

WOULD YOU LIKE TO PLAY GOLF IN THE COMPANY OF YOUR OWN DOG?



In some countries impossible, in one country nothing unusual. As many things in our life happen unexpected, one day our elder son being member of the management of a five* golf resort in Austria came home and stated: “You have to play golf”. Me and my husband, we faced the challenge and after short period of time we got the golf infection. But a big question mark followed: A family of four, both sons working abroad, how to organize our household during our absence with our family

member number five – a dog – Rhodesian Ridgeback, called Athos?

We were lucky. In Austria, you can stay with your dog in a hotel, in some hotels you have to pay a rather symbolic dog fee added to your room charge. You can play golf accompanied by your dog, on some golf courses you have to pay a dog fee, on other courses a fee called differently - environmental fee.

In our golf club Haugschlag located in wonderful “Waldviertel” (Forest Quarter) in Austria in the north close to the Czech border, you can even participate in golf tournaments with your



dog. There is a simple rule: You have always to ask your flight partners for consent to play with a dog. In case you would have to play in one flight with two dogs, you would have to switch with your dog for the flight in front of you or behind respectively.

As Rhodesian Ridgebacks are very intelligent, our Athos was quickly trained for his “green card”. How Athos behaves on the golf course: Always on leash, attached to one of my clubs in the golf bag. He needed to collapse my golf bag only two times to learn to stay always close to my bag. At the tee

box, he is always calm, never barking, he would sometimes close his eyes in the moment of the swing sound. He never walks on tee or green, even close to green. In case he would need to do something, he would take me to the next rough or even forest. He would never drink water from artificial lakes because of potential agrichemicals residues. We have to carry water for him especially on hot days. During slow tournaments he would sit for



a while close to my bag and get some irritation on his belly, but usually it would disappear until



the next morning. Athos was trained never ever touch a golf ball. RRs are not much interested in retrieve, they would do it once but not repeat. As on our golf course we have plenty of game, I just have to check and if necessary to take his leash into my hands. Athos was not trained to find balls as he was trained not to touch them. It would be too difficult for him to find them and not touch them.

In order to summarize the great experience to play golf together with our dog – Athos for more than ten years – it is worth to train your dog for golf. If I have only limited time for golf, I would play only a quick round late afternoon as the last flight on the golf course – myself, my dog and sunset providing me with the great feeling like playing on own golf course.

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