

The Mighty Wurlitzer

*Established 1991
December 2008 Edition 17
North West Group
GSPC*



*Best Wishes For Christmas
And The New Year*

**The German Shorthaired
Pointer Club
North West Group**

Honorary President—Brian Finan

Chair:- Geoff Saynor
01352 716099

Secretary:- Eddie Kania
DAISY BANK
CHINLEY
HIGH PEAK SK23 6DA
07974 168 188 FAX 01663 750973,
ekania@btopenworld.com

Treasurer:- Paul Dark
07732588030

Cup Steward:- Allan Drysdale
01257261584
dryrika@hotmail.co.uk

Wurlitzer Editor– Peter Hogg
01387 740132
peterhogg@gspjade.mail1.co.uk

Publicity: Don Potter
don_potter@agilent.com

Wurlitzer Sub Editor: Allan Drysdale

Committee–
Geoff Saynor, Andy Peers, Paul Dark,
Rob Irvine, Don Potter, Geoff Wood,
Karen Saynor, Allan Drysdale, Mark Lovell ,
Eddie Kania,

Honorary Committee—John Burns,

German Shorthaired Pointer Club Website
www.gsp.org.uk

North West Group Website
www.hprgroup.co.uk/nwg

Welcome



To the 17th edition of The Mighty Wurlitzer. Once again after seventeen years this publication is packed with various items of interest including:

- Achievements & Results
- Website Statistics
- Show Trophy Winner
- Liz Ashton Trophy Winner
- Working Test Report
- Progress Test Report
- Dogs and the Law
- The Beat Goes On
- Long Retrieve etc
- Hunting Snipe with Wirehaired Pointers
- Grouse Counting
- Getting the Balance Right
- Fifty years of grouse beating
- Recipes
- Training equipment etc
- Training Class Schedule—2009

The Mighty Wurlitzer is a publication for the membership, and cannot function properly if the membership do not contribute!

Articles should be forwarded to the editor. They can be handwritten, by quill pen, ball-point, chalk, electronic, typed or anything! So lets be having them throughout the coming year!

The Editor

The German Shorthaired Pointer Club North West Group Aims & Objectives

The aim of the North West Group is to help handlers of HPR breed gundogs to develop their training skills to enable them to produce obedient, well mannered shooting companions, whether worked solo as rough shooting dogs, or in company, with others, beating and picking up.

The objective is to produce dogs, which are welcomed on shoots and can serve a useful purpose. The main focus remains to encourage handlers to develop the working ability of their dog's), encourage them to participate in working tests, pointing tests, and field trials, and to introduce them into the working dog environment.

First time HPR owners and handlers are made welcome and will be encouraged to join the North West Group but should quickly show an enthusiasm for developing the working ability of their dogs.

The training programme will be one of continuous assessment, based on the Progress Test booklet. This highlights the various elements of a structured training programme. A booklet will be issued to each new member, once the member has showed full commitment towards the Group. Members should note that to achieve even the basic standard set out in this booklet they will need to progress their training in the periods between training classes. Adequate progress cannot be made simply on a once a month basis.

Any new handler attending training class for the first time will be given a copy of these aims and objectives, and will be asked to come to a decision, as to whether they are prepared to put in the time and commitment, to train themselves and their dog to a satisfactory standard.

If a decision is reached to the effect that a new handler wishes to continue, then every assistance will be given by more experienced handlers in the Group to help a new dog/handler partnership reach a satisfactory standard.

Handlers/dogs, who are not interested in progressing working ability but are simply attending for instruction in basic obedience, will be advised to seek such training from either, a professional dog trainer, on a one to one basis, or through a local dog-training club.

President's Greeting

As I sit here typing this missive, my boat, which is named, "Instant Echoes", (don't know if I've told you that before), is heeled hard over to port and is fairly dancing around, it's a really stormy day. What's slightly ironic about that is that we are "tucked up" for the winter in Aquatica Marina, Alghero!

It's good to see that you have had another busy year, with lots of excellent results and more importantly heaps of enjoyment for you all. Chris and I do miss those days a great deal but then you can't have everything. Speaking of which poor Chris doesn't get a lot of this sailing "lark" either. This year she has managed a few short breaks with me and in September three full weeks, during which we sailed across to Minorca and having visited some lovely places, we of course sailed back.

Your competition results this year are very impressive. Of course, I find the results of field trials in particular to be very gratifying. Those of you that have sufficient grey hair to remember me will know that trials were always of particular interest to me. This of course doesn't detract one iota, (does anything ever not detract several iotas, or should that be ioti), from all the good work that you have all done. The amount and standard of the awards that you have received must be very reassuring and encouraging to any new handlers just joining the Group. It is, I know from past experience; also very heart warming for your Trainers to see their plans and efforts bearing fruit.

May I say a word of welcome to the new members and to say please make full use of the wealth of experience with which you are surrounding yourselves but most of all enjoy the training and your dogs. Always remember we all had to learn.

Still, I see gathering new venues to train on. I'm

sure this must be the wealthiest Group in the country in terms of training grounds. By that I'm not only referring to the numbers but more so to the diversity

Lovely to hear also, that you are gaining even more strength in giving assistance to shoots. It's also good news that the Principles and the Keepers are recognising your professionalism in the counts and other dog work.

Sad news that some moors, which we have traipsed over for more years than I am prepared to own up to, have now been leased to another organization. We can only hope that they will do as much for the land and birds as the previous tenants and we have done.

Whilst on sad notes, Chris and I would like to express our sadness to Geoff and Margaret for their sad loss of Lotte this year. It never fails to hurt.

The demonstration at Dunscair Farm, the Watergrove Working Test and the Clay Shoot at Crowden all appear to have gone extremely well, although I am reliably informed that the weather at Crowden left something to be desired. No change there then!!

All in all, the group is in very robust health, lots of it due to the very hard work of our committee and all their helpers, we should all be very grateful to them. Thank you very much.

It now only remains for Chris and myself to wish you a Very Merry Christmas and a fun filled, "if it can't be prosperous" New Year. Cheers mi dears.

PS. According to my dictionary (English/Italian); Iota is a Greek letter, which also Represents the minimum. I expect you knew that Geoff. If you will forget my question so will I.

Thoughts from the Chair Geoff Saynor

The past year has presented significant challenges to all of us, rising fuel prices earlier in the year followed by the financial crisis over recent months. Both of these have, I believe, had an impact on the willingness of HPR people to travel significant distances in search of their enjoyment, experience and training. Even if it has not directly affected what you are doing, it has certainly made each of us think twice about every opportunity we have to trail the length and breadth of the country.

Breaking my train of thought for a moment, and for those of you who are confused about the reasons for the current

financial situation, I came across the following, in the Times. This is a handy explanation of how the financial markets work and will help you to appreciate why they have got into such a mess:

The chief of a Native American tribe was asked in the autumn if the winter was going to be cold or mild. Being a 21st century chief he had no idea, but said that it was going to be cold and told the people in his village to collect wood.

A few days later he rang the National Weather Service. "Yes, it is going to be cold," they told him, so he went back to his people and told them to collect more wood. A week later he called again. "Is it going to be a cold winter?" he asked. "Yes, very cold." So he went back and told his people to collect every bit of wood they could.

Two weeks later he called again. "Yes," he was told, "it is going to be one of the coldest winters ever." "How can you be so sure?" the chief asked. The weatherman replied: "The Native Americans are collecting wood like crazy."

So saying, it has been a bit of a strange year. There have been signs, on some occasions in particular, that entries to events such as working tests were very low and that this may have been a result of the financial pressures putting people off travelling. At other times things have been very well subscribed and it almost appears as if people have been focussing on particular events and all turning up at once. At a novice field trial at the beginning of November the list of reserves was longer than the list of runners.

