an automatic photo browser for his desktop. When we got to the box of service and family photographs, I offered to scan them all so he could refresh his memory whenever he liked. It wasn't just Rosík who welcomed this idea – these were photographs not only from his professional service, but that captured private moments. Sadly, he could no longer remember the names of the people or dogs who appeared in many of them – but as we looked through the pictures from his fourteen-month stay at the Academy of the Border Service of the National Security Committee in Almaty (formerly Alma-Ata, capital of the Kazakh Soviet Socialist Republic), which lasted from 1954 to 1955, he started talking about this period of his life.





When I asked him why he studied canines so far away from home, he smiled.

'I was drawn to working with canines from my childhood, because we always kept hunting dogs at home,' he told me. 'I left to study service cynology at the Academy of the Border Service of the National Security Committee in Alma-Ata, Kazakhstan, which included a two-month course in Russian. Several other cynologists came with me, including Karel Hartl (born 1924, chief commander of service cynology at the main

*Photo: Czechoslovakian trainees in Alma-Ata in 1954*

Border Guard administration from 1955 to 1981, oversaw interspecies mating between the Carpathian wolf and the German Shepherd Dog in 1958; Colonel v. v. Ing.), Karel Všolek (1919 – 1989, Czech canine specialist and Border Guard official, awarded a gold medal in 1965 by the Verein für Deutsche Schäferhunde for the popularisation of the German Shepherd Dog; Major v. v.), Josef Ivan, Emil Čermák, Jaroslav Kuchař (1927 – 1986, Czech canine specialist of the Border Guard, made famous by his excellent service dog, Brek; Major v. v.), Pavel Beroušek, Eduard Abík (1928 – 1982, served as fourth chief of the Independent Department of Service Cynology at the training and breeding centre of the Federal Public Security Administration in Mlynská dolina, Bratislava from 1964 to 1981; Lieutenant Colonel v. v., JUDr.) – who, beside me, was the only one from the Slovak Border Guard station – and many others, who were later recognised as Czechoslovakian canine specialists.

'I learned as much Russian as I could on the beginners' course, because I wanted to learn as much as possible about service cynology,' Rosík continued. 'I graduated from the Riding School and trained with a female German Shepherd Dog, Darja, and my assigned service horse, whose name I can't remember. Our studies were based on scientific research and the practical experience of Russian physiologist Ivan Petrovich Pavlov, on which Soviet cynologists had based detailed programs for the education and training



*Photo: Czechoslovakian trainees in Alma-Ata in 1954*

of service dogs in the armed forces. It allowed us to understand higher nervous activity *Kuchař, Beroušek, Všolek, Rosík, Ivan (tall) and Růžek (with guitar)* in animals.'



*Photo: Alma-Ata riding training in 1954*

Life in this part of Kazakhstan was hard even for the natives, who were used to living in the desert, steppe and semi-desert. The high temperatures of summer days were followed by unusually cold nights, and in winter, the temperature could drop to -30 Celsius. Despite these extremes, students were expected to study and practice with their assigned service dogs and horses, as well as learn swordplay, self-defence, shooting, and survival in the wild. Rosík told me how, on one occasion, students were sent with mounted police to suppress demonstrations by the local Kazakhs against the Soviet-mandated collectivisation of agriculture, which included cotton and tobacco plantations and the keeping of goats, horses and camels.







Photo: Koskolenka in the winter of 1954

While Rosík had no wish to take part in this, he had warmer memories of his expeditions on the Koskolenka River, where students practiced survival in the wild with local hunters, who hunted game with help from their enormous trained eagles. He recalled successful fishing sessions and the kindness of the locals, whose culture fascinated him – their beautifully stitched clothes and fur coats, their songs and dances, their fighting games. Though Anna could not see any of the photographs, she was pleased to relive the so-called Kazakh period, when 'Dedo' Rosík left and she was alone with their son, František, and tiny daughter Ann.

'When I returned in 1955, I was promoted to the rank of Senior Officer of the Canine Brigade,' Rosík told me. 'Straight away, Petr Kubaška (1921 – 1975, Master Warrant Officer, commander of the breeding kennels of the 11th Brigade of Border Guards from 1960 to 1970, actively managed breeding of German Shepherd Dogs and the experimental breeding of other working breeds and hybrids of wolf and German Shepherd Dogs) and I established the first unofficial service dog breeding kennel in a military warehouse in the large grounds of the former Pálfi manor house in Malacky. Within a year, we were doing well and established an official breeding kennel, z Pohraniční stráže (Z PS), in the riding grounds at Šamorín. We relocated to the grounds of the training battalion in Malacky in 1960.



