

The Gun Dog Supreme

NEWSBULLETIN of the WIREHAired POINTING GRIFFON CLUB OF AMERICA
EDUCATION & RESEARCH FOUNDATION

www.wpgca.org

Mike and Kathi Rackouski, Editors, 1806 E. Sixth St. Ashland, WI 54806

Telephone: 715-682-0383(CST), Email: mracko@ncis.net

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Yes, I know what you are saying, "It is about time I received my June GDS". I have a million excuses, except the one where my dog ate my report...darned this computer anyway! As you can tell this issue is a little larger than normal. A lot of things have happened or are happening so let's get right into it.

It is hard to believe that the hunting season is ONLY 3 or 4 months away, which means the fall test is perhaps even closer. Four months may seem to be a lot of time until you start figuring in the various home projects, the family vacation and ...oh yeah, that inexorable, mind numbing activity we all refer to as WORK! The fall test is not far at all when you are preparing a dog for the Intermediate Hunting Dog Test. You need to make the most of this time. It doesn't need to be much, but make it quality time. Be sure to reread pages 3 thru 7 in the June 2000 *Gun Dog Supreme*, follow the "green book" and make a plan to attend a training weekend near you. Dates, locations, and contact information for these events can be found on page 4.

Many of you have a puppy right now. For some of you this may be your first Griffon or maybe even your first pointing dog. If this is the case, don't worry; you have an excellent knowledge base, in the club, to draw from. If you do have questions please do not hesitate to contact the breeder. First of all, they would love to hear how their little one is doing and if they can't answer your questions they can direct you to a club member that can. On page 13 Joan has some information and advice to help bring your puppy along.

A while back I received an email from Mark Dougherty, a club member from the Northeast Regional Chapter. At the time, there were several posts to our website message board/discussion list from puppy owners who were concerned about their dog not pointing. Mark wrote me:

"...From reading all the chat from other members there seems to be a lot of concern over when a young dog is going to start pointing from new owners. Having just gone through this anxiety this past fall with my pup, I thought of sending you an essay for the next GDS (compiled from this past seasons diary notes) on how BRANDY flushed 50-60 wild birds, tracked down and caught a pheasant (that I assume someone had wing clipped) and finally at the end of our woodcock season here in the northeast started pointing on her own."

I thought an article like that would be a great addition to the GDS and one which new owners would appreciate reading. By Marks own words: "My essay has turned into a novel...". You can find his article starting on page 8.

By now all the regional chapters have completed their test weekends. Handlers who ran in NAT have their sights set for the IHDT this fall, while those who tested in IHDT are anticipating the hunting season, and new puppy owners are just having a ball with their new family member. On page 6 Joan looks back at the Northwest, Rocky Mountain and Heartland spring tests (the Northeast test did not occur at the time this article was written. Look for complete test coverage and results in the August issue.)

Filling out the remainder of this issue are a remembrance of DAN CERNICKY on pages 3 and 4, the WPGCA's upcoming 50th anniversary on page 5, a list of OFA test results for the last two years, and last but not least, the fall 2001 test schedule both on page 15. Enjoy the reading and have a great summer.

Mike Rackowski

COVER PHOTO: *I just couldn't pass this one up. BECK OF AGASSIZ LOWLANDS (Chyte Z Zaplav x Berta of Show-Me-Borealis) with his first Iowa rooster at 7 months of age. This photo was taken during the first week of Iowa's pheasant season last year. despite the fact the rooster had 3/4 inch spurs, Beck made a nice retrieve of the winged bird. (Photo by: Mike Rackowski)*

DAN CERNIKY
"OUR" DAN

December 7, 1988 - April 6, 2001

By: Joan Bailey

I remember shortly before **DAN** was to be shipped from Czechoslovakia to Jim and Arlene in Illinois in 1991. At that time they had **BLEUMELEIN VOM ERIK** and two cats. **DAN**'s registration papers preceded him and a copy had been sent to Joe Nadeker, the original to Jim. Jim was worried that **DAN** might "harm" the cats. I mentioned Jim's concern to Joe during one of our frequent telephone conversations. Joe responded to Jim's concern by saying to me: "Tell Jim not to worry; **DAN** only got a "2" in the test for killing a cat!" A few days later **DAN** arrived and Jim called me shortly after they had gotten back from O'Hare. I asked Jim where he and **DAN** were at this moment. He said they were in the kitchen. I asked, "Where are the cats?" "In the kitchen," Jim answered and then added, "I think it's going to be okay and I can let him off the leash pretty soon." I asked, "What's **DAN** doing right now?" Jim replied, "He's looking at the cats and wagging his tail!" I said, "You better wait a little longer."



DAN CERNICKY (L) with BIRKLEY BELLE OF DUTCHMAN'S HOLLOW. This photo was taken about 5 years ago by Arlene Seibel.

Well, **DAN**, ever the gentleman—and a wise one at that—caught on quickly just as our earlier arrivals had; he figured out that life could be good here and part of the deal was not to eat a cat.