As you see there is no way of guaranteeing the reason but, whatever the cause, we seem as a group to have had a fairly slack year in terms of numbers of people coming to training classes. This is no bad thing. Small numbers allow for more flexibility of approach, allow trainers to focus on and spend time with individuals and gives the opportunity for the serious handlers to really work hard on stretching the ability of their dogs.

One thing I can emphasise is that you will only get out of your dogs as much as you put in. It is fine to say that you don't want to travel long distances and you should find something on your own doorstep. You may be lucky but it is far more likely that you will find that you don't have anything close to you and, in any case, to get the necessary breadth of experience to fully develop the ability of both your dog and you as a handler you will find that you have to be prepared to travel, often significant distances, for tests, trials, working opportunities. From all of these you will get the experience of different ground and varying conditions.

Having said this, it is important to remember that there may be facilities to both train and work your dogs nearby, but you simply don't know about them. The one thing I can guarantee is that, almost without exception, these will not come knocking at your door (we have had one example where this literally did happen). Far more frequently you will only become aware of them as a result of contacts, of talking to

people and of asking. When seeking out these opportunities you need to be clear what you are looking for, what you may be expecting of someone else and, in many cases, what you are prepared to pay. Whilst you may find opportunities for dogging in, which will help with steadiness and familiarisation of your dog with game, this is a step on the way and is not a substitute to being able to take your HPR out and working it properly in a shooting environment.

Finding places to do this is not easy. Many shoots are being run on a commercial basis and are only interested on selling days with a minimum number of birds and hence a significant cost for the day. However, times are currently difficult for these shoots. The same financial conditions apply to them as to the rest of us and I believe that for many shoots bookings are down. This provides an opportunity to make contact, to talk to the keeper and to see if you can work out an agreement to have your dog worked and shot over for two or three birds.

You may find that the keeper will come out and shoot himself, or he may know someone who will shoot for you, but either way you will get hands on experience of working your dog properly. This cannot be gained in any other environment. The downside of this approach is that you are going to have to pay – current rate is something of the order of £20 per bird but, provided you make it very clear to the gun that he is only to shoot birds off the point, this represents good value for money. The main point to take from this is that the opportunities are there but you have to seek them out.

Most importantly however you have to have trained your dog and put in the effort to get to a standard where you are able to work in this situation. Whilst it is difficult to track down and develop good contacts it is extremely easy to lose them. A keeper who watches you dog disappear into the distance, ignoring the whistle and putting up birds left, right and centre is not going to invite you back for another go. This is where training is so important. It is not all about working tests or field trials, these are simply stepping stones to get you to a position where you are confident you can go out with your dog into a working environment and not make a complete fool of yourself.

Just to pick on one point in respect of training. We often focus on retrieving as a particular aspect of training classes. This follows through with working tests but something then seems to go astray with the step up to field trials where, despite the excellent work by many dogs to find game and produce it for the guns, everything seems to fall apart when it comes to the retrieve. I have seen examples of dogs running around, ignoring the whistle and simply not having the basics to be able to get to the right area. At this level you want to be in a position where you know that, whatever you are asked to do, you will be able to properly control your dog. Quite simply when a bird has been shot, you want it retrieved and into the bag without any undue delay.

This is why, as part of our training approach, we seek to instil the importance of direction and control. I had a debate

over a couple of glasses of wine recently on this subject. My view was that if there is a blind retrieve I would expect the handler to be able to get their dog to the area they have been told by the guns that the bird has come down. The opposing view, and this from a field trial judge, was that it did not matter if the dog did not follow directions and went it's own way as the dog may simply be understanding and using the wind better. I am afraid that to me this does not have a great deal of credibility. Put simply, on a blind retrieve the dog does not know where the bird is and consequently it cannot work out how to use the scenting conditions. What he really meant is that his dog is going off, doing it's own thing and simply hunting an area. If you want to achieve efficient retrieving, which both does the job and looks effective, you need to have the control to be able to help your dog. It should be a partnership. Everything will not always go right and it is important that you are able to give help to your dog where appropriate.

On a more personal level, this year Karen and I had our first experience of a litter of puppies. Having taken Inca to Germany for mating she subsequently presented us with a litter of seven puppies, four girls and three boys, or as subsequently transpired five girls and two boys. I am told it was an easy mistake to make in the heat of the moment. Who am I to argue?

The original intention was that we would keep one of the babies and Karen selected straight away which one was 'Indie'. She would be staying with us. However, as those first weeks crept by the doubts started to filter in. With only eleven months between Ekko, our previous new addition to the family, and the puppies and with an awful lot of work still to do with Ekko, Karen decided that to have another puppy at this time would simply result in her being unable to give either of them the necessary training input. The result was that Indie went to a working home in Cambridgeshire and Karen kept Ekko, for better or worse (as it has turned out most of it is better).

The one thing that sticks in my mind from those days of having the puppies at home is newspaper. Having constructed a puppy pen in, what had previously been, our dining room, we seemed to have a day long ritual of removing newspaper from the floor of the pen and replacing it with clean sheets. Taking this daily supply outside in dustbin bags and burning it is a straightforward exercise in the early days as very small puppies don't leave too much behind but, as the days go by and the puppies get larger, the volume of both liquid and solid puppy residues appears to increase exponentially. This results in many frustrating mornings stood out in the rain trying to set fire to dustbin bags full of sodden and stinking paper.

I cannot express too highly the elation and the sense of total relief when this daily ritual comes to an end. However, this is tinged with sadness and disappointment when your puppies are no longer around. In seven weeks you find that they have all taken on their own personalities and you have got to know their own particular ways of doing things, they

become a little like the seven dwarfs with their individual characteristics. Once they have gone the house seems strangely quiet and empty, despite having three dogs, three cats and the two of us still around.

Anyway, this is enough of my rambling and I will let you read on through the rest of this excellent publication.

All that remains from me is to wish you a very happy Christmas and a prosperous (or the best you can achieve in the current climate) New Year.

Best wishes to you all.

Secretary's Ramblings

Eddie Kania

It's that time of year once again!!!!

A little more settled this year, your committee has remained unchanged; I mention this because if any member has questions, ideas or concerns your committee is there to help if it is at all possible. We, as a committee, have always endeavoured to involve the whole membership in our decision making progress. Please do not hesitate to speak to any committee member should the need arise, committee members are listed at the beginning of the Wurlitzer

I'm pleased that the Group Clay Shoot has become an annual event, organised by Andy & Theresa Peers this was again a very successful, fun day out. The weather could have been better, however it did not dampen our spirits, and we dried out in usual NWG fashion later. I was pleased to note David Irvine, Lewis Herbert and Jack Dark came along and all three had a few shots with coaching provided. There is a more detailed report on the clay shoot later in the Wurlitzer.

Our Working Test has moved back to its usual third Sunday in July. Judges reports can be found later in this publication. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank all those members of the committee their partners and other group members who helped make the day such a success. 2009 sees our Watergrove working test again scheduled to be held on the third Sunday - July 19th 2009

North West Group - Achievements and Results

Eddie Kania

2008 has been a very busy year for the membership and congratulations are in order. Very well done to all those that have had success in Pointing Test, Working Test and Field Trials. I have included a list of results, which is also available on the website.

