



# **Belgian Championchips NVBK 2023**



**What exactly is the NVBK?**

The N.V.B.K. is an abbreviation for National Association of Belgian Cynologists. Colloquially it is said: 'het Verbond' ( in Flemish ).

The NVBK has existed for almost 60 years and was founded by a group of people from Sint-Hubertus (= FCI) who were no longer happy with the way things were going and founded their own association.

The Association is therefore called a 'dissident' association. The NVBK is therefore completely separate from the FCI.

The NVBK started their own Belgian ring program and their own pedigrees for Malinois.

There is therefore still a Belgian ring program in Sint-Hubertus. But the NVBK became bigger, with more clubs, more members, more competitions, etc

The NVBK became a household name, just like the KNPV is in the Netherlands.

The emphasis in the NVBK is more on the quality of the bite and here and there, there are minor differences in the programs.

In the meantime, the NVBK has become a royal association because you get that title in Belgium when you have existed for 50 years. They will celebrate their 60th anniversary in 2024!

Although everyone immediately thinks of the Malinois and ring sports when they hear the NVBK and the Verbond, the association has become somewhat broader. They also offer an international ring program under the name Globalring. In addition, they also have clubs that practice obedience and agility and relatively recently they have also organized exhibitions and published pedigrees for other breeds.

Especially for foreigners, it is not always clear that one Belgian ringprogram is not the same as the other and why there are differences in the pedigrees.

There is no doubt that the NVBK has left its mark on the history and future of the Malinois.

You will undoubtedly recognize the well-known names of Malinois from the NVBK, such as A'tim, Wolf van Dupae's kennelke, Erriem van het Beenhouwerke, Edden, Zodt, Dick I and II, Malinois from Van het Groentenhof or van het Muizenbos and so many more.

And there are the illustrious trainers such as Romain Sneyers, João Lopes and especially Bart Bellon, who, thanks to the videos 'Dances with Malinois', ensured the heyday of the NVBK and who is now a world-famous name, also outside the ring sport.

[www.nvbk.org](http://www.nvbk.org) (the website is also in French and English)



Axel Van der Borgh

The NVBK Belgian Championships were held on the weekend of Saturday 9 and 10 September 2023. This year the championship was organized by the club 'Zo'n Meester, zo'n hond' ( which means such a Master, such a Dog) from Sint-Gillis-Waas.

In most dogsports, the highest level is called category 3. I refer to IGP 1, 2 and ultimately 3. The same for monioring.

That is just the opposite in the NVBK. They start in category 3 with the intention of eventually playing in the highest category, namely 1.

In the Verbond, exactly the same exercises are completed in category 3 as in the highest category. So even in the lowest category, defending the object with and without a muzzle is one of the exercises.

There is a conscious difference in the level of difficulty. That is also a significant difference with, for example, monioring, where monitoring an object is only discussed in the highest

category.

### Category 3

On Saturday the championship for category 3 took place with 14 teams, but I had to miss it. So no detailed report of this trial itself.

The regular competition was concluded by handler and breeder **Johan Limbourg** and S'max Of Joli Troucheaus. Johan had to say goodbye to his 'Max' very unexpectedly. A tough nut to crack, we can imagine.

The competition was ultimately won by **Geert Verbruggen** with his Seppe De Statori. Geert is the brother of the well-known decoy Hans Verbruggen. Both are valued trainers from the Hoboken club. Seppe is a son of the late Chaos Degantis aka Sam who was also very successful with their clubmate Gunter Mertens. Gunter finished 9th at this championship.

Geert told me that he hopes that he can continue with this momentum and not have to wait that long for the next title. Because he had to wait 21 years for his second Belgian title. His first title dates back to 2002 in Cat2.



We would also have liked to see **Pierre Kembel** (photo above) at work with his male Grimmer Dux. Pierre tells a unique story. Pierre is a Swede who successfully competes with one and the same dog in the NVBK and in IGP. That has never been seen before. In December, Pierre and his dog achieved second place in IGP in Missouri, the USA. That is strong.

Personally, I really enjoy both dog sports. Both sports are part of dogsports with protectionwork included, but they are two very different worlds with their own typical accents.

Pierre ultimately finished 8th, in cat 3, out of 14 participants.

Taking part in competition is already quite an achievement. Participating in the Belgian NVBK championship certainly is. But competing for the title as a non-resident of Belgium in a sport that is only played in Belgium is truly unique. It is not easy in Belgium, so we can imagine how difficult it must be for someone from abroad. But where there's a will there's a way.

Pierre regularly traveled to Belgium to train and participate in competitions.