Photo: Kazakhstan in 1954



Photo: Petr Kubaška in 1962

'Petr Kubaška was a loyal and hardworking man. He adored his family, his wife and children, his dogs – everything else was secondary. He was a passionate breeder and skilled craftsman. He always had threads and tools in his hands, meticulously fixing any damage to the protective sleeves and coats used in defence training. He did the same at other border patrols we visited.' Kubaška had formerly been a shoemaker, trained at Baťa Corporation.

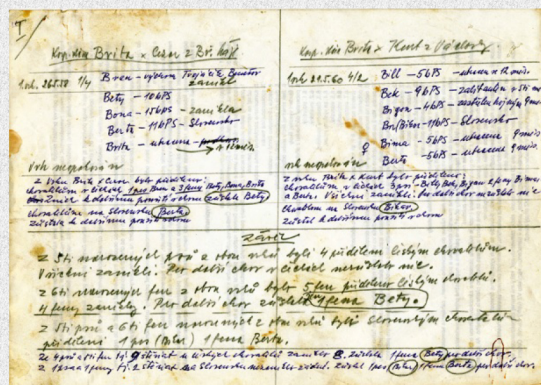


Photo: Copy of the private breeding book of František Rosík. Offspring of Brita, 1958



Den vrhu: 18. 12. 1968

Počet narodených štítat	psů <u>3</u>	fen <u>3</u>	Utraceno po vrhu	psů <u>0</u>	fen <u>0</u>
Počet štítat s paspárky	psů <u>0</u>	fen <u>0</u>	K odchovu ponecháno	psů <u>3</u>	fen <u>2</u>
Narozeno mrtvých	psů <u>0</u>	fen <u>0</u>	Předáno do služby	psů <u>3</u>	fen <u>1</u>
Uhytnulo po narození	psů <u>0</u>	fen <u>1</u>			

[illegible]

'O' names Old, Onyx, Odin, Ola, and Osa z PS (F2) . At nineteen months old, they were transported to Libějovice. Without this move, further breeding in Czech Republic would have been impossible, since hybrids were dying without offspring. In Libějovice, Onyx z PS (F2) and female Ola z PS (F2) had no offspring, but Old z PS (F2) and Odin z PS (F2) contributed to expansion among Czech civilian breeders. After producing a litter in Libějovice, female Osa z PS (F2) was returned to Slovakia so her offspring could be used in further breeding.

Czechoslovakian Vĺčiak. By developing a new breed of dog, we gained the support of civilian breeders. We could not have succeeded without a broad breeding base.'

The technical department of the 11th Brigade of Border Guards even bought goats and chickens for the kennel in Šamorín so Petr could feed quality milk and eggs to the puppies.

A litter of hybrids was born to the female Berta z PS (F1) in 1960. Berta's puppies with the German

Shepherd Dog Haso zo Šamorína – all given names beginning with 'O' – were born on 20th February.



Photo: Czechoslovakian Vlčiak Bonitation with Rosík,  
Sopuch and Hartl in 1984



Rosík and I had endless debates about other dog breeds and their benefits to humankind. We often discussed my objections to the use of hybrids in Border Guard service due to handler turnover. Handlers in the basic military service would change every fifteen months, and since these pack animals only accept one primary master, they did not tolerate this well – their problems with respecting another handler interfered with the quality of their service. Rosík acknowledged my concerns, but emphasised that hybrids and Czechoslovakian Vlčiaks were gradually withdrawn from service during the 80s and early 90s, especially at Border Guard stations in the Czech Republic (where approximately 2000 animals were put to sleep), because Colonel Hartl's dream – refreshing the German Shepherd Dog with wolf blood, which was meant to improve their performance in bad weather – never came to fruition. Fortunately, civilian breeders have begun to see the importance of this breed as working, companion and sport dogs, proven by its internationally recognised standard.