7th November 2008 Novice FT GSPC
Ford Northumberland, Judged by Mr. G. Card & Mr. S. Chant
2nd Mrs. Jean Baldwin with Freshetin Lentiggine, Italian Spinone

1st November 2008 Novice FT GWPC
Caversfield, Judged by Mr. E Hales & Mr. C Snelling
1st Mrs. Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikes Splendour Large Munsterlander

18th October 2008 Novice FT C&DGS
Stiperstones Moor, Judged by Mrs. S Kuban and Mrs. C. Carpenter
3rd Mrs. Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikes Splendour Large Munsterlander

September 6th 2008 Hungarian Wirehaired Vizsla Association Working Test Widmerpool
4th in Puppy Shaun Patterson with Bareve Bombie GWP

27th July 2008 GSPA Grouse Pointing Test Alston Cumbria
Graded Good in Junior Tarkanya Spikes Splendour - Mrs. Karen Saynor
Graded Very Good in Junior Barleyarch Kenko at DRYSIKA - Allan Drysdale

NORTH WEST GROUP WORKING TEST WATERGROVE RESERVOIR July 20th 2008

Puppy Test Judged by Liz Veasey

1st Tarkanya Spkeys Splendour LM Bitch 25/05/07 Handler Mrs. K. Saynor

4th Kimmax Klose En KounterGWP Bitch 29/01/07 Handler Mr. S. Noble

Novice Tests Judged by Rory Major

1st Barleyarch Kenko at DryskaGSP Dog 15/03/06 Handler Mr. A Drysdale

2nd Tarkanya Spkeys Splendour LM Bitch 25/05/07 Handler Mrs. K. Saynor

3rd Swifthouse Dalziel GSP Dog 01/03/06 Handler Mr. J Burns

4th Barleyarch Bourneville at GamebourneGSP Bitch 15/03/06 Handler Mr. M. Davies

Graduate Test Judged by Madge Simons

1st Gunfield Evita HV Bitch 09/02/05 Handler Mr. R Irvine

Open Test Judged by Jennifer Hurley (2598)

1st Ambermoss Ruby GSP Bitch 25/10/03 Handler Mr. P. Dark

2nd Arany's Anya Mit Drysika GLP Bitch 20/12/02 Handler Mr. A Drysdale

3rd Tholumi Brother of Soul GSP Dog 05/07/01 Handler Mr. J. Hateley

12th July 2008 Coventry & District Gundogs Working Test, Cosby Leicestershire

1st in Novice Jean Baldwin with Freshetin Lentiggine

29th June 2008 Large Munsterlander Club, Working Test, Hall Barn

1st in Puppy Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour

June 8th 2008 MWWGS, Working Test Rorrington

3rd in Puppy Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour

4th in Novice Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour

March 24th 2008 GSPA Working Test Stoke Bardolph

1st in Puppy Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour

May 5th Swifthouse Test of Works

1st in Puppy Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour

2nd in Novice Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour

January 24th Open FT Dukeries Gundog Club

Rise Park Estate. East Yorkshire Judges. G. Card, J. Naylor

2nd Paul Dark with Ambermoss Ruby, German Shorthaired Pointer

January 19th , All Aged, FT GSPA

Satley.(Nr.Cornsay,Co.Durham)Judges. F.Alcock. P.Nixon.

CoM, Karen Saynor with Tarkanya Lytas Lassie, Large Munsterlander

Congratulations !!!!!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all from

Sue & Eddie Kania

HPR GROUP Website Statistics

Eddie Kania

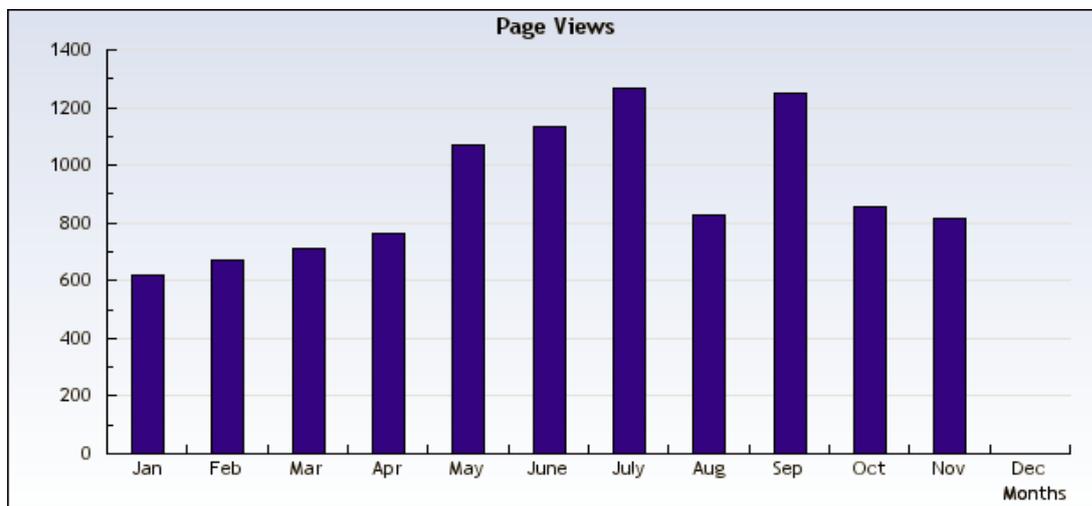
The Group page on www.hprgroup.co.uk has been set up. Below is a current traffic report which shows that there is a significant amount of interest in the site. The site will be developed over time ensuring that it is a valuable resource for all HPR owners. Ideas and content for the site should be sent to me.

Page Views

Statistics on successful page impressions

Period: From January 1st, 2008 to November 30th 2008

9982 Page Views



From January 1, 2008 to November 30, 2008 1-11 of 11

Date	Month	Page Views
1/1/2008	January	620
1/2/2008	February	669
1/3/2008	March	712
1/4/2008	April	762
1/5/2008	May	1,069
1/6/2008	June	1,135
1/7/2008	July	1,267
1/8/2008	August	825
1/9/2008	September	1,251
1/10/2008	October	855
1/11/2008	November	817

These statistics show all successful page views (also known as page impressions) and the time they were made.

Note: Only fully loaded pages are counted. Individual images and components are not included

North West Group Show Dog of the Year Trophy

Eddie Kania

A trophy is to be awarded annually at the Group AGM, to the dog, which has gained the most points at Open and Championship shows during the previous year. The purpose of the scheme is to encourage members of the North West Group to participate in showing events, and therefore help preserve the dual-purpose nature of HPR breeds.

Points can only be gained from Breed competition at OPEN & CHAMPIONSHIP Shows LICENCED BY THE UK KENNEL CLUB.

From January 1st to 31st December.

Points can only be claimed from ONE BREED class per show.

OPEN SHOWS	1 st	3 points
	2 nd	2 points
	3 rd	1 point
PLUS	Best of Breed	1 point
	Best Puppy in Breed	1 point
CHAMPIONSHIP SHOWS	1 st	10 points
	2 nd	9 points
	3 rd	8 points
PLUS	Challenge Certificate	2 points
	Reserve Challenge Certificate	1 point
	Best Puppy in Breed	1 point
Gaining Show Champion Status		30 points

ELIGIBILITY

The registered owner of the dog must be a fully paid up member of the GSP Club for the period, during which the points are claimed. Additionally the Dog (accompanied by its registered owner) must have attended a minimum of 4 Group-training classes other than the progress test and working test, between January 1st and December 31st.

Owners will submit a list of all awards gained in the qualifying period on the relevant form, (i.e. claims for the period 1st Jan 2008 -31st Dec 2008 should be submitted by 30th April 2009). The GSPC membership number must be included on the claim form, and all claims must be verified. In the event of a tie the committee will decide the award.

Please forward all claim forms to:

Catherine Drysdale 01257 261 584
Email - drysika@hotmail.co.uk

The Liz Ashton Memorial Trophy Eddie Kania

The Trophy is to be awarded annually at the Group AGM to the handler and dog partnership who gain the most points in field events during the year. The purpose of the scheme is to encourage members of the North West Group to improve as handlers and to enter more competitive events.

Handlers running more than one dog may submit separate claim forms for each dog.

Points can only be gained from competition at Pointing Tests, Working Tests, Field Trials LICENCED BY THE UK KENNEL CLUB and the NWG Progress Test. From May 1st to April 30th. Points can only be claimed in one class per Working Test i.e. Puppy or Novice, which ever is the higher. Eligibility: Handlers shall be fully paid up members of the GSP Club for the period that points are being claimed within and must attend a minimum of 4 Group-training events other than the July Working Test, and October Progress Test, between May 1st and 30th April each year. The GSP Club membership number must be included on the claim form and all claims will be verified. In the event of a tie, the committee will decide the award.

