

The 28th Annual HWA Airedale Field Nationals

What an exciting time we had! The 28th Annual HWA Airedale Field Nationals, which took place on Sept 19-21 at Holly Hills Preserve in Chillicothe, OH, brought together an entry of 37 Airedales and their owners. By the end of the weekend, several dogs were new title holders, and we met some new dogs whose potential begs for further field adventures.

The Nationals weekend started on Thursday evening with Hospitality offered at the Old Canal Smoke House restaurant, just a short drive from our headquarters motel, the Quality Inn in Chillicothe. Our thanks to Lawrence and Polly Alexander for their generous sponsorship of this evening.

Daybreak on Friday morning had participants making the 40 minute drive out to Holly Hills through an unfolding tableau of rolling hills, scenic woods, and fields. Holly Hills Game Preserve owners Dean and Marsha Hatfield rolled out their "you are family" treatment for us, complete with Marsha's home-cooked lunches and Dean's constant "whatever you need" tending. Their generous hospitality contributed greatly to the relaxing and fun mood of the weekend.



Early morning at Holly Hills

Full-Speed Ahead Friday



Laser at the Fur Test tree with owner Linda Sorak

Friday's full schedule started with Fur Tests. Our entry of 14 dogs was the largest in recent years for the Fur Tests. While many owners reported doing their tracking homework, on this misty morning only one Junior entrant, Laser, owned and handled by Linda Sorak, successfully tracked his way to the raccoon cage.

Brent LeMaster, our Workshop Presenter, also called together his group of 10 workshop participants. Over the course of sessions on Friday morning, Friday afternoon, and Saturday afternoon, Brent and his group covered a lot of training ground, going from basics such as place board targeting; to e-collar introduction and conditioning; on to introductions to birds, gunfire, flushing, and basic retrieving. While a weekend workshop can't be expected to "train" a

dog, the idea was to help owners see what their Airedales can do, and to encourage owners to build on the start they got this weekend. Judging from the enthusiasm of the dogs and owners, having fun in the field was one of most successful results.



Brent LeMaster Workshop gets started



Airedales loved the Barkathon!

Having some Airedale-style excitement is the idea of the Barkathon, an event fit in for some late Friday morning fun. In the Barkathon, Airedales are called up individually to face-off with a caged raccoon. The raccoon is kept safe by lowering or raising his cage to keep him out of Airedale reach, but the leashed dog is encouraged to jump and bark, egged on by his owner and the circle of other barking Airedales. The dog that barks the most barks in one minute is the winner. To be fair, we had two divisions, one for dogs with a Fur Test title and one for untitled dogs. In the end, Cait, owned and enthusiastically handled by Christie Williams, won by barking 90 barks in 60 seconds. In the "novice" category, Laser, owned and handled by Linda Sorak, was the winner with 85 barks. That Cait and Laser are mother and son was a point noted by proudly by breeder Christie Williams. Her neighbors may not be so happy about that all that barking ability.

The Hunting Instinct Test, which took place on Friday afternoon and Saturday morning sessions under the guidance of Stew Tardif and his assistants, was an important part of the weekend for dogs who hadn't had much prior training or exposure to hunting elements. Stew had each of the 14 dogs entered go through a series of ten simple tests, such as chasing a drag, following a raccoon-scent trail, confronting a caged raccoon, finding a caged bird, and entering the pond. Stew evaluated and scored each dog on the ten exercises, with dogs earning a score of 70 out of a possible 100 points receiving a qualifying certificate. While spectators enjoyed



Jack does his first water retrieve in the Hunting Instinct Test, encouraged by Stew Tardif and owner Lilly Elliott.

watching the dogs go through their paces, the more serious purpose of the Hunting Instinct Test is to find out each dog's strong points, identify and encourage promising dogs, and also take note of breeding programs that produce pups with aptitude.

After a full day afield on Friday, the Annual General Meeting on Friday evening brought out a mellowed group of members and friends. Those present looked at a financial report and committee reports, and they had the chance to make suggestions and comments. Secretary Ellen Gordon did the honors of casting the official ballot that named Michael Sites as the new Treasurer and Patricia Nemeth as a new Board member for the 2014-2015 term. We gratefully recognized past Treasurer Corally Burmaster and Board Member Stew Tardif for their service through their past term.