**Rosík considered the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak an ambassador of the good in people, because it binds what at first glance appear to be incompatible elements.**

### **Photographical and biographical data:**

- Rosík was a salesman of hardware goods at the firm of J. Chrastina in Malenovice and V. J. Rott in Prague
- Completed secondary education
- On 12th May 1951, he married Anna Kadnárová (born in 1933)
- Their daughter Anna was born in 1953, their son František in 1954, their daughter Dagmar in 1957, and their son Pavel in 1959
- Anna ('Babicka') died on 19th November 2013
- 
- Major v. v. František Rosík died on the 1st July 2015 – though he planned to live to the age of ninety, and to see the publication of the history of the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak Breed, which we planned together



*Photo: Czechoslovakian Vlčiak summer camp, Hodruša Hámre, 1986*



## Service career and classification

- Basic military service from 1st October 1949 to 3rd April 1950 at the training centre of the Slovak National Security in Humenné
- From 4th of April 1950, he served as the executive body of the Border Guard in Bratislava (Karlova Ves)
- In 1951, he was promoted to the rank of Staff Sergeant
- On 1st June 1952, he was promoted to the rank Starship – powerful midshipman
- On 1st December 1952, he was promoted to the rank of 2nd Lieutenant
- From 29th January 1954 to 31st March 1955, together with fifteen other Czechoslovakian officers of the Border Guard, he studied service cynology for fourteen months at the Academy of the Border Service of the National Security Committee, Alma-Ata (Almaty), Kazakhstan
- On 1st August 1954, he was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant
- From 1955 to 1962, he was a senior office clerk of service cynology in the 11th Brigade of Border Guards in Bratislava
- In 1955, he founded an unofficial breeding kennel on the grounds of the former Pálfi manor house in Malacky
- On 1st August 1956, he was promoted to the rank of 1st Lieutenant; in the same year, he founded an official breeding kennel in the riding grounds at Šamorín, called „z Pohraničnej stráže“ (Z PS)
- On 1st August 1960, he was promoted to the rank of Captain
- On 20th February 1960, the first hybrids of the F2 generation were bred in Slovakia, and a litter – all given names beginning with 'O' – founded the independent Czech and Slovak line of hybrids with the blood of a Carpathian wolf, Brita
- In 1964, Rosík founded a yearly Border Guard competition in dog handlers' performance
- From 1962 to 1966, he worked as a senior officer of service cynology at the operation department of the 11th Brigade of Border Guards in Bratislava
- On 1st November 1964, he was promoted to the rank of Major and the breeding kennels of the 11th Brigade of Border Guards were moved from Šamorín to Malacky
- In 1974, the breeding kennels were moved again, from Malacky to Dlhé Luky. Šarik, a wolf from the zoo in Hluboká nad Vltavou, formed a separate line of hybrids and animals recognised as the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak.



*Photo: Border Guard dog handlers' competition in 1964*





Rosík retired after twenty-eight years of service on 31st November 1979. He called his wife Anna 'Grandma' after the birth of their first grandchild. Despite having three heart attacks, he conscientiously took care not only of his household and his wife – who lost her sight to diabetes in 1955 – but of his breeding kennel, „z Rosíkova“, and the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak Club of the Slovak Republic.

**In his kennel z Rosíkova kennel, Rosík bred thirty-five litters of Czechoslovakian Vlčiaaks with the help of breeder Peter Krotkovský, helping to form and stabilise the breed not only in the former Czechoslovakia, but the whole of Europe.**

Anna's death on 19th November 2013 broke Rosík, leaving him feeling lonely and worthless. He confided in me that he planned to live to the age of ninety, but sadly, this wasn't meant to be.

### Canine merits

Rosík managed the breeding and training of German Shepherd Dogs for the Border Guard of Bratislava, as well as the experimental breeding of other working breeds for the Border Guard's needs. In 1955, together with Petr Kubaška, he founded the first unofficial breeding kennel for Border Guard service dogs on the grounds of the former Pálfi manor house in Malacky. They registered the first official breeding kennel at the sport and riding grounds of Šamorín, Dunajská Streda, in 1956, called z Pohraničnej stráže (Z PS). It moved to the grounds of the reserve battalion of the Border Guard in Malacky in 1964. Ten years later, it relocated to Dlhé Lúky. This kennel has been operated by the Slovak police force since 1993 and breeds puppies under the internationally protected name *Polícia – Slovakia*.