POINTING TEST

Excellent	2 points
Very Good	1 points

WORKING TEST

1 st	4 points
2 nd	3 points
3 rd	2 points
4 th	1 point

FIELD TRIAL

1 st	20 points
2 nd	15 points
3 rd	12 points
4 th	10 points
C of M	8 points

Gaining of Field Trial Champion Status 30 points

GROUP PROGRESS TEST

Excellent	3 points
Very Good	2 points
Good	1 point

Only the highest points for ONE test in each category of the Progress Test - Hunting, Retrieving / Tracking, Obedience/ Steadiness, Water – will be awarded, regardless of the number of tests entered. A maximum of 12 points therefore can be gained in the Progress Test during the year.

The German Shorthaired Pointer Club cannot accept any responsibility for any injury, damage or loss to person, dog or property whilst taking part in the competition.

Please forward completed claim forms by 30th April 2009 to:

Catherine Dysdale 01257 261 584
drysika@hotmail.co.uk

Meet Hattie (Jennaline Hatsie Pollings at Drysika JW) who won the North West Group Show Trophy 2008



As well as being a competent working dog, Hattie has had many successes in the show ring but her most recent success was in August when she became the proud mum of 10 healthy babies! (See below) We have had GSP's for 23 years but this was a new venture for Allan and I as we wanted to breed or own puppy instead of buying one in from a reputable breeder. Hattie was thus mated to the renowned Show Champion Barleyarch Paris who is also regularly worked on the Hatton Shoot in Cheshire.

The whole experience of having and rearing the litter was one we are so glad we undertook but in our opinion, in order to rear and socialise a litter properly, a great deal of commitment and devotion is required, as well as an unending supply of newspapers and lots of bedding! One can only wonder how the "puppy farmers" in GSP's manage to do this to any acceptable standard on a regular basis.

The reward to us has been in the lovely people and homes that the puppies have gone to and we have had some very positive feedback from them, especially the fact that they all appear to have superb temperaments and have fitted in so well, whilst still retaining that exuberant personality which is one of the traits that make up this endearing breed. I have to admit we were very fussy about who we sold the puppies to as finding the right home environment where a puppy would receive the right education and stimulation was our priority. We have kept a puppy bitch called Lily (Drysika Fleur de Lis). As Paris was the sire we decided to call them all French phrases and we had others such as Drysika Joie de Vivre and Drysika Deja Vu. I intend to show Lily and Allan may try his hand at something a little different from gundog work with her, but who knows what the future will bring?.....



EKKO'S SECOND NOVICE FIELD TRIAL
1st November, 2008
Karen Saynor - Liz Aston Trophy Winner - 2008

On 1st November we were up at 4.30am to drive down to Caversfield, near Oxford for the GWPC Novice Field Trial. We were running number 8 so had quite a wait before it was our turn. It was a very cold day with a little drizzle but nothing worse.

Our first run was along a grass-filled ditch which turned into a thick hedge with quite a lot of thick brambly patches. Quite soon Ekko came on point.



She was sent into flush, the bird went out the back of the hedge and - silence! We think the guns on the other side may not have been with us so after that was checked out we carried on. Up in the really thick part of the hedge she pointed again and a bird went out the back. This time it was down but as there was no way dog or handler could get through where we were we were taken to the end and through a gate into the next field so that the retrieve could be done (blind by that stage). Back came a still live hen bird.



Our second run was in a strip of quite high cover crop with a head wind. I was dreading these as Ekko is not used to working in them. She pointed quite quickly but started to track as the bird's ran quickly ahead. I called her off so we didn't end up at the end of the strip and carried on hunting. Again she

indicated and started to track and again I called her off. This was really scary! As she came across again she quickly turned on the scent and a bird lifted which was shot. As it fell several more lifted around it. She was steady and sent for the bird. I'm glad Ekko knew where it was because I was just watching her. We were picked up and I hoped that was us finished with.

No such luck. When they had finished the second round they started on a third. Again we were called up and had the end of another cover strip. This time we had a cheek wind and I thought that the birds would have all gone on the last dog's run. I sent her down the side most of the length and then up the middle again trying to make sure nothing was missed and then we got to near the very end. She was being very careful down there and then froze on point again.

I wish I could have taken a photo it was lovely. One of those points where the body is bent round. She was pointing very near to the edge of the crop and I couldn't see anything there but when sent in to flush out came a hen. It was shot out in the field and still flapping when she was sent for the retrieve. That had to be us finished I was sure.

We carried on so that some of the dogs could do a retrieve on birds that had been shot over a hedge on a previous dogs run and then the steward called me up again!!!! I couldn't believe it but I was unaware of the sniggering going on behind me between my darling OH and a certain picking-up dog handler. Geoff thought it would be very amusing to get the steward to call me up again. My face must have been a picture. It was only when another competitor who was with the steward felt sorry for me and whispered behind her back that it was a set-up that I relaxed a bit.

It was starting to get dark by the time we went to the water with six dogs which was a great result. Unfortunately one wouldn't swim.

At the end of the day there were 5 awards. Three C o M's, a 3rd and my 'baby' was awarded 1st place and also the guns award. I was thrilled and still can't believe it. She must have learned so much from yesterday - new experiences every time we go out.

Scary as it was it was a great day spent with a great group of people. The judges really did their best for everyone and the guns, who were used to shooting over hrs, really knew what they were doing - watching the dogs, and leaping through the hedges at the appropriate times (when possible) to be ready for the birds. It makes so much difference when the birds come down.

North West Group Working Test Watergrove - 20th July 2008

Puppy Test

Judged by Liz Veasey

Many thanks to the North West Group for their kind invitation to judge the Puppy Working Test! I was very impressed with the overall standard of the puppies and the rapport handlers had already established with them. On the whole, dogs worked well in partnership, listening to commands when hunting and clearly enjoying the challenge of finding and retrieving dummies.

Test 1: Hunting

Handlers were asked to run their dogs for 10 minutes with a stop whistle at the end. Each dog worked into the wind on fresh ground with the handler deciding the width and depth of the hunting pattern. All dogs completed this well. Best scores came from **Stubblemere Ben Harrald** and **Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour** who were wide ranging, worked at a good pace, indicated scent and reacted well to unobtrusive, quiet handling from their owners.

Test 2: Seen Retrieve

A simple seen retrieve at a distance: Some competitors had not worked their dogs on retrieves at length. This soon sorted out three dogs that completed the exercise with ease: **Gongos Kanya**, **Kimmax Klose En Kounter** and **Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour**.

Test 3: Water Retrieve

Handlers chose where they wanted to put their dogs into water to fetch a seen retrieve: Many dogs, although confident once in the water, took some time to enter. Unfortunately the longer this took the further the water retrieve became due to the prevailing wind. All dogs but one completed the exercise. The highest mark went to **Gongos Kanya** who entered the water confidently, swam strongly and completed the retrieve to hand.

Test 4: Memory Retrieve

For this test dogs were walked to heel, sat whilst the handler threw a dummy, asked to stay whilst their handler returned, recalled and then sent for the retrieve.

Top marks went to **Gongos Kanya** who completed the exercise perfectly.

Test 5: Split Retrieve

The last test was a split retrieve completed in the order decided upon by the owners. Many dogs ignored initial instructions from their owners and had to be firmly handled to complete the retrieve in order. Again, those that experienced initial difficulties then found the rest of the test more difficult - dogs began to forget the second retrieve, leaving owners with an almost blind retrieving situation. Despite this, all dogs completed the test. Best marks went to **Stubblemere Ben Harrald, Bareve Bombie, Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour and Greenwire Samuel**.

