

Bumped into a post about the terrier attributes of the Pumi on the “Szemelyeskedes nelkul a Pumirol” FB page. The name of the page loosely translates as “about the Pumi without ad hominem.”

Janos Mako's post focusing on the Pumi's secondary (terrier) function that was widely discussed and complimented by experts during the 1920s-1940s. Regardless, the breed got classified and recorded in both, AKC and FCI standard as a herding breed, however, in the FCI standard it is referred to as a “herding terrier”

The author's questions are, does the Pumi has “terrier blood” in him? If it does since when? Obviously there is no “general terrier” DNA is known.

Most specific functions are developed via selection and adaptability.

The author also posted an article written in Hungarian about a Pumi that was published in the “Vadaszat” Magazine (Hunting) in 1936. I translated the article (see below) that I think might opens up further the discussion over the Pumi's versatility and potential future as a herding breed.

About The Hungarian Pumi's Versatility.

written by: Ven Hangos (pen name of Matyas Storz) 1936:

The late Albert Kovacs the best bloodhound huntsman (in Hungary) loved to work with dogs. He was a well known game keeper and dog trainer even beyond borders.

In addition to his excellent Hanoverian bloodhounds he also owned pure bred Pumis. He had used his Pumis for blood tracking the same way as his bloodhounds.

The big difference between the two breeds was that the rough coated Pumi handled the harsh cold winters as well as the hot summer heat much better than his hounds.

In general, Pumis have done great blood trailing work and were considered one of the best wild-bore tracking and baying breeds. Pumis never lost track of a wounded bore or any big game.

Pumis were also preferred at major hunting parties of the nobility because in addition to blood trailing, they were also excellent for small game retrieving. Pumis have learned retrieving from Vizslas by observing them while working together. In the same time if Pumis found a wounded large game, they waited by the side of the animal until the hunters arrived.

One time, during a large estate hunting event, one of the Pumis started vocalizing from a great distance. The old game keeper had recognized his praised dog's voice and when he called the dog, the Pumi broke into a loud excited attention seeking bark that it sounded like music coming from a gypsy violinist.

The landowner who walked alongside the old Jäger noted that, “how loud is Hexi Pumi when he is driving games. I wonder, what he has found.”

“Most likely, he found a wounded boar sire...” I answered.

After a short while the dog changed his tone that suggested that he bayed the animal.

Subsequently, the bark was interrupted by the loud gun shot that took the game out of its misery. Then I overheard that the dog actually stopped one of the hunting guests, Dr Kerzel's wounded boar and it was shot by the game keeper, Albert Kovacs. The host remarked to the doctor that, “Kerzl, your boar is already down.”

Hexi the Pumi has never left the game keeper's side. He also did reliable bird dog work and when they were out to bird hunt, he always pointed and flushed out the partridges. If the old Jäger shot a bird, the Pumi was excited to retrieve it. The game keeper also liked to take Hexi to the marshlands to shoot corncrakes that were abundant near wetlands and shooting them was an endless entertainment. According to Kovacs, corncrakes made great bird roasts.

The Pumi was just a great overall hunting dog. They were great in damage control against pests wild animals such as bores, gophers, badgers and hedgehogs. They also dug after foxes in their burrows where they killed them together with their kits. Pumis did not discriminate and they often also killed domestic cats if they were around.

Another testament on record about the Pumi's boldness and versatility is by the retired gamekeeper, Joska Szabo who often hunted martens with his Pumi usually during the first snow.

His Pumi, Ficko has saved his life one time, when a wounded wild boar attacked Szabo who fell on the ground where the boar kept ramming and biting him. However, Ficko the Pumi jumped on the top of the boar and relentlessly attacked him until the game keeper got his composure back and could shoot the boar.

The Pumi's boldness has been chronicled in another incident when a Pumi dugged himself into a European Wildcat's burrow where he did not exit from for about an hour after he was bitten and clawed by the cat. The owner immediately restrained the Pumi, blocked the entrance of the burrow and returned to kill the wild cat next day.

By writing these stories, I want to raise awareness about this breed that in addition to herding, can also be useful for hunters and game keepers. It is a breed that is widely available, healthy, rugged and less susceptible to illnesses than bloodhounds are. They also work well in smaller areas.

I recommend that you take a chance on a Pumi. You won't be disappointed and will see that the "öreg Hangos" was correct about the breed's usefulness.

Hexi the Pumi that I paid homage to in this short essay, is already passed away. He rests quietly under an oak tree in the town of Kisbag. He is patiently waiting to rejoin with his handler and hunt again together on the eternal fields of St Hubert.