Our utmost respect for the fire in this conductor to take on this challenge and make such efforts. Chapeau, we say in French in Flanders, haha. Which means we say 'respect' !

The host club was also allowed to join the party because home clubmember **John Sarlet** was on stage. He achieved second place with Wick Van het Groentenhof.

Remarkably, in the results we notice 4 dogs from the well-known NVBK kennel Van het Groentenhof.

We must not forget to thank decoy **Sven Pultyn** for his excellent work.

**Podium  
Categorie 3  
:**

1. Geert Verbruggen with Seppe De Statori
2. John Sarlet with Wick Van het Groentenhof
3. Dirk De Bie with X'Tsuki Van Heide Hof



**Full 2023 championship results for category 3**

|                                        |                                                    |               |                       |                |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|----------------|
| .Inrichtende club – Club organisateur  | <b>Nationaal Kampioenschap te Sint Gillis Waas</b> |               | .Datum - Date         | <b>9/09/23</b> |
| .Categorie                             | <b>Cat 3</b>                                       | .Nr – N° Club | <b>251</b>            |                |
| .Naam keurders – Nom des juges         | <b>Geets F</b>                                     |               | <b>Vanderauwera M</b> |                |
| .Naam aanvalsman – Nom homme d'attaq   | <b>Pultyn S</b>                                    | .Nr – N° club | <b>61</b>             |                |
| .Naam burgeraanvalsmansman - Nom civil | <b>Heelen A</b>                                    | .Nr – N° club | <b>61</b>             |                |

| Rang Class | Naam eigenaar<br>Nom propriétaire | Voornaam<br>Prénom | Naam hond<br>Nom chien   | Club             | Hond<br>Cat | I.B. nr-n° | Punten<br>Points |
|------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|------------------|-------------|------------|------------------|
| 1          | Verbruggen                        | Geert              | Seppe de Statori         | Hoboken          | 3           | 4946       | 350              |
| 2          | Sarlet                            | John               | Wick van het Groentenhof | Sint Gillis Waas | 3           | 4883       | 339              |
| 3          | De Bie                            | Dirk               | X'Tsuki Van Heide Hof    | Ranst            | 3           | 4862       | 328              |
| 4          | Van Overloop                      | Nadia              | Woezy v/h Groentenhof    | Zwijndrecht      | 3           | 4933       | 322              |
| 4          | Heytens                           | Ivan               | Wisten van Sefhof        | Koksijde         | 3           | 4940       | 322              |
| 6          | Vanryssel                         | Ronny              | Toby                     | Koksijde         | 3           | 4938       | 317              |
| 7          | Vandeginste                       | Wouter             | Xam v/d Schuddebeurze    | MB Aartrijke     | 3           | 4962       | 314              |
| 8          | Kembel                            | Pierre             | Grimmer Dux              | Hoboken          | 3           | 4792       | 309              |
| 9          | Mertens                           | Gunter             | Grimmer d'Ivar           | Hoboken          | 3           | 4934       | 296              |
| 10         | Lambert                           | Tim                | Valkira v/h Speyenhof    | Eeklo            | 3           | 4887       | 295              |
| 11         | Goris                             | Rudy               | Wacko                    | Arendonk         | 3           | 4943       | 292              |
| 12         | Janssen                           | Marc               | Unit v/h Groentenhof     | Meerhout         | 3           | 4833       | 285              |
| 13         | Adriaensen                        | Marc               | Vadir                    | Arendonk         | 3           | 4842       | 273              |
| 14         | Hoefkens                          | Jozef              | Warto v/h Groentenhof    | Nijlen           | 3           | 4868       | 243              |



**Cat 2 : an attempt of the civilian in the guard of the object with muzzle**

**Narcos Du Calvaire des Acacias , handler is Jean-Marie Deville**



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### Extreme heat

It is not my habit to write long about the weather conditions, but this time it is more than relevant.

On the way home we heard on the radio that it was officially called a heat wave because it was warmer than 30 °C for 6 days. We even recorded 32 °C in the afternoon.

The exceptionally hot weather by Belgian standards was therefore an aggravating circumstance at this championship.

On Saturday the organization would have counted around 450 visitors. On Sunday we estimate that number to be somewhat lower. We suspect that the heat played a major role in this.

The number of spectators has declined in recent years. Not only in the NVBK, by the way. Corona played a role in this, but also many other factors.

However, there was international interest again. We always find it very admirable that people make great efforts to get a taste of a sport or competition. There were spectators from Spain, the Netherlands, the United States, Germany, Finland, Sweden, Ecuador and Austria.

And they are right because the Belgian ring sport is a beautiful and spectacular dog sport.

### Welfare of the dogs

Please note, at no time were any risks taken regarding the welfare of the dogs.