Most dogs are naturally competent at hunting and retrieving, under competition pressure it's often simple mistakes or misinterpretation by the handler that decided which dogs are placed and those that are not. On many of the tests I purposely left some decisions to the handler – how wide should the dog range, where should the dog enter the water, which retrieve should the dog be sent for first?

When final scores were totted up there was only one mark between first and second place, scoring 94 and 93 out of 100 respectively. Congratulations to both handlers; you consistently made sound, experienced decisions which your dogs responded excellently to.

Results

1 st	Tarkanya Spikeys Splendour	LM	Handled by: K Saynor
2 nd	Gongos Kanya	HWV	Handled by: P Robinson
3 rd	Stubblemere Ben Harrald	GSP	Handled by: P Druce
4 th	Kimmax Klose En Kounter	GWP	Handled by: S Noble

Novice Tests

Judged by Rory Major

1 st	BARLEYARCH KENKO at DRYSIKA	GSP	Handler Mr A Drysdale
2 nd	TARKANYA SPIKEYS SPLENDOUR	LM	Handler Mrs K. Saynor
3 rd	SWIFTHOUSE DALZIEL	GSP	Handler Mr J Burns
4 th	BARLEYARCH BOURNEVILLE AT GAMEBOURNE	GSP	Handler Mr M. Davies

Graduate Test Judged by Madge Simons

I was pleased to be asked to judge the graduate class at the North West Group Working Test at Watergrove. The tests set were very demanding and proved to be too difficult for some of the entered dogs on that day.

However, the winning dog was a worthy winner & well deserving of its first place.

1st - **Gunfield Evita H.V. Handled by Mr. R. Irvine**

A very nice dog proving to be very biddable, that was quietly handled & a good partnership between dog & handler.

2nd - **Seek Infront G.S.P. Handled by Mr. N. Davison**

This dog was 16 points behind the winning dog & proved to be a little strong for his inexperienced and rather nervous handler. Although very capable, the relationship between dog and handler needed to be worked on.

3rd - Kimmax Threes a Crowd G.W.P Handled by Mr. P. McCullough

This dog was 33 points behind the first placed dog.

Overall, I enjoyed the day, the venue & hospitality. Sadly, the standard was not as high as I would have liked to have seen for a graduate test, possibly accentuated by the degree of difficulty of the tests set on the day.

**Open Test
Judged by Jennifer Hurley**

I had heard about this working test ground long before I had the opportunity to venture up North to see for myself. I am pleased to say that I was not disappointed. The ground is fantastic and there are very few grounds that can offer each dog a fresh piece of ground to hunt with a caged quail on each dogs run. The retrieving tests were also very demanding and it became very clear that there was a definite North/South divide. The terrain was such that unless dogs were used to working in that environment they would struggle. The afternoon started with the retrieving following the mornings hunting. It was decided to run the dogs on the easier of the two tests first due to the fact that I felt a number of dogs would struggle tackling a retrieve over a fairly significant stone wall. The test set was a seen split with one dummy landing in a gully some 100 yards away, the second dummy landing on the bank of a hill some 130 yards away. What made this test difficult was the terrain the dogs had to get through to get to their retrieve which consisted of undulating reed grass in marshy areas and although the dog could be clearly seen when it got into the area, there were times when contact was lost making for difficulty when trying to direct the dog. The second part of the split was over a small stone wall and again, a long distance through marshy grass down a dip and up a hill to retrieve a puppy dummy from the open. Obviously, if dogs had needed to be handled significantly onto the first dummy, by the time they were sent for the second dummy all memory of its existence had disappeared.

This was the only retrieving test held that afternoon and once completed, all the dogs were taken down to complete a blind retrieve over a stretch of approx 30 – 40 yards of water which they all completed.

1st - Ambermoss Ruby GSP Handled by Mr. Paul Dark

Hunting was good & worked a cheek wind fairly well always in touch with the handler but was purposeful in her style of hunting. Located and pointed caged game, nice hunting dog with natural pace and style.

Retrieve – again it was apparent that this dog was used to working this type of ground and made a good job of both of its retrieves with the minimum of handling onto it's second retrieve.

Water – a little hesitant to enter the water but once in and swimming, completed the retrieve well.

2nd Arany's Anya Mit Drysika GLP Handled by Mr. Alan Drysdale

Excellent hunting, with pace and style - covered her ground well & worked a difficult wind correctly. Had a superb find on the caged game which was held for a reasonable period of time before the temptation got the better of her? A keen flushing dog and although she had a good turn of pace, she was biddable and responsive to the handler's requirements.

Retrieve – completed test with handling onto both retrieves but handled well. Water – encouraged to enter and completed the test well - a worthy second place.

3rd Tholumi Brother of Soul GSP Handled by Mr. Jack Hateley

Ground treatment and use of the wind could have been better. Lacked the drive and style of the 1st & 2nd placed dogs but she had a nice find and point on the caged game and was quietly handled.

Retrieve – again, one of the top dogs to complete this test and although needed to be handled to both retrieves he made a good job of the test and was well handled. Top marks for his water retrieve, one command given, out and back with the dummy with no other input required.

4th Ch. Just Joking For Kimmax GWP Handled Mr. Peter McCullough.

Hunted quite nicely but lacked a certain drive. Did cover its ground reasonably well but needed to be handled to do so. I would have liked to have seen the dog demonstrate a little more natural drive. There was a slight acknowledgement of caged game but no point.

Retrieve – Completed both retrieves and, took some handling onto the second retrieve, but only one of the few to complete this test.

Water – Excellent water only dropped half a mark.

In summary, the retrieving test set was too difficult for those not used to this terrain which is clearly reflected in the results. Out of the 10 dogs running on the day 4 failed the test and this was the easier of the two tests originally set. Whilst I'm not suggesting that we lose sight of the fact that this is an Open working test and competitors entered with the possibility that there will be a small number of failures.

Thank you the North West Group for asking me to judge the Open test, I had a very enjoyable day.

The weather was kind to us * not too hot for the dogs. The venue is great and the hospitality & atmosphere was excellent.

Thank you to Geoff Saynor for Stewarding and dummy throwing.

I would like to thank Eddie Kania, and the committee for organising the day.

PROGRESS TEST September 2008

Allan Drysdale

The September training class took place at Brushes Clough this year and Don and I were the judges for the day. Don judged Section 3 Retrieving and I judged both Section 1 Obedience and Steadiness and Section 4 Water Retrieving. The entries were fairly healthy and, on the whole, it was clear that the participants had 'put the work in'.

The Obedience and Steadiness section 'does what it says on the tin' and one is looking for evidence of a good relationship between handler and dog, with the dog understanding what action needs to be taken in response to handler commands. Further, any response should be prompt, even in the face of distractions, such as thrown dummies. I was pleased with all the 'teams' and both Excellent and Very Goods were achieved. Unfortunately, John could not complete all the tests due to Millie deciding to do a runner to look for Mum!!! (Dual handling not allowed!!!).

The Water Retrieving tests ranged from a 'Simple Seen' into water to an extremely difficult 'Blind' across water. Once again, the performances were consistently high and it was only a lack of experience that prevented one handler in particular from getting an Excellent instead of a Very Good. This was due to him standing too far away from the water's edge to collect the retrieve, which resulted in the dummy being dropped. If any water test allows you to stand at the water's edge, then STAND THERE! This is good practice with a young dog anyway, as it ensures that dummies are retrieved to hand. As stated above, the 'Blind Across' was extremely difficult, as the dummy was situated in dense cover, behind fairly tall trees. This is where experience came to the fore and both Karen with Ekko and Jean with Tilly handled very well, even when both dogs headed towards a stick that was floating tantalizingly to the right of where the dogs needed to go!