Most of us knew **DAN**. We saw him at Heartland tests; some of us hunted over him; others saw him when we, as newcomers, visited the Seibels to get a look at what our dogs were like. Of course whenever a family came to visit **DAN**, he sold the folks on our breed! And when newcomers hunted over him, they wanted another **DAN**. If you knew him, you loved him. He was the consummate gentleman and a superb hunting dog.

In an email from Jim a few days after **DAN** died, he wrote to me, "... Just yesterday we were able to see the joy of his grand-puppies that arrived in Michigan at the Mike and Kathy Branigan home [one pup for Branigans, one for the Dan Walsh family. Mike had brought both pups back from upstate New York from the Canfield litter (**CHIPPER DE LOS ALTOS x AVERY OF MOUNTAIN HOUSE**)]. As I may have told you, the two Walsh

children, ages 8 and 11, were unaware that they were getting a puppy. They were on vacation in Florida and upon returning from the Detroit airport, they told the kids that they were going to stop and look at a boat on the way home. The look on the kids' faces when they saw their new pup was first of disbelief and then the joy only children (of any age) can express. Both pups looked great as they all do at 11 weeks. It was good therapy for both of us and we are grateful to both families for allowing us to share their moment..." Jim also wrote, "I cannot tell in written or spoken words how much Arlene and I appreciate you allowing us to have DAN. He brought more joy in more forms than any human deserves."

DAN's name appears in the pedigree of every dog that we tested in NAT this spring. Our dear, sweet DAN is gone, but he will be a part of our dogs for many generations to come.

DAN CERNIKY
O'HARE AIRPORT,
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

By: Jim and Arlene Seibel

On March 10, 1991, Dan stepped out of his travel crate, looked around as Arlene put his lead on and followed her with his head and tail held high to the nearest light post where he calmly relieved himself. We both admired his calm and gentlemanly nature right from the first moment we saw him. He never lost that composure and demeanor in the ten years we were privileged to have him. In every respect, he was the finest dog that we have ever known or had.

Now we are able to see his genotype in the field in most of the pups in the WPGCA program. Some manifest it in the friendly, people-loving nature. Others have the beautiful smooth movement in the field that enable them to, like Dan, hunt all day without showing any need to take breaks and rest. Many times we see his level temperament in his progeny. We see him often and it makes us smile.

Thank you Joe and Joan for making it possible for Arlene and me and many others to have had the honor of being a friend of Dan Cerniky. ■

UPCOMING TRAINING DAYS

Northwest Chapter:

-None Planned-

Rocky Mountain Chapter:

A date has not been set yet, but one is being planned for sometime in August

Contact: Glenn Lehrer (406) 586-0015 ghlmtman@aol.com

Gary Pool (208) 324-2473 gpool@micron.net

Heartland Chapter:

Michigan - June 23rd, (July and August dates are also planned but not set yet)

Contact: Jim Seibel (616) 789-1020 james.seibel@kelloggs.com

Iowa - August 4th and 5th

Contact: John Pitlo (319) 872-5764 jvpitlo@clinton.net

(Flyers will be mailed out to area owners so that birds can be ordered in time.)

Northeast Chapter: Maine

August 4th and 5th

Contact: Rick Molt (207) 563-5675 tina@tidewater.net

(Will be sending flyers out with applications for birds.)



50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE
WIREHAIRED POINTING GRIFFON
CLUB OF AMERICA
August 29, 1951 to 2001

By: Joan Bailey



A once-in-a-lifetime-opportunity to be a part of History!

Now is a chance to start planning a 50th anniversary party this summer for dogs and owners all across America. Breeders, former breeders, breeder coaches, judges, chapter presidents, ANYONE: Call a few other Griffon owners, set a date as close to August 29th as possible. Maybe the weekend before—August 25th or 26th. Get together and celebrate. Or get together and do a training/exposure day or weekend. Raise your glasses to our dogs and the people who have owned them.

Check the October 1988 GDS for dog party ideas!

**We are the oldest versatile hunting dog club in the U.S. It's a big deal.
Let's make the most of it and have a lot great times all across America!!!!**

In the first issue of The Gun Dog Supreme, General Tom Rogers, our first Secretary and founder, wrote:

Future generations of sportsmen and gun dog lovers may well mark August 29th 1951, as an important date in the history of dogdom—for on that date the Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America was activated

THEY ARE CALLING US "THE BEST"

By: Joan Bailey

In the March 2001 issue of *Outdoor Life*, Larry Mueller's regular column is called "Finding a Cooperative Dog." It's a very good article that helps people use different tools for finding a cooperative dog; or where to buy a puppy that has good odds for becoming a cooperative dog. In it he says, "One source is the many clubs that exist for all types of hunting dogs. But be wary. Some are field-trial oriented and a few ride the fence. The same applies to about 20 specialty' magazines..." He goes on and tells the readers that he has compiled a list of clubs and magazines and you can get the list by sending him a stamped, self-addressed envelope. I asked Larry for a copy.