In a separate parking lot for the participants, we noticed that the cars were placed in the shade. That there were umbrellas over the car trunks. That there was constant surveillance so that the dogs could be checked. Some participants actually have such an airconditioned trailer. No exaggerated luxury in this kind of weather. Others had a sun protection blanket over their car.



The organization was also prepared for this heat and had provided several buckets of water throughout the site. There was even a specially equipped bathing place with three 'shells' with water in which the dogs could cool down.

**See the picture.**

Also the judges, **Mr. Marc Verhulst and Mr. Francis Geets**, put together a program taking the scorching heat into account.

There was also little or no wind, which made it even hotter.

The entire program takes an average of 25 minutes per team.



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Every attack this championship happened through water. At least if the dogs started biting straight at the decoys. And that happened. When returning, a dog may have left the water bowl to return to its owner. But when it comes to biting, they all like to take the shortest route.



When guarding the object, with or without a muzzle, the decoy and civilian used the sprayer on the dog. And in the defense of the handler a whole bucket of water was thrown over the dog.

Some didn't like it when a stranger sprayed water on them or tipped a bucket of water over them, but no dog was unnerved by that. And the refreshment will certainly have been good.

The 1 minute layoff, which ended with food refusal, was done under a parasol in the shade. During the competition, the handler was allowed to indicate between the exercises to take a drinking break for their dog.

Not only the dogs were considered, but also the judges and the decoys. They were also regularly offered drinks.

By the way, those decoys performed their task very well in this extreme heat. For Cat 2, **Aerts Tony** worked as a decoy and **Yuri Goosens** took care of the civilian work. For Cat 1 they have reversed the roles.



**Decoy Youri Goosens working with Lucas van Cuypers in Cat 1.**

A nice fact: decoy Aerts Tony is the partner of participant and outgoing Cat 1 champion, **Brenda Van Camp**.

Quite rightly, we heard the judges thank their decoys after the competition for the beautiful and correct work they did in difficult circumstances. Both decoys have indeed worked as they should. Always the same way for every dog and without wanting to put themselves in the spotlight. This is also greatly appreciated by the participants and the public.

At the championship, the order of the participants is determined by the position in the ranking of the season.

This means that the last selected person takes office first.

And the highest ranked players in the competition are the last to compete. And that is always noticeable. Also to the public by the way. The number of spectators remained disappointing, but in the afternoon more people came to watch.

The title candidates or favorites are always the better trained dogs or teams.



**Decoy Tony Aerts gives V'drago van De Beys a nice bite in cat 2**

**Category 2**

Champion of 2022 in Category 3, **De Beys Didier** with V'Drago (from the club in Jemeppe) took a shot at the title of Category 2 this time. It was very clear that Didier indeed had good control over his dog, but a competition has to be played and dogs are not robots. V'Drago arrived just too late to indicate the decoy when searching for the decoy. I had the impression that the dog knew approximately where the decoy was hiding, but he had not yet found the right opening to the decoy to bark at. Handler De Beys had some difficulty with the judges' decision and came forward with video images. But so far no VAR has been used in dogsports. But we understand his disappointment.

During one of the attacks, V'Drago miscalculated when taking the water pool. It looked like he wanted to take that pool as a long jump and therefore wanted to jump all the way over it and then start biting. But that was not possible, so his chest landed on the edge of the water tank. A heavy knock and very spectacular. But this miscalculation by V'Drago had no effect on this strong dog



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because he simply continued with his work as if nothing had happened. That characterizes a strong Malinois. And that is what we as enthusiasts must continue to strive for and why the beautiful Belgian ring program is so well known. This tough program tests the resilience of this exceptionally beautiful working breed: fearless, courageous, hard, high will to please, perseverance, ...

I don't see many, if not no other breeds, doing what our Malinois do so well.

After more than 100 years, the Malinois has not changed in appearance and is perhaps the strongest breed in existence. A breed that does not suffer from elbow or hip dysplasia, eye abnormalities, allergies or other defects that many other breeds suffer from.

However, the Malinois are not looked at by their appearance, but by their build, character, their will to please, their courage, their engine, etc.

The fact that this is such a fantastic breed is partly due to the Belgian ring program.

V'Drago also showed his spectacular side in guarding. In the master defense he bit full, above the jute protection, in the upper arm. I'm pretty sure decoy Tony would have known that.



The champion was **Leonard Michel** with Ubas Van de Yserheem. Another familiar face. I still remember that Michel convincingly became Belgian champion in category 1 in 2013 with **Stephane Dewaelheyns'** dog, Hergos van het Groentenhof.

Michel can now proudly call himself champion of Belgium with his own dog: Ubas Van de Yserheem.

