

CHATTER



An occasional magazine
for devotees of the Irish
Red and White Setter

Issue No. 14

September, 1987

This is a somewhat short version of Chatter which we are hoping to distribute at the Rare Breeds Event, which we have all been looking forward to for some time. Especially since this will be our one and only chance to participate, as we cease to be a rare next year.

While it will be great to be able to compete for challenge certificates, there are other consequences which will follow - some good, some not so good.

It will be a little easier to get a junior warrant, as wins at shows with tickets will count three points instead of one. But qualifying for Crufts will be much harder. Wins in Not Separately Classified will not count, and of course Rare Breeds will not be available to us. And wins at shows in the breed not blessed with tickets will not count for qualifying. Only ten shows will have tickets, so it will not be easy. I have the above facts from our Club secretary, so I am assuming them to be correct. If not I am sure someone will soon let me know, and I will publish an amendment in the next issue which we hope to have out at Crufts.

So what's been happening this summer.

We had an interesting evening in July for members living in the South. We gathered at Caterham for a match against the Warlingham Golden Retriever Club. 14 red and whites competed against an equal number of goldies. The overall winner was a goldie, but Pat Peacock's Holly Blue was in the last three. Everyone seemed to have a good time, and twelve bottles of wine disappeared quite quickly. We had a raffle which raised £14 for the rescue fund. This was the first event we have organised for people in the South, and as they all seemed to enjoy it we intend to do it again next June, when our opposition will be a team of labradors.

WE went to Ireland again this year for the Munster Circuit which was as enjoyable as ever. The results appear elsewhere, and again both the Yvonne Davies ladies did very well, and Trudi Walsh was always among the winners. If you have not yet tried this holiday, why not consider it. It is unique if you enjoy showing your dogs, and you meet a lot of nice people.

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A less sensible dog and handler might:-

a) Set and/or stick on the old scent.

b) Fiddle around wildly on the old scent, losing all concentration, generally a great deal of noisy handling resulting in the dog's leaving the scene on the wrong beat and having blown a mental gasket - now quite out of control!

c) Locate and whizz about on the old scent, nose down and DEAF; twig they've run and set off at a great clatter to catch up on them, nose still down and still deaf. 100 yards later (having missed out all the intervening ground), crashes into birds more than likely chasing them and anything else he meets between here and the next county.

Having shown us all what, as a breed we should be achieving, Mr. Stewart then took each dog and handler individually to offer assessment and general guidance. I do not know what was said since these were private sessions. Mr. Stewart's general comments were that urgent care and caution in the matter of selection of breeding stock was needed in that some seemed too heavily built and distinctly "un-Irish Setters" in general appearance. Remember the Breed Standard requires our dogs to be strong and athletic (albeit not racy) WITHOUT LUMBER eg., unnecessary bony and muscular development - strong does NOT mean big or heavy! Mr. Stewart went on to say that generally movement was poor to disastrous - only two running with any style at all and that he detected no 'class' or 'quality', however, he was pleased to find a general level of ability in all except one hopeless case and that from a Trainer's point of view he was quite pleased with the temperament of those IRW before him; he had also noticed that some handlers had quite clearly put in a lot of leg work on their Setters.

Whilst making these comments Mr. Stewart admitted that in the matter of 'good' gundogs he is a "purist", they MUST be bred selectively for work - by all means exhibit the handsomest of them - but ALWAYS breed for work. In this way conformation, build, temperament and ability should maintain a high average standard. He has reminded me time and time again that in the final analysis the 'good' dog is not just a handsome, appropriately marked dog, he is the dog which, along with these attributes has the conformation, build, temperament and ability to do well, and with style, the job for which he was originally designed. By hard work and rigorous selection the 'good' dog is no 'pie in the sky' - with more care and attention there would be more of them!