It lists nineteen magazines and clubs, so not many organizations made the list. We are on it and this is what he says:

GUN DOG SUPREME is the newsletter of The Wirehaired Pointing Griffon Club of America. Editors change periodically, but a good contact is Judy Coil, Secretary, HC 78 Box 29, Kelliher, MN 56650. Phone: 218-647-8451. This small, dedicated group is America's most advanced testing and breeding club. They test even more thoroughly than... i.e., natural ability, then an intermediate test, and finally the utility test. All members, in fact anyone who manages to buy one of their dogs (always a waiting list) signs a contract stating that they will not breed their dog without the approval and guidance of the club's breeding committee. The committee carefully and successfully selects mates that will avoid hip dysplasia and retain the best of hunting instincts, trainability, and cooperation in the field

If you are not already proud of your dog and yourself and your club, I don't think it's ever going to get any better than this!

We are doing a wonderful job. ■

AN OVERVIEW OF OUR IDAHO, WASHINGTON, & WISCONSIN SPRING TESTS

By: Joan Bailey

As I write this on May 4th. We still have the Maine test to go in two more weeks. Albeit I thought I should get my thoughts down while it is all still fresh in my mind and give members a chance to hear about the first three spring tests now. In the August GDS there will be a write-up of the Maine test, plus write-ups from the other tests, along with all the test results from our five spring tests, and a bunch of photos of our dogs.

We began of course in Idaho, although the KDK had their test in January and three of our dogs from the "A" of **HIGH DESERT** litter were tested there. One got a price I, another a Prize II, and the third one did not qualify.

Our Idaho test this year was very special because Dr. Jaromir Dostal, the breed warden of the Cesky Fousek Club had accepted our invitation to come across the ocean and be at our test, and to give the major portion of our annual judges seminar. This long weekend started on Thursday when many of us began arriving throughout the day. That evening there was



*During his visit Dr. Dostal (left) walked along with the judging groups. Here they are looking at the coat and conformation of **BAHIDA OF SANDHILL**, owned by Vince Crow, in their NAT. Dr. Dostal. (Photo by: Connie Rupp)*

a special dinner mostly for our judges and their spouses. This was held at the Snake River Grill in the small town of Hagerman, which lies close to the Snake River. As you have read in other GDSSs, there is a marvelous French chef there (trained in Paris, but born in the U.S.). He just followed his dream, which is cooking the best food, and lucky for us he ended up in Hagerman, only a 30-minute drive from Jerome. So Dr. Dostal's first day in Idaho included a lively evening with all of us; the wine flowing freely as was the talk! It was a high decibel night as we dug in to a five-course dinner made from the chukars and ducks that our local club members had shot last fall. There were about 40 of us gathered at this long table and at one point we realized that 15 states were represented, plus Czechoslovakia!

Friday morning Dr. Dostal joined us for our annual board of directors meeting. As we progressed into the morning he said to me at one point, "You don't fight at all like we do in our meetings!" I'm not sure if that is a compliment or not. At least it was an observation.

After a quick lunch, we began our seminar at 1:00 p.m. The major thrust of our precious hours together was to listen to Dr. Dostal talk about how he does the breeding for the Fouseks in the Czech Republic. He is by profession a geneticist, so he knows far more than

we about such matters. He had an extensive slide presentation to help us understand how they do it there. He showed us many pedigrees. Pointing out what they were trying to achieve with each breeding. This was all extremely fascinating for me, as you can all imagine, given my long interest and work in the breeding of our dogs. I learned things that will help me in the future in making our breeding decisions. Dr. Dostal was most gracious in answering our many questions.

The next day we were all in the field with three judging groups spread out along the wonderful Idaho Fish & Game land that encompasses hundreds of acres that runs along the Snake River down in the deep canyon. In the field we learned a lot from Dr. Dostal about conformation and also which male dog within a litter would be the one he would choose for breeding. He is a world-renowned conformation judge, traveling even as far as Japan when he is invited to judge there. Of course our dogs were mostly grand this weekend, and the most recent Pool litter, "G" OF AUGER FALLS (Prairie Storm's Beau x Elle of Auger Falls) did exceedingly well, as did other litters there, and in Washington and in Wisconsin, as you will see in the August GDS.

Sunday morning was quite relaxed as we had only a few dogs to test and we finished before lunchtime. So we had a leisurely lunch at the old stone house down beside the river and sat in the sun talking as much as we could to Dr. Dostal, asking questions, which he was so gracious in answering.

The following weekend I was at the Washington test on Sunday and watched three NAT dogs do very well—they all got all 4's and no major faults in conformation and coat!

Two weeks later I was in Wisconsin and my overall impression throughout the weekend was of a huge passel of wonderful dogs! We are doing so well in our program; producing sound dogs that are eager for game, who have a great desire to please their masters. We have come one long way, believe me.

I am so pleased to observe how well our senior judges are doing, as well as all our judges. I am particularly pleased to watch the senior judges guide the apprentice judges; giving them opportunities to start a handler and his dog on a track of the pheasant; how they explain to the apprentices when one doesn't understand a particular point.

Along these same lines I am delightedly to tell you that Dr. Dostal observed that our judging is very good; that we do an excellent job in providing a true evaluation of the genotype of each dog we judge. This means our judges have the ability to separate the "wheat from the shaft," so to speak. That is, our judges can figure out the real natural ability of the dog. For example, if someone puts their young NAT dog through forced retrieving training BEFORE the dog's NAT, our judges can pick that up in a minute. They know the dog is going into the water to retrieve the dummy because he has been trained to do that, not because the dog has a lot of enthusiasm to do this. I already knew how good we are, but it sure is nice to hear it from someone like Dr. Dostal, who simply offered his observation without anyone soliciting it from him.