*Photo: František Rosík and  
Glosa z PS in 1978*

In 1964, to improve their service performance, Rosík founded dogs and handlers' competitions for the Border Guard. He methodically and professionally managed the breeding of the German Shepherd Dogs, experimental crossbreeding of other working breeds and wolf hybrids for the Border Guard's needs, and the interspecies mating of the Carpathian wolf male with the German Shepherd Dog female. He participated in developing the breed standard for the newly emerging Czechoslovakian Vlčiak and furthering its national and international recognition. Moving away from the original interspecies mating project – the improvement of German Shepherd Dogs with wolf blood – he embarked on a lifelong mission to create a new and independent breed, becoming the co-founder of the fourth Slovak national breed, the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak, which the International Canine Federation (FCI) recognised on 1st June 1999 (FCI standard no. 332).



## Publishing Activities



Rosík wrote numerous articles and lectures on the breeding and assessment of the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak for the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak Breed Club of the Slovak Republic's newsletters. He was also interviewed for print and electronic media.

*Photo: World Exhibition in Bratislava in 2009*

## Special canine awards

Rosík gained international recognition as a co-founder and breeder of the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak, receiving an award for his work at the World Exhibition in Bratislava in 2009.

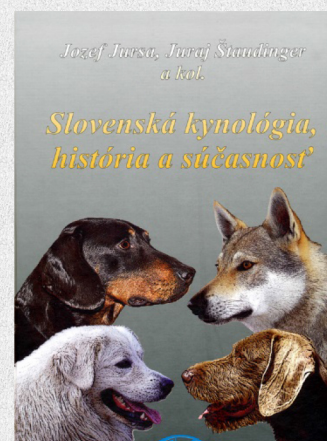
*František Rosík and Marián Fašung at the Service Cynology Hall in 2012 (photo). Fašung was an important civilian canine specialist: Slovak Champion in 1971 and Slovak Vice Champion in 1973 of sport defence canine training in the former Union for Cooperation with the Army, performed according to the methodology of police service canine training*



## Historical Recognition

In 2013, his place in history was secured when his significant contribution to the emergence of the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak was recorded in a personal profile on pages 139 to 162 of *Slovak Cynology: History and Present* by Ing. Jozef Jursa (President of the Slovak Kennel Club), Colonel Mgr. Bc. Juraj Štaudinger (President of Slovak Association for Sport Cynology) and their colleagues, published by the Kennel Club of Slovak Republic on the twentieth anniversary of its founding. The book was introduced to the public at a ceremonial meeting of the club on 10th November 2013 to celebrate this occasion.

At the meeting, the Slovak Kennel Club awarded deserving breeders, dog trainers and cynological representatives of the Slovak Republic who made significant contributions to the development of Slovak canine sport, defence and hunting. It awarded the gold medal to Colonel v. v. Ing. Karel Hartl and Major v. v. František Rosík for their lifelong work in the creation of the Czechoslovakian Vlčiak. Rosík received the gold medal in person from Jursa, Štaudinger, and Jozef Šuster (President of the Slovak Union of the Kennel Clubs), while Hartl apologised for his absence, which was due to serious health issues.



*Photo: Book cover of Slovak Cynology: History and Present*



Photos from the archives of Mgr. Peter Nevolný and Major František Rosík





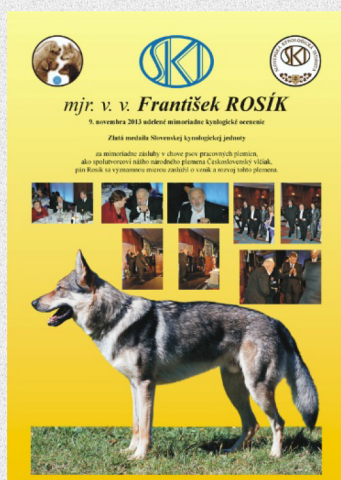


*Pamatuju na ten den, když se mi v létě roku osmapadesát výrazně změnil život.*

*Do naší šamorinské chovatelské stanice přijel Karel Hartl a z Chovatelské stanice Pohraniční stráže v Libějovicích přinesl v náručí chlupaté klubičko sedmítýdenní fenečky po karpatské vlčici Britě a německém ovčáku Cézar z Březového háje.*

*Životaschopné štěně, už na pohled jiné, než na jaké jsme byli do té doby zvyklí, mě a Petra Kubašku okouzlo natolik, že jsme po jejich prvních potomcích byli ochotni obětovat všechno – svá jména uznávaných kynologických odborníků, své postavení i majetek, jenom abychom mohli v načatém díle pokračovat a dovést k úspěšnému konci...*

*Fr. Rosík*



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