Following the success of the morning session Mr. Stewart suggested we shortly hold (before the winter sets in) a 'Puppy Day' for youngsters of trainable age and potential (this is something the Committee will get organised) and to this end we were shown a young puppy bitch, 14 months' of age and just two weeks' into her training following a rather late first 'season' and very much in the 'square bashing' section of her training. Having had two five minute sessions daily she is beginning to hunt, turn and recall as well as correct faulty ground treatment responding both to whistle and hand signals as well as verbal encouragement when all is going along nicely. As yet she is not dropping at a distance. Using the puppy Mr. Stewart then showed us how to encourage pointing and roading using pigeon provided and planted by Allan Rankin.

By the time the puppy bitch had been dealt with - and only just restrained from eating the pigeon!! There was both time and pigeons left for those who wished to be given an opportunity with Allan's planted pigeons and so ended a very satisfactory day.

After the 'pointing exercises' we returned to the Car Park where speeches and presentations to the Landowner, Farmer, and Mr. Stewart were made and

the raffle drawn. In conclusion I, personally, should like to thank Mr. Stewart who came very much 'on the blind' to a session the like of which he normally avoids like the plague and who was so generous with his time and patience with us all, to Messrs. Baron, Conway, & Rankin whose preparation and hard work on the day ensured all went well and finally to our handlers and their supporters who had the courage to try something they had not tried before. That the day 'worked' can be measured that everybody whatever their rôle or responsibility seemed to enjoy and find the day of value.

I. Somerfield September, 1987.

AUTUMN FIELD TRIALS

Due to my annual shooting engagement in Scotland I am unable to attend these Trials but I gather Mrs. Tuite was running her Bawnrhu Maranda of Rua who is now qualified to run in Open Stakes and newcomers to the scene, Paul Conway and Rod Baron handling Paul's six year old bitch Meudon Prima Donna in Trials for the first time. I am sorry I was unable to be present - even if only to add moral support - but when more details of the Trials come to hand I will let you know.

Don't forget Trials in Ireland continue until shooting commences on 1st November. If you would like to enter or watch, particularly the IRWFSS Trials, please contact Brian MacDiarmada Tel. 0001 819 389 who will point you in the right direction.

CC's to be awarded in UK

As those of you who Show IRW will know CC's are to be available next year. I, in common with many others, have been in the habit of exhibiting one or two of my Setters which are certainly NOT worthy of Championship Show awards even though Judges may have made given them awards! For example my original 'spotty dog' with one testicle and head which would have looked good on Show English was regularly placed and once gained Best Puppy at a Ch. Show! And then there is my dear old Heather! In view of the fact that Judges do sometimes drop 'clangers' I wonder if, now that CC's are on offer, we could persuade ourselves to be MUCH more selective with the regard to the animals we take to Championship Shows so that Judges will not be asked to examine dogs not of really good quality? Side by side with that suggestion I do think it would be enormously sad if some of our 'quality casuals' which are of interest to those within the breed, even if they are not CC quality, were not to be seen at, say, Club gatherings. Would there be any support therefore, for the idea that we ask our Club to include some extra groups to be exhibited (but not judged) say, whilst the Show Judge proper is having his or her lunch? That way we could maintain a really good 'over-view' of the whole breed, particularly those which are of great value in ways other than 'quality Show'.

I do hope there will be support for this idea - I think it would be such a nice touch if there were to be a parade with a short commentary on each dog as it goes around the ring and since they wouldn't be 'show' dogs surely no harm could be done pointing out the good and not so good features of each animal - naturally with the owner's permission? Tactfully arranged this could be a most enjoyable feature of the show - so let me know if anybody 'out there' agrees with me!!

I. Somerfield September, 1987.

MUNSTER CIRCUIT - 1987

The weather was very good this year and only at Limerick was there rain and that was not too bad, so those of us that went had an excellent holiday.

Canon Doherty had two new young dogs out, both looking extremely promising. One of these was SHEEBHIM BAIREE by Champion MEUDON BLAZE ex Champion MOUNTEAGLE BELLE. The other was SHEEBHIM ARD NA COILLE by CHIEF RANGER ex Champion MOUNTEAGLE BELLE.