He was also very impressed with our dedication—not just the judges, but also all the members—the traveling long distances to test our dogs; the pitching in and helping. It was the overall picture that impressed him. And he enjoyed being a part of our group for these days we had together.

On Sunday when the judging was finished and we were able to sit and talk some more, we spoke about the frozen semen that Dr. Dostal will be gathering for us and shipping very soon. His trip; his observation of our dogs; his observation of the vast and diverse terrain in which our dogs must hunt, will help him in choosing the tested males from whom we will receive frozen semen.

I will keep you up to date on the happenings involving the breeding committee and you will all enjoy reading the test results in the August GDS. See you later! Joan ■

Brandy's First Year

By: Mark Dougherty

Merrymeeting's Brandy is the culmination of nearly 5 years of personal research with the goal of finding a gun dog that would best fit my personality and hunting style. I was looking for a versatile pointing breed that could handle New England's grouse and woodcock, as well as waterfowl work on the marshes and streams where I spend my days of the fall hunting season. That research eventually led me to the WPGCA. After the initial application process and a waiting period, I was adopted by the cutest little fuzz ball, out of a mating from **Auger of Alderbrook**, and **Prairie Storms Alderbrook**. The bond seemed instant, and I immediately began conditioning and exposure. Things like saying "kennel" when putting Pup in her crate, and praising her whenever she picked something up and came to me with it. We also started taking short 10-minute walks in the woods behind the house, crossing a very small, very shallow stream so she would become familiar with water. Everything we did was in small doses, for a short time, and she was making great progress. However, with all that, she was my first pointing dog, and I desperately wanted to see her point.

Several days a week I took **Brandy** to a field trial area where I knew there were leftover quail. Although everyone told me to stay away from pen raised, and especially planted birds, these quail had survived field trials, and being used for training by nearly every breed of bird dog on a daily basis. They had also survived all the foxes, coyotes, hawks, owls, and various other predators that roamed the countryside. I had no concerns that my 12 week old pup would catch them. We had several outings before she really started using her nose and trailing the quail for short distances through the grass. Then one day it all came together, or so I thought. We had just finished splashing around in the water by the boat ramp, and heading back toward the truck when I saw a group of quail sneak into the tree line. I brought **Brandy** downwind of where I had spotted the birds and turned her loose. She immediately winded the birds and made her way into the trees with me right behind her. With the thinner ground cover, she saw the birds and froze. She held her "point" for about 10-15 seconds as the birds walked off. I tried to walk up and flush the birds, but as soon as I took a step the birds began flushing and **Brandy** chased right behind. I was so happy to see my puppy point



***MERRYMEETING'S BRANDY** intently watches the testing during the Spring 2000 Northeast Chapter test weekend in Maine. (Photo by: Jane McKenna)*

(Editors note: many of you will recognize this photo from the August 2000 GDS. While I normally try not to reuse photos, one cannot

at such a young age! As short as it was, it was still a point. It should go without saying that she was given lots of praise. We then continued back to the truck. About 50 yards from the parking area, we came across another group of birds, again just inside the tree line. This time Brandy not only stopped, but also her right front paw came up, and she leaned into it as she strained to see the birds. This point held for about 20 seconds and she released herself and flushed the birds. As I watched all this, I could not help thinking; "Boy is this going to be easy!" I would soon find out, "Boy was I wrong!"

After those initial puppy points, **Brandy** would track, flush, and chase dozens of birds for the entire summer without so much as a hint of a point. I have to admit I was getting concerned, but I knew she had it, I had seen it. She was getting lots of exposure, becoming very proficient at using her nose in locating birds, retrieving her training bumper like a champ, and beginning to gain confidence in the water, taking her first short swims. By August, I was working her only on wild birds. I had some good grouse covers close to the house and on a cool morning in September we were working through some thick cover when **Brandy** became very birdy, then froze into an unmistakable point! It really caught me off guard, and after a few seconds, I walked ahead and two grouse flushed in front of us. I was relieved to see her point, but a few minutes later, she began working a scent and in a short time flushed another grouse. Again, this would be the last point I would see for some time.

A week later, I took **Brandy** to the fall test in Maine for exposure, and to watch the other dogs being tested. At the test, I expressed my concerns to Rick Molt, and he reassured me that if I continued working her on wild birds, and did not shoot anything she did not point, she would eventually start pointing on her own. I still had that feeling of "what if she doesn't" inside, but I knew she had it in her. I just needed to be patient. That same day, Rick asked if I wanted to give **Brandy** a chance to track a bird. I had told him about how good she was using her nose, and how aggressive she was in the thick cover, and although I knew it would not help her pointing, she also had to get experience tracking wounded game, especially with the way I shoot. So Rick pulled some wing feathers off the pheasant and turned it loose in an open field of grass a couple of inches high. I brought six month old **Brandy** over to the spot where the bird had been released, and after a few moments she began working out the scent trail. It was really something to see such a young pup's instincts take over. The pheasant made it to a path that had been cut through the center of the field and ran right down the trail to a thick fencerow. Once **Brandy** made it to the trail, her nose was to the ground and she was off to the races. She had no problem diving right into the thick cover and tackling that bird. Once she got it under control, she came running all the way back to the gallery with it. No she did not deliver to hand, but I have to say, I was very pleased with her track and her boldness in handling the bird.