Leonard already presented Hergos with great confidence in 2013. And now he showed the same quality with his Ubas. 'No Stress' seems to be Michel's motto.

### **Ubas van de Yserheem biting at decoy Tony's first attempt at guarding the object.**

We consider guarding an object to be the crowning achievement of training. What a fantastic, spectacular and tough exercise full of challenges.

The idea behind this exercise is that the dog must independently guard an object. It is a different object every trial. The regulations do describe the conditions that that object must meet.

The decoy or citizen is instructed to steal the object. At least, trying to steal.

This exercise also exists in various other sports such as mondioring and French ring, Global ring, etc. We repeat, every sport has its own accents and rules and therefore there are also differences when it comes to guarding the object.



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In the NVBK, the decoy is always instructed in advance by the judges how the attempts should be made at that competition. the same attempts for every dog.

The handler places the object in the ring and instructs his dog to guard it. Some objects are less practical to guard, others are easier. So that can already be a difficulty.

The handler then moves out of sight of the dog and it is up to the dog to complete the exercise all alone and independently.

Around the object are three rings that help the judges to award the points. If the object has been moved while performing this exercise, imaginary rings are used.

The dog must guard the object with bravado. Resting indifferently on the object is therefore not an option!

The dog must decide for itself when the decoy comes too close by biting or punching. When the decoy or civilian stops his attempt because he is bitten or punched and therefore moves backwards, the dog must decide to release and return to the object.

The decoy may also use an accessory or object to deter the dog. These accessories or objects must be safe above all in the interest of the dog. Despite this threat, the dog must still guard the object.

And if that is not enough, the dog should preferably start biting full and release itself when the decoy steps back and returns to the object to be guarded.

For some dogs, this exercise seems to come naturally. But nothing could be further from the truth. It is an extremely difficult exercise that requires a lot of training to complete successfully.



**Guarding the object for category 2:**

During this championship, the decoy received the following instructions from the judges for the three attempts without a muzzle:

- In the first attempt, the decoy cautiously stepped sideways into the ring.
- In the second attempt, the decoy sprayed water in the direction of the dog from a distance. When the attacker was close enough, he sprayed over the dog.
- In the third attempt, the decoy held a dome in front of him containing 'cat tails'.



**Guarding the object in the first attempt by attacker Tony in category 2 with V'Rex du Lac des Lotus owned by Rudy Stappers.**



**The third attempt with the dome by Thor from Mr. Bruynseels.**

For guarding with a muzzle, the civilian was given two attempts to grab the object:

- First attempt: the civilian approached while spraying water. When he entered the ring, he naturally sprayed towards the dog.
- Second attempt: the civilian threw cushions to the left and right in the direction of the dog just before entering the ring to distract.



**The second attempt by civilian Youri Goosens on V'Drago van De Beys.**

The first part of the competition looked like this for the teams in category 2:

- A short walk with a leash to introduce themselves to the judges
- the send away over barrels
- A short walk without a leash
- 1 minute down
- Followed by food refusal: 2 pieces of cervola were thrown
- The 3 positions at about 25 meters behind the water bowl. The handler sat on a chair next to the judge who whispered the positions to him
- The retrieve: the object was a plastic swim float and it was thrown into the water bowl
- Finding and selecting the small wooden block: the blocks were hidden behind cones about 30 meters away and were spread out
- Jump over a fixed hedge: back and forth.
- The palisade or the wall : for the past 2 years only forward with a sloping back.
- The long jump or large pit or trench.
- Jump over the small pit with the hurdle ( called windmill )

The obedience part and the jumps did not lead to a significant difference in points between the participants, not even for a few dogs that were already 10 years old.



**V'Rex du Lac des Lotus van Rudy Stappers in the send away**



**The long jump or large pit by U'Duvel v/d Suikerdijk from De Bleser.**

After the ground work, which includes the obedience part and the jumps, in ringsport the biting or protection work followed.

The sequence of exercises for the protection work was as follows:

- Protection work started immediately with guarding the object
- An attack with the stick by the water bowl, the decoy sat on a chair and combed the dog's fur, on the back
- Guarding the object again, but this time with a muzzle
- Finding the decoy, followed by transportation
- The stopped attack
- The defense of the handler
- It concluded with a final stick attack.

We've discussed guarding the object earlier.



**See him push ! U'Duvel van de Suikerdijk from handler De Bleser in Category 2**

Then followed the long attack with the stick by the water bowl. After the bite, the decoy dropped the baton and sat down while rubbing the dog's back with a heavy brush. This exercise provided beautiful images. The decoy stood in the corner of the field, behind the pool, close to the audience. The decoys caught the dogs well and tended to their bite while brushing through the coats of the Belgian Malinois with a coarse brush."