Results were as follows:-

Clonmel

Green Star Dog	SHEEBHIM ARD NA COILLE
Reserve G.S.D.	BRIAN BORU OF AUTUMNWOOD
Green Star Bitch	HEATHER BREEZE. B.O.B. and 3rd in Gundog Group
Reserve G.S.B.	ARROWEBROOKE SOLO

Killarney

Green Star Dog + B.O.B.	GAMESHOT OF AUTUMNWOOD
Reserve G.S.D.	BRIAN BORU OF AUTUMNWOOD
Green Star Bitch	SHANNONLEE AMBER FLAME
Reserve G.S.B.	ARROWEBROOKE ANDREA

Limerick

Green Star Dog	SHEEBHIM ARD NA COILLE
Reserve G.S.D.	GAMESHOT OF AUTUMNWOOD
Green Star Bitch	SHANNONLEE AMBER FLAME
Reserve G.S.B.	ARROWEBROOKE BREEZE

SHEEBHIM ARD NA COILLE was B.O.B. and 5th in Gundog Group

Tralee

Green Star Dog	GAMESHOT OF AUTUMNWOOD
Reserve G.S.D.	SHEEBHIM ARD NA COILLE
Green Star Bitch + B.O.B.	HEATHER BREEZE
Reserve G.S.B.	ARROWEBROOKE BREEZE

A Training Day

When the Field Trail Sub-Committee announced a training day I must admit my heart sank. I did not look forward to a 500 mile round trip which had to be fitted into an increasingly hectic schedule, and I thought I might make a complete fool of myself. But I felt I should try to support the event, as nothing is more galling than to arrange these things, and then to get a poor response. So I made up my mind to 'have a go'.

I decided to take Ben, since he had had some training from his breeder Vincent Brennan in Ireland in his youth (he is now 6) and he is a fairly obedient dog. I never find it difficult to get the dogs quartering, as it comes to them instinctively, and this includes my show type red setters, but hoping they would perform sensibly in front of an audience was to say the least daunting. And as for pointing this was a mystery, for there is nothing to point around here where I live, twenty miles from London.

Anyway, we arrived at the right place, which proved to be a pretty village in North Yorks, with a picture postcard feel to it which immediately put us in a holiday mood.

The trainer, Peter Stewart took each dog in turn, and asked us to send the dog away.

As each dog did this, it was amusing to watch those who were waiting. While the handlers chatted to each other the dogs concentrated completely on the performing dogs, obviously acutely aware of what was going on and frantic to have a go themselves.

When our turn came Ben and I stepped forward, me nervously and Ben wagging his tail.

Off Ben went enthusiastically, and the quartering part wasn't too hard. He went well, turning for me on the whistle like an old timer. When he came back, the trainer said, 'Can you put him down?'

Oh sure, I replied overconfidentally, and yelled out 'Giddown'. Apparently this was terrible as shouting is not allowed and I should have been able to do this with the whistle or a hand signal. Suitably chastened we retired to watch the rest. I thought all the dogs made a reasonable shot at this exercise, apparently the major fault was a failure to hunt far enough away from the handler.

Then we adjourned for lunch in the pub, and when we went back to the field in the afternoon, the sun came out. A number of small cages containing live pigeon had been placed around the field and covered with bracken and dried grass. In turn, the dogs had to show their pointing ability. This was the part which had worried me the most as I had no idea if Ben would know what to do at all, and I certainly hadn't. But all the dogs seemed to love this bit, and all the ones I watched did good points. When our turn came I thought for a moment he would not pick up the scent. He was obviously puzzled, and then suddenly hundreds of years of breeding took over. He found the scent, he went forward slowly, and he froze!! I was holding the lead, and it was a marvellous moment. I guess everybody felt like this, for all the handlers seemed delighted with the afternoon, and we were sorry when it was over. I understand that there may be another day soon for puppies and young dogs. My thanks to everyone who organized this super day, and I hope there will be more.

PAT BRIGDEN