Nevertheless, in the back of my mind, I knew this would hurt her pointing instinct. She just learned she could catch a bird, and was praised lavishly for it. I was committed to putting her on wild birds and not shooting anything she did not point. At that time I had no idea how much my patience would be tested.

Grouse hunting season started October 1st and I had taken a weeks vacation to get the most out of it. Unfortunately, it got off to a slow start. Grouse numbers were way down (we think due to a very cold, wet, spring, and summer) and we were not finding any birds. In two days, we had just one flush, and **Brandy** was stung in the face at least once when she got to close to a hornet's nest. She had the third day off, and on the fourth, we went to scout a woodcock cover. The woodcock season did not open until the next day, but after two days of little bird contact I wanted her to get some action. And she did. Six woodcock flushes in about 30 minutes, but not even a hint of a point. The birds were here so I decided to return the next day when they were legal. Hopefully we could put it all together.

When we got there the next morning, I was disappointed to see nearly a half dozen

vehicles parked along the road. Evidently everyone else knew it was a good cover. What I soon found out was that it was also a pheasant stocking sight. We had worked the cover for almost two hours, with only two woodcock flushes, and we were heading back to the truck when I saw something running ahead of me. **Brandy** was off to my right in some thick cover so she did not see anything. I realized it was a cock pheasant and decided to let her go and see what happened. As she came around in front of me she hit the track and was off like a rocket through the cover. I was trying to keep up by listening for her bell, but the cover was too thick and she was moving fast. I eventually caught up to her after about a hundred yards, as she was circling around in a clearing. It appeared she had lost the track and was trying to work it out. I just sat back and watched her work. I then saw the rooster sneaking through some brush about 25 yards ahead of her. She eventually worked out the track and the race was on again. I was expecting the bird to flush at any moment but never heard anything. As I followed the sound of her bell, I heard cackling and figured she had put the bird up. I kept walking toward the sound of the bell, but heard more cackling and brush breaking. Could it be? Yes, here she came through the cover with a live pheasant in her mouth! I knelt down and called her. She circled behind me and trotted right in, delivering the bird to hand. I was amazed. I could not tell for sure because, from all the commotion, she had obviously had a little battle



*Mark Dougherty gets ready to throw a dummy for **MERRYMEETING'S BRANDY** during the Affinity For Water portion of her Natural Ability Test, which took place this past spring in Maine. (Photo by: Tina Molt)*

with the bird. I assumed a hunter had wounded the bird in some way. It was exciting stuff. Unfortunately, I realized the last thing I wanted her to do was catch a live bird. Boy was I right. We would work various covers over the next two weeks with not a single point. I was keeping track of flushes, and even trying to count all the reflashes on those woodcock that didn't fly too far. I had come up with nearly 60 birds that my puppy moved in that time period. She certainly could use her nose to find the birds, but I had no idea how to convince her she had to point them.

It was during a two day hunt in northern New Hampshire that I started to see things come together for **Brandy** and I. We were hunting with my good friend John, his Lab Molly, his In-laws from Ohio, and their young Vizsla, Sonny. I did not want to be rude, but I explained that I wanted to hunt **Brandy** by myself so we could concentrate on her pointing birds. Thankfully, they understood and off we went. Working along a small stream for about 15 minutes, Brandy locked into an intense, solid point. As I walked towards her, the woodcock flushed.... from behind her. That's right, my puppy pointed her first in season bird with her tail! To be honest I did not know if I should have shot that bird at the time or not. Looking

back, I should have. She was pointing and holding when the birds flushed, she just wasn't looking in the right direction. Oh well, onward and upward. I was happy to see a point. We continued working down the stream, but we were cut off by another group of hunters, and turned back toward the truck without any action.

Back at camp, I asked the rest of the group if I could take **Brandy** to what we all knew was the best cover for the area we were hunting. I knew I was asking a lot, but I also knew that I could never get that pup's first year back and I assured them, all I needed was the morning. Lucky for me, they were all gentlemen and agreed to my request.