Many thanks to all who entered on the day and the two 'Wires', belonging to Jan and Stuart really impressed. Jan must have a generous bank manager, however, as she entered 11 tests!!! She managed to achieve an average of 3.5, which is no mean feat. Well done.

Good luck with all your dogs!

Clay Pigeon Shoot

Andy Peers

Yet again its that time of year were the boys and girls of the Northwest GSP club get together, and shoot (or try) some clays.

What a day, the weather was absolutely disgusting, rain, wind and even sleet for a while. It was like being in the out with your dog and gun in the shooting season!

Not the best turn out due to the weather and other commitments, but after we had a mug of tea and bacon and egg butties, we went off to play.

We had 75 clays to shoot or miss which ever the case was. Despite the weather we battled on and had plenty of laughs and jokes, especially when Theresa Peers hit someone else clay, who was not even shooting with us.

The young guns David, Jack and Lewis all took part in the clay shooting, using a 4.10 shotgun. They hit most of the clays that were set up for them. They were getting coaching from Paul Dark, Rob Irvine and a very wet Eddy Kania.

Hope next year we have a better turn and better weather.

We all went back to the pub for prize giving, a hot drink and pint. Congratulations to Paul for winning on the day.

1st place went to Paul Dark

2nd place went to Andy Peers

3rd place went to Rob Irvine

ITEMS OF INTEREST

DOGS AND THE LAW

Legislation that every responsible dog owner should be aware of or know

As a dog owner, you should be aware of the laws that affect you and your dog, this article is meant for information only. The following extracts may be of interest.

Dogs Act 1871

It is civil offence if a dog is dangerous (to people or animals) and not kept under proper control, generally regarded as not kept on a lead or muzzled. This law can apply wherever an incident happens. If you breach the law your dog could be subject to a control or a destruction order and you may have to pay costs.

Dogs (Protection of Livestock) Act 1953

Your dog must not worry (chase or attack) livestock (cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, horses and poultry) on agricultural land, so keep your dog on a lead around livestock. If your dog worries livestock the farmer has the right to stop your dog, by shooting in certain circumstances.

Animal Boarding Establishments Act 1963

Anyone boarding animals as a business (even at home) needs to be licensed by the local authority.

Animals Act 1971

You could be liable for damage caused by your dog under this Act. It is highly advisable to have third party liability insurance to cover this. This is usually included in pet insurance policies and in some household insurance policies. It would be wise to clarify this with your insurer.

The Road Traffic Act 1988

It is an offence to have a dog on a designated road without it being held on a lead. Local authorities may have similar byelaws covering public areas.

Dogs travelling in vehicles should not be a nuisance or in any way distract the driver during a journey.

If a dog is injured in a car accident, the driver must stop and give their details to the person in charge of the dog. If there is no person in charge of the dog the incident must be reported to the police within 24 hours.

Dangerous Dogs Act 1991 (Section 3)

It is a criminal offence (for the owner and/or the person in charge of the dog) to allow a dog to be 'dangerously out of control' in a public place, a place where it is not permitted to be, and some other areas. A 'dangerously out of control' dog can be defined as a dog that has injured someone or a dog that a person has grounds for reasonable apprehension that it may do so. Something as simple as your dog chasing, barking at or jumping up at a person or child could lead to a complaint, so ensure that your dog is under control at all times. If your dog injures a person, it may be seized by the police and your penalty may include a prison sentence and/or a ban on keeping dogs. There is also an automatic presumption that your dog will be destroyed (unless you can persuade the court that it is not a danger to the public, in which case it may be subject to a control order). You may also have to pay a fine, compensation and costs.

The Control of Dogs Order 1992

This mandates that any dog in a public place must wear a collar with the name and address (including post-code) of the owner engraved or written on it, or engraved on a tag. Your telephone number is optional (but advisable). This we understand includes in your car.

Breeding and Sale of Dogs (Welfare) Act 1999

Breeders who breed five or more litters per year must be licensed by their local authority. Breeders with fewer litters must also be licensed if they are carrying out a business of breeding dogs for sale.

Licensed breeders must:

- a) Not mate a bitch less than 12 months old.
- b) Not whelp more than six litters from a bitch.
- c) Not whelp two litters within a 12 month period from the same bitch.
- d) Keep accurate records.
- e) Not sell a puppy until it is at least eight weeks of age, other than to a keeper of a licensed pet shop or Scottish rearing establishment.

The Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005

Under the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005, you could be fined up to £1,000 for breaching a dog control order. Local authorities can now make orders for standard offences including: failing to remove dog faeces, not keeping a dog on a lead, not putting and keeping a dog on a lead when directed to do so, permitting a dog to enter land from which dogs are excluded and taking more than a specified number of dogs on to land.

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act also updates the law on stray dogs by transferring the responsibility for strays from the police to the local authorities.

If you lose your dog, you should inform and stay in regular contact with the local authority. Petlog (the UK's largest pet reunification service), vets, dog shelters and the police, and put up posters in the area where you lost it. Dog wardens are obliged to seize stray dogs and the police for now still have discretionary power to seize stray dogs under the Dogs Act 1906. The finder of a stray dog must return it to its owner (if known). Or take it to the local authority or police (although soon, only the local authority will receive stray dogs.) It is illegal to take a found dog into your home without reporting it to the police first. If you want to retain the dog, this might be allowed, provided you are capable of looking after the dog and agree to keep it for at least 28 days. However, the original owner could still have a claim for the dog's return.

Byelaws on noisy animals

If your dog's barking causes a serious nuisance to neighbours, the local authority can serve a noise abatement notice, which if unheeded can result in you paying fines and legal expenses.

The Animal Welfare Act 2006

The Animal Welfare Act, which received Royal Assent in 2006 was introduced in 2007. The new Act increased and introduced new penalties to tackle cruelty, neglect, mutilation, tail docking, animal fighting and the giving of pets as prizes. In addition to this it introduced a duty of care for all pet owners to provide for their animals a environment, a suitable diet, the freedom to exhibit normal behaviour patterns, protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease and consideration of their animal's needs to be housed with, or apart from, other animals

THE BEAT GOES ON

Allan Drysdale

Even though I've been involved with the training and working of gundogs for fourteen years, I still consider myself to be a relative newcomer to this fascinating sport. I've been lucky enough to experience a number of various aspects during this time, including Grouse and Partridge counting, picking up, rough shooting, driven shooting and, of course, beating. Each aspect has benefits and potential pitfalls, especially if one has designs on trialling. Beating in particular is somewhat of a double edged sword. Anyone (and there are of course many within the group) who has beat on a shoot knows that it is a highly stimulating environment for a dog. There are whistles galore, flags waving, guns being fired and lots of shouting (in some instances at errant dogs!). All this combines and conspires to undermine all the hard work that you put into the pooch and before you know it, the little cherub is three fields away, running right through the next drive! This is why it is so important to ensure that the basics are sufficiently inculcated before venturing into a live game situation.

Another feature of beating is that it often happens that the dog goes on point when working through dense cover and not even Sherlock Holmes could find it! Meanwhile the beating line marches on relentlessly and a quick sprint (the word sprint might be a misnomer here!) to rejoin the masses is in order once the dog has been relocated. Further, if you are beating with a tail wind it is almost impossible to work the dog in the optimum way, as the beating line has to keep moving in accordance with the keeper's wishes. This can result in handlers putting up birds that the dog hasn't had a chance to work onto.