**"Thor van de Suikerdijk owned by Kathy Legena (this is from Category 1, but in Category 2, it was the same)."**



The search for the decoy, unlike the regular attacks, did lead to a greater difference between the participants. Like V'drago, who didn't find the decoy in time, as we mentioned earlier.

I noticed that there are always dogs that seem to have learned to run around the entire field in this exercise. It sometimes appears that these dogs don't use their nose but have learned to systematically cover everything quickly. With other dogs, you can see that they truly search well and use their nose. However, the dogs only have 1 minute to find the decoy. We can imagine that due to the stress involved, one minute can seem longer for a handler than it actually is. But in reality, a minute isn't that long. So, there isn't much room for error.

The decoy was hidden in a compartment among the bushes on the other side of the field where the dog was allowed to start searching. Not an insurmountable obstacle, but a minute was no excessive luxury.

Once the dog has found the decoy, this exercise transitions into transportation or training of the decoy. If the decoy attempts to flee, the dog must prevent it.



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This exercise also requires the dog to work independently. It is only allowed to bite when the decoy attempts to flee. And that decoy makes three attempts predetermined by the judges. The first escape was made after the decoy made a U-turn. In the second attempt, the shot was fired, and the third escape occurred immediately after the shot.

**V'Rex du Lac des Lotus from Rudy Stappers while barking at the decoy.**





"Training by Narcos du Calvaire des Acacia from Jean-Marie De Ville."



The transport of the decoy caused few problems.

What's always a bit uncertain is the interrupted attack or the interruption, and this time was no different. There are handlers who dare to take the risk by waiting until the last moment to recall or call back their dog. And there are those who play it safe and recall or call back their dog a bit earlier.

The decoy certainly didn't make it easy for the dogs. He worked vigorously with a bag of stones to create a lot of noise and also held slings with plastic balls in both hands. Plenty of signals for the dog to start biting, but that was precisely not the intention.

The defense work is always quite challenging. This time was no different. In fact, the majority of this exercise consists of a changing scenario, and the dog is not allowed to bite despite the many challenges, only to conclude with an approach by the decoy and thus an allowed bite. Of course, the dog never knows in advance when this approach will happen. It happens that a dog is so strongly trained (or is it untrained?) not to bite in this exercise that when he is allowed to bite, he doesn't do it.



The decoy used his voice with intensity throughout the entire exercise in the championship and also worked extensively with the stick to challenge the dog. None of the participating dogs made mistakes in response to this. They are all seasoned dogs.

### **The approach by decoy Tony on the later champion Michel Leonard and his Ubbas van de Yserheem.**

In Belgian ringsport, the dog must signal to its handler when being pursued by the decoy. However, the dog must continue to follow its handler. This is why it sometimes seems like the dog is just walking around. In some sports, dogs are challenged much more heavily during the master defense. But we sometimes have our doubts about that. The difference between a normal handshake and an attack is clear in the NVBK. And so it should be, we believe.

In some sports, we see that a handshake is sometimes very sudden and even comes across as very threatening. That is not the intention of a handshake, is it? They do this intentionally to make it difficult for the dog.

It's remarkable that after the contact or attack on the master of the decoy, some handlers in the NVBK strongly encourage their dog verbally once he has started biting. We can actually understand this quite well.

We looked it up specifically in the regulations, and it is indeed expressly stated that it is allowed to encourage the dog as long as the handler has moved at least 5 meters away from the decoy.

The handshake occurred just after the same decoy had poured a whole bucket of water over the dog from up close. After another short walk, the handler sat down at a terrace. The decoy came behind with that empty bucket and pretended to pour water over the dog again, but the bucket was empty.

Instead, he attacked the master.



The very last exercise was an attack with the stick. This time, the handler took position at the beginning of the pool, while the decoy stood on the other side. Once the dog had bitten, the decoy turned and walked further away from the handler. This is somewhat unusual in the ring.

We also noticed this with the favorite, V'drago, who

seemed disoriented after the release. He quickly released on command, but then things went awry. Normally, a dog immediately turns after releasing, then swiftly returns to its owner. However, because the decoy had turned during the bite, the dog was a bit confused about his location. When he released and turned around, his handler wasn't where he expected. He seemed perplexed, paused for a moment, and then chose to bite again.



**Podium Category 2**

### Category 1

"At around 2:30 PM, it was time for the big boys."