Semi-Soggy Saturday

Predicted rains fell throughout Friday night, but showers lightened to intermittent drizzle for most of Saturday morning. This was a good thing, since the land portions of the Upland (Flushing) Test and the continuation of the Hunting Instinct Test would take place, rain or shine, on Saturday morning.

Upland Test judges were AKC judge Brent LeMaster and John Dudash, who were unfazed by the weather, as were the Airedales and owners. A good-sized gallery came out in rain gear to watch the dogs work in a field of golden rod and tall reedy cover. Four Airedales were entered in the Senior Upland Test, followed by five in the Junior Upland Test. In spite of conditions, dogs hunted, birds flew, and gunners shot until it was time for the very last Junior dog to do his second and final retrieve. Milo, owned and handled by Lawrence Alexander, flushed his last chukar just as the light rain increased to a steady downpour. A long shot brought the bird down beyond the neighboring field. Young Milo marked the fall and charged off to retrieve it, while the gallery ran for shelter, and the judges rubbed rain from their faces. Long and wet moments later, a shout went up -- Milo was bringing back his bird to a very happy owner. It was a promising finish for the start of the test series.



Milo and owner Lawrence Alexander in the Upland Test.

Fortunately, Saturday afternoon's weather cleared to warm and rain-free as the land portion of the Retriever Test and the final dogs in the Hunting Instinct Test carried on.



Scarlett works for owner Ron Swisher in the Retriever Test.

Our Retriever judges were AKC Retriever judge Joe Smithberger and Catherine Darr, DVM, who designed their test to accurately access Airedale retrieving abilities. In the the Retriever Test, Senior dogs had to do a one land double retrieve, that is, sit/stay and watch while two birds are thrown out, then the dog must retrieve both consecutively and with minimal handling. Then the dog is required to do a land blind, that is, follow a handler's directions to find a bird hidden away at a measured distance. Junior dogs must retrieve two single throws in order to advance to Sunday's water retrieving part of the test. In the end, all the Airedales passed their land tests and were called back to Sunday's water tests.

Saturday evening brought some welcome rest time for the dogs, as their owners cleaned up for the Banquet and auction. This year's new venue of the Christopher Conference Center, which is connected to the Quality Inn, offered us a great location to display our array of items donated for our auction, as well as a buffet dinner featuring prime rib and seafood primavera. Aside from the food and fun shopping, a highlight of the evening included the announcement of Jeanne Esmond as the winner of Timber, the giant chain-sawed wood Airedale that was our special Limited Raffle item. In addition, Mal and Joyce Graham were surprised to be called to the podium to receive a special award -- an engraved slate to recognize their accomplishment of attending ALL 28 of Airedale Field Nationals.



Joyce and Mal Graham

Sunday, Sunday



Pocket Quail contestants searching for wings

Sunday morning dawned cool and sunny. To start the day with some fun for our new dogs, we revived a version of our old Pocket Quail fun event. In this event, dogs who were not entered in the bird

tests got a chance to try out their noses by finding chukar wings that had been hidden in a marked-off field. Owners followed their leashed dogs and were told to pick up and bag any

wings their dog found. Nine enthusiastic dog/owner teams looked like they were on a nose-led Easter-egg hunt until time was called at 15 minutes. Altogether, the Airedales found 43 of the 48 hidden wings. Cava, owned and handled by Christie Williams, was the top wing-finder with a total of 11 wings in her bag.



Tulla brings in a duck for owner Sandi Cooley.

In the end, only one Senior dog passed both her Senior Upland and Senior Retriever requirements. Kira, owned and handled by Michael Sites, made her owner doubly delighted. In addition, there were three Senior Upland qualifiers, two Junior Upland qualifiers, and four Junior Retriever qualifiers.

To find out more details on all the dogs entered, check out the marked catalog of the event, now posted as a .pdf in the 2013 Nationals section of our website:

<http://www.huntingworkingairedales.com/hwafielddnationals>

Also, if you purchased a keepsake catalog at the Nationals, you can use that marked catalog to jot down the results in your catalog for lasting reference.



Kira earned two Senior titles for owner Michael Sites.



As Airedales and owners headed home, conversations already turned to doing all this again next year. By popular demand, we decided that the 2014 Airedale Field Nationals will again be held at Holly Hills Preserve in Chillicothe, OH. **The date of next year's Nationals is Sept. 12-14, 2014.** We hope you'll save that date now, and plan to join in next year's Airedale adventures afield.