We were in the cover early the next morning and immediately got into birds. She flushed a grouse about 50 yards into the cover, and then flushed several woodcock along with a snowshoe hare, before she started to point again. The problem? I was unable to flush any birds. I think there was so much scent in there, and she was so inexperienced, she wasn't sure what scent was actually a bird. She would point, relocate, point, and then eventually resume her search. Throughout all this, I kept my mouth shut and let her figure it all out. As we were working through the cover, I bumped a woodcock and watched it flutter down in a thick tangle of aspen and briars. I called **Brandy** over, put her on the leash, and circled 20-30 yards downwind of where I had seen the bird go down. Within a few minutes, she slammed into an intense point. The excitement was building as I walked ahead.... And walked ahead.... And walked sideways.... And walked back toward her. I could not get that bird to flush. The pressure built and **Brandy** eventually broke her point and worked the cover around us. The scent was obviously there but we never flushed that bird. I can only guess that it had flushed as we circled downwind and I had never heard it. What a let down. We had come so close, but I just could not put it all together. We had spent almost two hours in there, moved 11 woodcock, 1 grouse, a snowshoe hare, and never fired a shot. **Brandy** had worked very hard, busting through the thick cover, and her front legs were bruised and bleeding because of it. She would have the rest of the day off and head back home the next morning. On the drive home I thought about how much progress she had made over the last couple of weeks. She was learning how to use her nose to locate birds, pointing intensely and holding while I walked ahead of her. I also had to keep reminding myself she was only an eight-month-old puppy. She had shown me a lot, and she did it at her own pace, without any force or pressure from me. However, time was running out. The woodcock season would soon close and there was always the concern that a cold front could move the birds south before we had a chance to get out again.

After another 5 days back at work, the weekend finally arrived, and we piled into the truck and headed north to my favorite cover in the White Mountains. When we arrived, I was relieved to see no other vehicles parked along the access road, and we had the cover to ourselves. It was a cold October morning with a strong breeze blowing. **Brandy** and I dropped over the edge toward the river, and began working a crosswind through the cover, but after 45 minutes, we had not had any action. I was starting to think the birds had moved south, when **Brandy** went on point. I walked up and could not flush a bird. "Here we go again," I thought. However, **Brandy** broke her point, circled around behind us and locked into another point. I started walking toward her when the woodcock flushed straight away. I shot and the bird dropped! Success at last! The bird had not gone far at all, but with all the excitement, **Brandy** took some time to find it and guess what she did? She pointed it. I did not have a command for fetch so I had to walk up and encourage her to pick it up. Once she did, I ran back to the spot I shot from, calling her, and she brought that bird right to me. Finally! It was almost too good to be true. After a lot of praise, and getting ourselves gathered back up, we hunted back to the truck. And you know what? The next bird she flushed.... And flushed.... And flushed. In all, four flushes on the same bird with no points. I can only guess that because she was able to retrieve the dead bird, she thought she could catch this one also.

We would eat lunch, take a short nap and head up the road to another good cover. Once we got into birds, **Brandy** started flushing again, and then she slammed into a point. I walked ahead and the woodcock gave me an easy shot. The bird dropped and **Brandy** was right behind. She overran it and turned following her nose to it, when she again pointed the bird. I know it is down so I just stay put this time, and it is not long before she pounces on it, and with encouragement from me delivers the bird to hand. I am, to say the least, very happy! Someone could not have traded me a Boone and Crockett whitetail for those two little woodcock! I did not know it then, but those would be the last woodcock we would see until spring. We hunted grouse several times after that, but **Brandy** was having a hard time pinning those late season birds down and I would not fire another shot over her the rest of the season.

After the hunting season ended, we continued to get out a couple times a week until we were hit with heavy snows around the first of February. With four feet of snow on the ground, the dogs couldn't even move in the woods so I turned my attention to starting **Brandy's** basic obedience program (heel, whoa, and here) in the garage and driveway.

I kept hoping the snow would melt, but it never did and we had about a six-week wait before she would see birds again. Once the snow melted, we started getting out again, and all I saw were flushes. She showed me one decent point on a woodcock and that was it. During one outing, she actually flushed 7-8 grouse without ever pointing. I was getting worried that she might not point a bird for her NA test in May. As the weather warmed, I gave her opportunities to get in the water, which she did on her own without any encouragement from me. I also reintroduced the gun because it had been so long since she had heard it. During all this, I started to see more independence in her. She was ranging out further, and not checking back in as often. Eventually the date of her NA test arrived and we headed to Maine to see how she would do.

Continued on following page.



MERRYMEETING'S BRANDY during the Search portion of her Natural Ability Test in Maine this past spring. (Photo by: Tina Molt)

You might expect me to say that because of all the exposure and time we spent, she got all 4's and a Prize I. Not even close. She received a Prize III. I have to say I was disappointed. And you know where she fell down? Pointing? No. Water? No. Gun shy? No. She got a two in Search and Cooperation, the last two things I would have ever guessed would be a problem. She was so wound up that when I put her down for the search, she was just running, hunting behind us, and not really paying attention to me. In addition, at one point she picked up some kind of scent, and when one of the judges asked me to call her, she blew me off. I had to go and get her and bring her back into the field. Boy was I bummed. So what to do next? Start working on obedience, conditioned retrieve, and getting ready for Intermediate in the fall! That's what.

One of the judges commented that she seems to be maturing slowly and I believe that could be a big part of it. I had to remind myself that not all of our dogs are going to be perfect and that the training and conditioning is a continuing process of trial and error for both us and our dogs. We need to keep the fun in it, look at the progress that we make, even if it is only little steps. **Brandy** showed me a lot of her potential in the first year. I know what she is capable of and need to keep building on that to develop her into a first rate gun dog. ■

MORE HELP FOR NEW PUPPY OWNERS COMING SOON!