The experienced **Luc Renneboog** (see photo under ) had the honor of kicking things off with his U'sam van 't Muizenbos. Sam turned out not to be fully under control, and in the last attack, he completely failed because he didn't move to bite. He probably didn't realize he was allowed to bite because the decoy was all the way at the end of the field in a dark trailer. The handler and the dog were positioned behind the pool, where visibility was further obstructed by a curtain of plastic streamers. Luc took his dog's mistake in a very sportsmanlike manner, didn't get worked up at all, didn't push his dog, and decided to call it a day.

Luc got a second chance because he also participated with a second dog, Qastart van de Boshoeve, with whom he just missed the podium. Qastart is only 5 years old, so there's still a lot of potential.



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Some exercises were completely the same as in category 2, while others were structured differently.

The retrieve, the one-minute down and food refusal, the walks, and the jumps were the same. The execution of the positions was also identical. The order of the obedience exercises and the jumps remained unchanged.



The search and selection of the correct block was slightly different. The start was the same but the blocks were placed even further than in category 2. In category 1, they were spread out openly in the grass.

For example, Senna Met Ardendsogen from Brenda Van Camp, the defending champions, couldn't find the block.

The groundwork didn't lead to spectacular differences. The dogs in category 1 are seasoned ring dogs. It's practically impossible to participate in category 1 with a very young dog. The youngest dog was 5 years old and the oldest was already 10.

You can teach a dog a lot at a young age, but experience and maturity are invaluable, and they are indeed necessary at this level.



Thus, the differences should once again be made in the protection work. The protection work largely followed the same pattern as in category 2:

1. Guarding an object
2. Long attack, behind the pool with the brush
3. Guarding an object with the muzzle
4. Finding the decoy and transportation
5. The stopped attack
6. Defending the master
7. Final attack with the stick

#### **Guarding an object:**

The object for guarding remained the same as in category 2, namely the tripod. This actually posed little difficulty because dogs at this level are certainly familiar with this object.

1st attempt: The decoy stepped sideways into the ring.

2nd attempt: The decoy used the sprayer.

3rd attempt: Immediately after releasing in the 2nd attempt, the decoy dropped the sprayer and resolutely made his final attempt. This attempt was completely different from the last attempt in category 2.

Defending champion **Brenda Van Camp** with her Senna Van Arendsogen demonstrated a very beautiful guarding of the object. A perfect example. In fact, Senna also quickly found the decoy during the search. With such dogs, you truly notice that they have a lot of experience and know well what is expected of them.

**Freddy Van Vlierberghe's** Rex Van de Suikerdijk is a leg biter. In guarding with the muzzle, Rex allowed the civilian to take his object. We heard Freddy curse. He realized that his dog guarded too short, allowing the civilian to calmly grab the object. Despite this 'mistake', Freddy was still able to take third place on the podium.

We see fewer and fewer leg biters because it is more challenging for the decoy to safely catch a very fast dog. Remember, in Belgian ring, the dogs are not waved off ( esquived ) as in some other sports. We really like to see a leg biter, but we are well aware that catching a very fast dog on the leg is not an easy task. Safety for both the decoy and the dog always comes first. However, it is not impossible. It does require more technique and timing from the decoy. Most dogs bite on the arm. Some also bite on the leg but only, for example, in guarding or master defense.



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This is specifically taught because in these exercises, it is sometimes better for the dog to also bite on the leg when an accessory is used. If the dog is trained to bite both the arm and the leg, it can decide depending on the situation.



**Second attempt by decoy Yuri op O'nox from Maxime Comans.**

**First attack:**

After the guarding, there was the attack thru the pool, just as it happened in category 2. The decoy sat down after the bite and vigorously combed the dogs' hair on their backs with a sweeping brush.



**Aanvalsmen Yuri Goosens met de latere kampioen Thor Van de Suikerdijk**

**Guarding an object with a muzzle:**

Next, the dogs were allowed to go back to guarding the object, but this time with the muzzle on.

1st attempt: The civilian used the sprayer on the dog.

2nd attempt: The civilian held an accessory in front of him, a dome with a curtain of cat tails.



**The second attempt by civilian Tony on Senna Met Arendsogen from Brenda Van Camp:**

**Search of the decoy and transport**

After the guarding, the decoy was allowed to hide for the search. The decoy was hidden in the same place as in Category 2.

The transportation also didn't make much difference in the points. The escapes always occurred after the release. While in Category 2, this is only allowed in the last escape.



**Stopped attack**

The stopped attack is a different story. In front of the decoy, a plastic cube (see photo) was set up, and the decoy worked hard with the stick.