2013 HWA Airedale Field Nationals Hunt Test Qualifiers and Award Winners

Junior Fur Qualifier

Eclipse Light My Fire, JHFur
Owner/handler: Linda Sorak, Normal, IL
Breeder: Christie Williams

Senior Upland (Flushing) Qualifiers

Ch. Strongbow Tullamore Dew, SH, SHF, JHR
Owner/handler/breeder: Sandra Cooley, Grafton, WI

Aircraft Kira Stella Sites, SH, SHF, SHR, CGC
Owners: Michael & Elise Sites; handler, Michael Sites, Eureka, MO
Breeders: Dale and Kim Burrier and Corally Burmaster

Tartan Scottshire Wolf Creek Pistol Pete, JH, SHF, JHR, CDX, GN, BN, RN
Owners: Joyce and Craig Contofalsky; handler, Joyce Contofalsky, Wadsworth OH
Breeders: Carol Scott and E. Forbes Gordon

Junior Upland (Flushing) Qualifiers

Seneca's Scarlett von Summit, JHF, JHR
Owners: Ron Swisher and Lori Taylor; handler, Ron Swisher, New Cumberland, PA
Breeder: Nancy Secrist

Ch. Strongbow Pistol Packin Momma, JHF
Owner/handler/breeder: Sandra Cooley, Grafton, WI

Senior Retriever Qualifier

Aircraft Kira Stella Sites, SH, SHF, SHR, CGC
Owners: Michael & Elise Sites; handler, Michael Sites, Eureka, MO
Breeders: Dale and Kim Burrier and Corally Burmaster

Junior Retriever Qualifiers

Tartan Scottshire Wolf Creek Pistol Pete, JH, SHF, JHR, CDX, GN, BN, RN
Owners: Joyce and Craig Contofalsky; handler, Joyce Contofalsky, Wadsworth OH
Breeders: Carol Scott and E. Forbes Gordon

Ziva vom Riesenhof, JH, JHF, JHR
Owners: Tom and Kim McPeek; handler, Tom McPeek, Chilicothe, OH

Breeder: Dieter Riese

Seneca's Scarlett von Summit, JHF, JHR

Owners: Ron Swisher and Lori Taylor; handler, Ron Swisher, New Cumberland, PA

Breeder: Nancy Secrist

Ch. Strongbow Tullamore Dew, SH, SHF, JHR

Owner/handler/breeder: Sandra Cooley, Grafton, WI

Hunting Instinct Test Qualifiers (listed as placed according to scores)

Eclipse Light My Fire, JHFur

Owner/handler: Linda Sorak, Normal, IL

Breeder: Christie Williams

Joval Clan Elliott Jacob

Owners: James & Lillian Elliott; handler, Lillian Elliott, Enon, OH

Breeder: Valeria & John Rickard

Nevinaire's Miss Lucy Rufhausen

Owner/handler: Issac White, Waynesburg, KY

Breeder: Pam Nevin

Rube's Lucky Seven

Owner/handler: Dave Ruebush, Blandinsville, IL

Breeder: Oden Airedales

Gaia

Owner/handler: Jedd Moore, Mt. Vernon, OH

Breeder: Sherri Glass

Icepond's Call Me Maybe

Owners and breeders: Paula and Holger Falk; handler, Paula Falk, Kents Store, VA

Special Awards

The Priscilla Cree Memorial Award, donated by Lawrence and Polly Alexander to the Fur Test Qualifier with the highest score:

Eclipse Light My Fire, JHFur

Owner/handler: Linda Sorak, Normal, IL

The Sandhill Brown Bess Memorial Award, donated by Henry S. Johnson, Jr. to the Upland Test Qualifier with the highest score:

Seneca's Scarlett von Summit, JHF, JHR

Owners: Ron Swisher and Lori Taylor; handler, Ron Swisher, New Cumberland, PA

Road Dog Award, for the dog attending this year's Nationals, who has earned the most passes at multiple HWA/AKC/UKC Hunt Tests since the last HWA Nationals:

Aircraft Kira Stella Sites, SH, SHF, SHR, CGC

Owners: Michael & Elise Sites, handler: Michael Sites, Eureka, MO

8 test passes since last year's Nationals