By: Joan Bailey

Time and time again we see owners of 12 months old dogs arrive at their NAT test and when their turn comes the owner and the young dog go out in the field and the dog does the task quite well. In between actually doing the task, such as tracking the live pheasant, or searching in the field, the dog is constantly pulling on the leash; will not lie down quietly; will not stay where it has been told to stay; or won't come when it's called. And this poor behavior increases over the next six months so that by the time the young dog comes to his IHDT he is well on his way to ignoring your commands, and is not retrieving very well, and in some cases not retrieving at all.

After a lot of observation by our judges we have come to the conclusion that most of you, for some reason, think you are not suppose to do any training of your dog until after NAT. That is not the case. *You do have to condition your dog to be a good citizen, and that conditioning begins the day your pup arrives at your house, or when you pick him up from the breeder, or at the airport if he arrives by plane.*

This means that the first time you tell the pup to "Come," you reward him when he gets to you with a pat and a "Good boy." It means a lot of repetition. *You must give commands and enforce them, over and over and over again until it becomes an automatic response on the part of the pup.*

I am working on an article to help you along this road. In the meantime, read ***How To Help Gun Dogs Train Themselves*** once more just before your pup arrives, or immediately after if you already have your new pup. Pay attention to the obedience. Be consistent. Demand that the pup do what you tell him to do. For example, it is a natural and normal behavior for a puppy to jump up on you. This is what they did in the wild to greet their mother. But we don't want our dogs to jump up on us. SO, you have to re-program the puppy not to jump up. ***Every time the puppy jumps up you must push him down gently and say NO. You must keep doing this for a long time until this constant repetition produces a habit, which turns into normal behavior for the puppy.*** If you do this NOW—with all behavior; it will make the retrieving a hundred times easier when you get to that step!

As soon as the article is ready we will get a copy to every new puppy owner, and to those of you who just ran your dogs in NAT this spring. ■

(Editors note: Please remember the field-test chair people probably live in a different time zone. If you contact them by telephone be sure to call them no later than 8:00 pm THEIR time.)

FALL TEST SCHEDULE

<u>Northwest:</u>	October 5 th and 6 th Dennis Carlson (541) 386-4830 email address - carlson@gorge.net
<u>Rocky Mountain:</u>	September 28 th - 30 th Vic Jaro (209) 543-9381 email address - vic@northrim.net
<u>Heartland:</u>	September 15 th - 17 th Jon and Judy Coil (218) 647-8451 email address - jcoil@paulbunyan.net
<u>Northeast:</u>	September 21 st - 23 rd Jane McKenna (207) 666-8260 email address - salmosalar@worldnet.att.net

OFA REPORTS

By: John Pitlo

The following are a listing of dogs certified by the Orthopedic Foundation for Animals (OFA). The ratings are "excellent", "good", and "fair" for a passing rating. Although there are four different ratings for dysplasia, the reports I receive from OFA only lists "dysplastic" for a dog with dysplasia.

- Baron of the High Country:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Cera of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG -831G29M, rating "good". Owned by Victor Woodward (male).
- Auger of Alderbrook:** Sire; Ariko vom Erik, Dam; Bailey of Ocean House. OFA-WG-832G42M, rating "good". Owned by Ralph Stuart (male).
- Beau of the High Country:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Cera of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG -829G27M, rating "good". Owned by Robert Whiting (male).
- Brady of the High Country:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Cera of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG -830E29M, rating "excellent". Owned by Robert Culver (male).
- Elmo of Dutchman's Hollow:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-824E26M, rating "excellent". Owned by Steve Kramer. (male)
- Eliza of Dutchman's Hollow:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-835G31F, rating "good". Owned by Philip Bennett. (female)
- Ekley of Dutchman's Hollow:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-846E33M, rating "excellent". Owned by Harry Christian. (male)
- Babine of the High Country:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Cera of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG -834G31F, rating "good". Owned by Sykes Mitchell (female).
- Badger of Drummer's Ridge:** Sire; Abbot of Dutchman's Hollow, Dam; Borka z Kolodev. OFA-WG-843G64M, rating "good". Owned by Mike and Kathleen Rackouski. (male)
- Elizabeth Ann of Auger Falls:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Cassidy of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-841G35F, rating "good". Owned by Bob Matsuoka. (female)
- Blitz of the High Country:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Cera of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG -813G24M, rating "good". Owned by Vaughn Anthony (male).
- Elly of Dutchman's Hollow:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-855G35F, rating "good". Owned by William Barglof. (female)
- Avery of Truman's Pride:** Sire; Chyt ze Zaplav, Dam; Prairie Storm's Abby. OFA-WG-859G24M, rating "good". Owned by Curtis Rapp.
- Shingobee Lake Czar:** Sire; Dam; OFA-WG-848G33M, rating "good". Owned by Pat McKinley (male)