**U'senna from Luc Renneboog just barely missed the bite!**

This was truly a perfect execution! In fact, we saw very few combinations that completed this exercise perfectly. This is not at all a criticism because it remains a difficult exercise. It's also challenging for the handler, who has to estimate from a distance when to call back or whistle for their dog. And sometimes, this can be too late, causing the dog not to make a mistake, but rather the handler whistling or calling too late. U'senna from Luc Renneboog achieved the last place in this championship, but the execution of this exercise by this team was truly spectacular. (See photo) Usually, handlers use a whistle, but Frederik Cuypers uses his voice. His Lucas also bit in.

**Defending the master:**

Before the attack by the decoy on the master, a short course was set up. As tradition dictates, the decoy did his best to challenge the dog, even with his voice, to follow the decoy and not his master.

The first major challenge occurred when the decoy, behind the master's back, made a sudden movement with both arms in the air. Only then did the handshake follow.



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However, the difficulty in this exercise mainly lay towards the end. The master received the command from the judge to step backward. The civilian stood a few meters in front of the master as a distraction.

In defense of the handler, Lucas also made a mistake. The handler had to step back for the approach, which is somewhat unusual. Lucas didn't follow **Frederik Cuypers**, but he stayed lying down. Meanwhile, the decoy came out from concealment behind the handler, and at that moment, the civilian threw a bucket of water on the dog. Lucas did not react to the approach behind him and did not bite. The audience reacted disappointed.



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#### Second attack:

The competition concluded with the second attack. The teams took their positions behind the pool, and the decoy stood at the other end of the field in an open horse trailer, working with the stick. Frederik Cuypers had to call his dog back very strongly on the way, as it seemed like Lucas was running towards the judge. Mr. Cuypers reacted very well to this. Presumably, Lucas didn't see exactly where the decoy was positioned, as the decoy was actually in the dark inside the horse trailer. Once again, an example of how well-trained these dogs may be, they never become robots.

#### Category 1 Podium:

The Belgian title ultimately went to last year's Category 2 champion: **Kathy Legena** with Thor Van de Suikerdijk, delivering a strong performance. Brenda Van Camp and Senna Van Arendsogen couldn't defend their title but secured a very commendable second place.

In every sport, a bit of luck is also involved. Kathy and Thor put on a great performance. It got a bit tense when her dog could only find the decoy just in time. Kathy was rightfully thrilled with her second consecutive Belgian title. After winning in Category 2, she now adds this one in Category 1. Her numerous supporters were also overjoyed. Together, they celebrated this beautiful victory with great enthusiasm, and the champagne corks were popped. Her fans treated her to a refreshing dive, or rather, a cool splash into the water bowl.

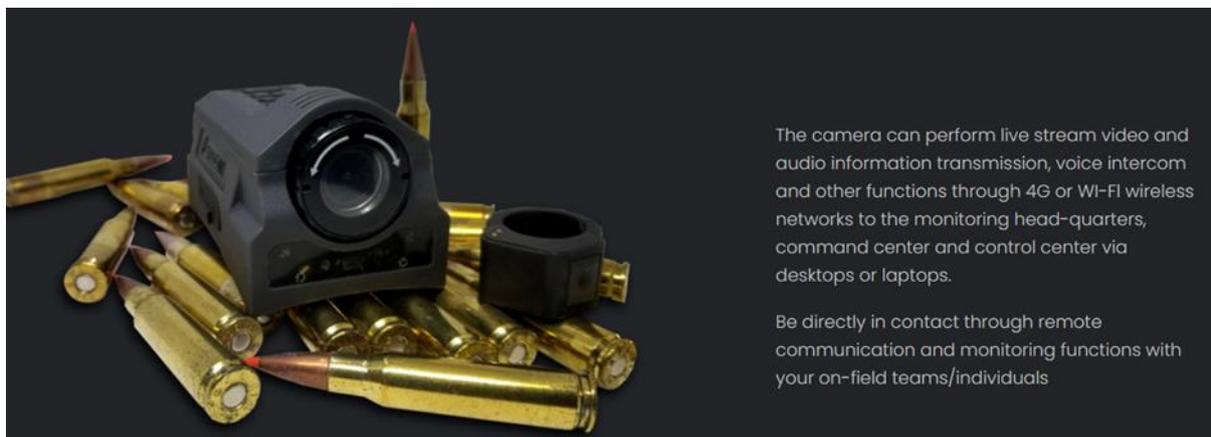


**Podium Category 1**

|                                            |                                                    |                      |                 |
|--------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------|
| .Inrichtende club – Club organisateur      | <b>Nationaal Kampioenschap te Sint Gillis Waas</b> | .Datum - Date        | <b>10/09/23</b> |
| .Categorie                                 | <b>Cat 2/1</b>                                     | .Nr – N° Club        | <b>251</b>      |
| .Naam keurders – Nom des juges             | <b>VERHULST MARC</b>                               | <b>GEETS FRANCIS</b> |                 |
| .Naam aanvalsmansman – Nom homme d'attaque | <b>AERTS TONY &amp; GOOSSENS YOURI</b>             | .Nr – N° club        | <b>93/103</b>   |
| .Naam burgeraanvalsmansman - Nom civil     |                                                    | .Nr – N° club        |                 |