Despite the above, however, there are many positive aspects to beating. First and foremost, your dog will be getting some invaluable experience on live game and, for many people; this is the only way that this can be realised. Sure, one can train a gundog to a point (no pun intended); however, the only way that a dog is going to learn how to 'hold' it's birds whilst on point is through experience. Similarly, the opportunity for your dog to retrieve a freshly shot bird is often possible when operating as a beater. Occasionally, your dog can mislead you, as happened with Anya last season. The drive had finished and beaters AND pickers up (yes...that's what I said), were searching the area where a Partridge had fallen, apparently "dead...it dropped like a stone". After approx 10 minutes, I turned around to see Anya coming towards me with the stricken bird in her mouth. Of course, lots of praise and an overwhelming sense of pride at the fact that it was my dog that had found the elusive one. However, I soon had my state of euphoria shattered as a fellow beater informed me that Anya had, in one graceful movement, pinched the Partridge out of his hand! Much laughter at my expense followed; however, that's all part of the day.

So, if any of you have an opportunity to go beating with your dogs, I would suggest that you give it a go. Remember to ensure, however, that your dog's recall response and response to the stop whistle is as good as you can possibly get it. Finally, be prepared for some 'micky taking' (I nearly said something else then!), as we all know that dogs are great levellers and the beaters that I beat with never miss the opportunity to point out instances where my dogs' transgress! Give as good as you get!

Long retrieve with both seen and blind distractions

Shaun Patterson

Pause for a minute and reflect on the many challenges you have faced in the working field.....be it a field trial, working test or out beating....200 yard seen retrieve with distractions on the return...a bolting hare and falling

pheasant, dummy's thrown as your charge returns at pace with his/her retrieve....I'm sure the permutations, and experiences for that, are endless.....What about long retrieve with birth of baby and career change.....!

Getting to the basis of this brief article....not sure if you can recall my article last year when I waxed lyrical about the arrival of my new wirehair puppy, Jess, and the excitement, anticipation and challenges that lay in wait....I thought a quick update might be of interest, or at least fill space in the magazine (no pressure from the editor, honest).

Not sure if many of you will know me, but I used to be a regular at training class, some of you might have seen me at the working test at Watergrove – where I entered a Wheaton Terrier in the guise of a Wirehaired Pointer!!!!

Jess is a cracking little dog, a wonderful temperament, fantastic retriever and strong hunter...Some might say a rough diamond, all be it purchased from Ratners, but a diamond none the less...Her *linage doesn't get much better, top show and working lines litter her pedigree....*

Training started well, I had decided very early on that I would not unnecessarily push Jess, I have a reliable dog in Mya to take beating with me, so you know what they say....slowly, slowly, catchy monkey....perhaps this was a mistake in hindsight...I wanted her to catch/retrieve game birds...(make of that what you will).....Bar a few problems with water everything was coming together with Jess at a pace I had not expected. I looked towards the Summer months of 2008 to really take Jess on.....Cue first seen distraction (all be it a blind one when I got Jess).....

Elizabeth Kate was born on the 4th March 2008.....the happiest day of my life, closely followed by marrying Joanne or was that watching Sheffield Wednesday beat Manchester United at Wembley stadium in the League Cup final.....

Elizabeth changed every priority in my life, I'm sure Joanne will argue this point!

I certainly had to review my training plans – and wanted to do so....If I wasn't helping out with baby duties I was doing my best to catch up on sleep (hard work this parenting business)...the dog training had to slip....I have two dogs to exercise as well as try and continue with Jess's development....

Then came the blind distraction....a change of career reduced my 'free time' even further...

I had to resort to exercising the dogs together and training is a couple of hours grabbed on Saturday and Sunday....

Things are settling down at home, Elizabeth is doing fantastic, and thanks to having a very understanding better half, I am starting to pick up with Jess again. Fingers crossed come Spring of next year I might just start to see a bit of sparkle on that rough diamond....but we will see...no rush, to coin that oft used phrase of football managers under pressure....Its a marathon not a sprint!

What is it about the best laid plans and all that...?!? I would like to thank my beating colleagues at Mossy Lea and Load Brook for their support and training advice as I get back on the rails with Jess....I find it invaluable having you guys around to bounce ideas off.

And so to finish this update, I promise to feedback next year.....give you all the details, good and bad....The challenge will really be to get that little girl throwing dummies for me!!!!

Seasons greetings and all the very best for the New Year (family Patterson)

Editors Note:

Shaun, I know where you are coming from ! I got a Wire puppy in May, and broke my neck in July ! Training goes on the backburner! It's all part of life's rich tapestry!!!!

Hunting Snipe With Wirehaired Pointers

Christopher Gray

www.kenneltrudvang.co.uk



Hunting snipe on the open hill or moorland fringe must surely be one of the most exciting and exacting sporting disciplines that can be undertaken. At times frustrating and always exhausting it is a sport that really gives the pointer a chance to stretch its legs (the owner also) and show us what it's really made of.

Snipe are abundant throughout the uplands of Scotland, particularly through the winter when untold thousands of migrant snipe alight on these shores looking forward to our mild but wet climate.

In this respect Scotland, particularly in the west, rarely lets them down.

The snipe also has the longest season of any game bird (12th Aug-30th Jan) giving ample opportunity for hunting throughout that time in a variety of situations. A lot of snipe tend to congregate in good roosting cover, perhaps rashie beds or remnants of wetlands adjacent to improved pasture on the lower ground and there can be good sport to be had in such places. But for a real challenge where the dog and handler are tested to the full it is to the open hill we should head.

Low densities of snipe well spread over the ground are ideal, giving the dog ample range to open out in his pattern and provide a welcome spectacle for those following.

We are lucky here in South Scotland to have such a large proportion of our uplands categorised as 'unimproved grazing', unimproved it may be in relation to livestock but it is perfect for pointers, snipe and hares. White grass combined with stands of 'juncus' and an abundance of wet springs and hill drains seem just perfect to accommodate both the snipe and his hunter. Indeed it never ceases to amaze me what an underutilised resource this type of terrain is.

It seems that everyone's attention is distracted by that other sporting bird of the uplands the 'famous grouse', and while no one could deny that the sport afforded by grouse is top class, it also comes with a top class price tag.

Snipe on the other hand have two advantages, 1) very few people are willing to walk all day for a scant few chances at such an elusive little bird and 2) snipe don't need heather, in fact grazed out heather areas and rough sheep walk tend to be just perfect. I imagine there are untold opportunities out there for people with the right type of dogs and the will to go and look for them.

So what makes a good snipe dog?

A good snipe dog is ideally a hard, wide runner with plenty of stamina to handle steep inclines and rough ground. In a good breeze he can afford to be relatively open in his pattern (if he has the nose to handle it) and should ideally 'hit the wall' some way off his birds. With the exception of early season birds hill snipe tend to be wary and don't hold as well to the dog as most other game, but on the plus side they don't tend to run in front of the dog either. His point should be staunch for snipe with little or no fidgeting or creeping whilst waiting for the sportsman as it can take some time to reach the dog who in all likelihood is pointing several hundred meters away over possibly rough terrain.

The final approach to the dog should be as stealthy as possible with your gun made ready in case of an early 'rise'. If all goes well and you reach the dog, quiet encouragement is all it should take to ease the dog on. An experienced snipe dog typically advances with caution, often low and cat like and so you proceed after him as best you can until lo!!, up jumps the snipe and flits away on the wind with his typical double 'screakk'. If you are lucky you will be satisfied with a good shot on the going away bird, your dog steady by your side. Good marking by the dog is imperative as the snipe do not appear to give off as much scent dead under a wet, grassy tussock as they do when they are alive and sitting before the dog. A quick retrieve and you have your prize and a tasty prize it is too!

Much is made of dogs not pointing or retrieving snipe (or woodcock for that matter), I have never found this to be the case, most young dogs point just about everything and it is for us to encourage or discourage (in the case of larks and pipits etc.) Dogs which habitually 'blink' on snipe probably need more exposure to them, just keep shooting where possible and let the dog retrieve he will soon get the message. On the point of retrieving I force train all my dogs to retrieve and again have never had a dog (so far) that refused a retrieve on a snipe.