- Blaze of Cloudy Skies:** Sire; Prairie Storm's Beau, Dam; Champagne Blaze of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-867G26F, rating "good". Owned by John and Angie McDunn. (female)
- Merrymeeting's Able:** Sire; Chyt ze Zaplav, Dam; Prairie Storm's Alder. OFA-WG-866G24M, rating "good". Owned by Ned Enyeart. (male)
- Shingobee Lake Delilah:** Sire; Alders Edge Ian, Dam; Shingobee Lake Elegance. OFA-WG-871G26F, rating "good". Owned by Ed and Lorraine Francis. (female)
- Echo of Dutchman's Hollow:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-874E38M, rating "excellent". Owned by Frank and Nan Baures. (male)
- Elvis of Dutchman's Hollow:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-880G39M, rating "excellent". Owned by Charlie Adams. (male)
- Cricket of Berkshire Pond:** Sire; Barton de los Altos, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-884G27F, rating "good". Owned by Michael & Darcy Lilley. (male)
- Feu Follet Dit Shingobee:** Sire; Dam; OFA-WG-883G27F, rating "good". Owned by Pat McKinley (male)
- Askari-Scout of Truman's Pride:** Sire; Chyt ze Zaplav, Dam; Prairie Storm's Abby. OFA-WG-892F30M, rating "fair". Owned by Albert & Patricia Canaris.
- Brigand of Cloudy Skies:** Sire; Prairie Storm's Beau, Dam; Champagne Blaze of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-897G31M, rating "good". Owned by Bernard Constantin. (male)
- Merrymeeting's Aldo:** Sire; Chyt ze Zaplav, Dam; Prairie Storm's Alder. OFA-WG-917G33M, rating "good". Owned by E. Fraser Sherrard. (male)
- Fergus of Auger Falls:** Sire; Ariko vom Erik , Dam; Elle of Auger Falls. OFA-WG-921G24M, rating "good". Owned by Robert Bullock. (male)
- Festus Ann of Auger Falls:** Sire; Ariko vom Erik , Dam; Elle of Auger Falls. OFA-WG-923G24F, rating "good". Owned by Michael Muck. (female)
- Bonny Belle of Alderbrook:** Sire; Chyt ze Zaplav, Dam; Bailey of Ocean House. OFA-WG-922E24F, rating "excellent". Owned by Carl S. Kaufmann (female).
- Bristol of Alderbrook:** Sire; Chyt ze Zaplav, Dam; Bailey of Ocean House. OFA-WG-928F24F, rating "fair". Owned by Ted Silver. (female).
- Avery of Mountainhouse:** Sire; Chyt ze Zaplav, Dam; Bell of Ocean House. OFA-WG-934G25F, rating "good". Owned by Mark Canfield. (female).
- Acacia of the Great Plains:** Sire; Erik od Jezarek, Dam; Ana of Show Me Borealis. OFA-WG-937G25F, rating "good". Owned by Sidney Siefken. (female).
- Aida of the Great Plains:** Sire; Erik od Jezarek, Dam; Ana of Show Me Borealis. OFA-WG-938G24F, rating "good". Owned by Jim & Barb Gill. (female).
- Frankie of Auger Falls:** Sire; Ariko vom Erik , Dam; Elle of Auger Falls. OFA-WG-943F27M, rating "fair". Owned by Terry Kramer. (male)
- Duzital of Auger Falls:** Sire; Dan Cerniky, Dam; Cassidy of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-946E74M, rating "excellent". Owned by Lee Fulton. (male)
- Aguiila of the Great Plains:** Sire; Erik od Jezarek, Dam; Ana of Show Me Borealis. OFA-WG-948G26M, rating "good". Owned by Jeff Dillon. (female).
- Drake of Dutchman's Hollow:** Sire; Dan Cerniky, Dam; Callaj of Dutchman's Hollow. OFA-WG-950E61M, rating "excellent". Owned by Kenneth Hurtig. (male)
- FOUSEKS**
- Chaz of Iamonia:** Sire; Erik od Jezarek, Dam; Flora z Hlozku. OFA-CF-24G25M, rating "good". Owned by William Kashmark. (male)
- Czechers of Iamonia:** Sire; Erik od Jezarek, Dam; Flora z Hlozku. OFA-CF-25G26M, rating "good". Owned by Dennis & Mary Carlson. (male)
- Breavaj of Iamonia:** Sire; Dar Ze Seletic, Dam; Flora z Hlozku. Rating "dysplatic". Owned by John Pitlo. (female)



Having fun in the summer! Group photo from the Rocky Mountain Chapter training/exposure day in Montana, August 5th, 2000. (left to right) Rusty Redfield and ABE OF AGASSIZ LOWLANDS, Cory Dawson and BELLE OF CLOUDY SKIES, J.J. Connor and BELA OF HIGH DESERT, Glenn Lehrer with BONNIE OF AGASSIZ LOWLANDS and CERA OF DUTCHMAN'S HOLLOW, Andy Rupp and BLUE OF AGASSIZ LOWLANDS, and Mike Vance and BLJO OF HIGH DESERT. (Photo by: Glenn Lehrer)

Be sure to take advantage of a training/exposure day near you this summer. These events are quality time for your dog whether you are getting ready for an upcoming test or just want to get your pup into some birds. Training days are also good for you. You get to see old friends, meet new ones and possibly learn new ways of training.