| Rang<br>Class | Naam eigenaar<br>Nom propriétaire | Voornaam<br>Prénom<br>Prénom | Naam hond<br>Nom chien               | Club                | Hond<br>Cat | I.B. nr-n°  | Punten<br>Points |
|---------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-------------|------------------|
| 1             | <b>Legena</b>                     | <b>Kathy</b>                 | <b>Thor v/d Suikerdijk</b>           | <b>Hever/Dender</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>4604</b> | <b>325</b>       |
| 2             | <b>Van Camp</b>                   | <b>Breda</b>                 | <b>Senna met Arendsogen</b>          | <b>Brecht</b>       | <b>1</b>    | <b>4499</b> | <b>319</b>       |
| 3             | <b>Vanvlierberghe Freddy</b>      | <b>Freddy</b>                | <b>Rex v/d Suikerdijk</b>            | <b>Eeklo</b>        | <b>1</b>    | <b>4450</b> | <b>303</b>       |
| 4             | <b>Renneboog</b>                  | <b>Luc</b>                   | <b>Qastart v/d Boshoeve</b>          | <b>Oxdonk</b>       | <b>1</b>    | <b>4764</b> | <b>300</b>       |
| 5             | <b>Comans</b>                     | <b>Maxime</b>                | <b>Q'Nox</b>                         | <b>Hever/Dender</b> | <b>1</b>    | <b>4611</b> | <b>295</b>       |
| 6             | <b>Cupers</b>                     | <b>Frederic</b>              | <b>Lucas</b>                         | <b>Ghoy</b>         | <b>1</b>    | <b>4715</b> | <b>267</b>       |
| 7             | <b>Verbert</b>                    | <b>Gilbert</b>               | <b>U'Sam van 't Muizenbos</b>        | <b>Ranst</b>        | <b>1</b>    | <b>4722</b> | <b>260</b>       |
| 8             | <b>Renneboog</b>                  | <b>Luc</b>                   | <b>U'Senna</b>                       | <b>Oxdonk</b>       | <b>1</b>    | <b>4713</b> | <b>255</b>       |
| 1             | <b>Leonard</b>                    | <b>Michel</b>                | <b>Ubas van de Yserheem</b>          | <b>Lessines</b>     | <b>2</b>    | <b>4765</b> | <b>366</b>       |
| 2             | <b>Bruynseels</b>                 | <b>Leon</b>                  | <b>Thor</b>                          | <b>Nijlen</b>       | <b>2</b>    | <b>4723</b> | <b>361</b>       |
| 3             | <b>De Beys</b>                    | <b>Didier</b>                | <b>V'Drago</b>                       | <b>Jemeppe</b>      | <b>2</b>    | <b>4781</b> | <b>358</b>       |
| 4             | <b>De Maesschaik</b>              | <b>Ester</b>                 | <b>Wannes v/d Suikerdijk</b>         | <b>Zwijndrecht</b>  | <b>2</b>    | <b>4771</b> | <b>347</b>       |
| 5             | <b>Stappers</b>                   | <b>Rudy</b>                  | <b>V'Rex du Lac des Lotus</b>        | <b>Retie</b>        | <b>2</b>    | <b>4831</b> | <b>336</b>       |
| 6             | <b>Deville</b>                    | <b>Jean-Marie</b>            | <b>Narco du Calvaire des Acacias</b> | <b>Hever/Dender</b> | <b>2</b>    | <b>4778</b> | <b>330</b>       |
| 7             | <b>De Bleser</b>                  | <b>Glen</b>                  | <b>U'Duvel v/d Suikerdijk</b>        | <b>Wilrijk</b>      | <b>2</b>    | <b>4711</b> | <b>316</b>       |
| 8             | <b>Pultyn</b>                     | <b>SVEN</b>                  | <b>Victor v/d Leibeekhoeve</b>       | <b>Zwijndrecht</b>  | <b>2</b>    | <b>4772</b> | <b>304</b>       |



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We would like to congratulate the participants on their performances and thank the NVBK for their hospitality. Special thanks to Pierre Ames (from Recuva’s Malinois) from Germany for sharing the fantastic photos.

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Photos: Pierre Ames, Pierre Kembel, Carlos Escobar, the NVBK, and Axel Van der Borgh.