Training for snipe shooting is no different than normal, with the one exception that 'fitness is king' (on part of dog and handler). As with grouse shooting, dogs which are unfit or have not tried running on rough ground for extended periods will not fare well and tend to 'blow' quickly

Dogs which are only used for hunting in woodland or agricultural habitats or have been trained as 'hairy labradors' may also find the fact that they are expected to sail across the wind a little daunting to begin with. Keep off the whistle, if at all possible, with such dogs and let them lead you over the hill at least until they find their feet.

Dogs which 'bore' ahead are also a pest, though well bred pointers normally have an innate desire to run across the wind in their search for game. In this case judicious use of the whistle, frequent change of direction and perseverance should pay off in the end.

One point on marking snipe, it pays to watch closely any 'misses' (and there will be many). If the bird should come down within a few hundred metres it is highly likely to be carrying a pellet or two and one should pull the dog and make a beat to take in the site of the fall. If the bird is not hit chances are it will not sit for the dog, wounded birds on the other hand are secured with ease and are often dead at the fall. If you only intend shooting snipe then shot size no. 8 or 9 may have some advantage, if however there is any likelihood of larger game then stick to your normal game cartridge.

No article on snipe would be complete without mentioning Hares as they go together like 'cheese and pickle'. Like them or loathe them there is no more infuriating animal to the dog handler nor prize for the gourmet. Purists normally train their dogs to ignore hares completely much the same way as we break dogs to sheep and deer. But for those of us who pride ourselves in having 'versatile' gundogs, which see an odd hare as being a positive bonus to the gamebag, despite its weight, we really have some training to do.

First and foremost utter respect for the 'stop' whistle is essential and the key to success. In the first season blow the dog down on every hare it sees even those departing in the distance. Let the young dog's blood cool right down and approach the dog before casting off by the scruff of the neck in the opposite direction. Any attempt to follow or 'line' the hare's track must be met with the stop whistle and cast off until you get the desired effect. Eventually the dog will start to sit at the flush of any hare and look to you for guidance as to what to do next, hopefully this situation persists until the dog is experienced enough to realise that only clapped hares are worth bothering about.

As for the pointing of hares, this is a phenomenon that is more often talked about than witnessed. Hares often leave the beat sometime before dog and handler reach the scene and in cases where they remain often prove to give off little scent when actually 'clapped' in their form. No piece of game gives off as little scent when clapped or as much when flushed and young dogs will more often than not be found pointing at an empty seat. That some dogs do become proficient at pointing hares is beyond doubt but even their effectiveness can vary from day to day. (I should make it clear that I am referring to 'brown hares' as opposed to mountain hares which tend on the whole to be easier for the dog to handle more akin to rabbits.) Treat empty pointing as you would for

any other game, being careful not to praise the dog in this situation.

It would be prudent to avoid shooting any hares for the young dog even after a successful point, blowing the dog down vigorously after each flush. Hunting out and retrieving dragged hares in training is OK but until the dog is 100% steady I would refrain from shooting in front of the dog. Even when you do, preservation of that hard won steadiness will be easier if you go and pick up hares that you have shot yourself at least the first few times and intermittently thereafter.

As regards a wounded hare, avoidance is better than cure, always shoot within your effective range. Maintaining steadiness after the dog has been sent for, pursued and captured a wounded hare or two is never going to be easy. Many dogs begin their careers as steady as a rock and end them as suitable competitors for the 'Waterloo Cup'.

Respect for the stop whistle from the dog and consistency on the part of the handler is the only way.

Needless to say any dog hunting on the open hill needs to be absolutely steady to sheep.

Well I hope I have wetted the appetite of some of you who perhaps own continental pointers but are as yet snipe virgins, believe me when I say that once started you will be absolutely hooked and kicking pheasants out of hedgerows will never be the same again.

© Chris Gray 15/04/08

Grouse Counting Rob Irviine



For many years now members of the GSPC NWG have taken part in grouse counting in the north of England to determine the fluctuating fortunes of red grouse, which hold such a special place in the hearts of moorland sportsmen and women. As a result the data we collect has been used to build up a unique database of grouse populations plus other moorland animals and birds such as Black Grouse, Hares & birds of prey. The counting service is provided for the interest of shooting and conservation for both private landowners and groups such as National Trust for shoot management and moorland regeneration projects.

The counting of game birds using pointers in spring and summer, is one of a number of indicators used by land owners/managers to ascertain the density of breeding pairs (spring) and their breeding success or failure by brood size and number of broods (summer). This helps indicate the health of the ground, the wildlife and the shooting potential for the coming season. We also record the number of single birds and sex as a high number

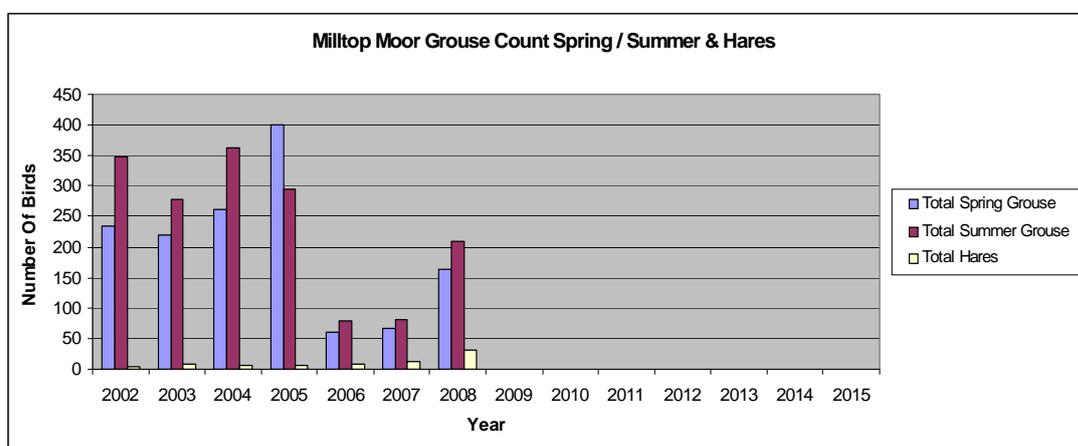
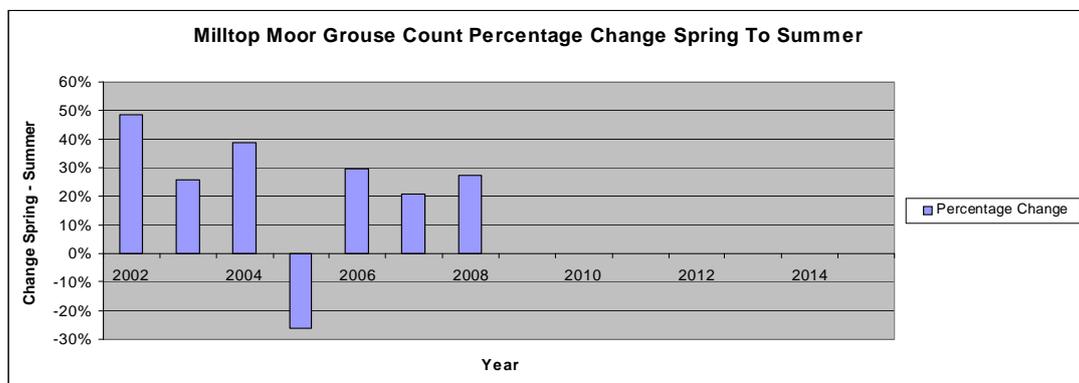
of mature cock birds may effect the distribution of birds in the area due to the territorial instinct of grouse. The results must be recorded whether they are good or bad for grouse. Therefore, a drop in grouse numbers must be documented and reported as faithfully as a rise in the population, no matter how welcome that would be. A low count may mean no shooting at all that season or years of work in regeneration have to be revised.

There are many different methods of counting grouse and all are relevant. To ensure the data collected is an accurate representation it is important the same area of ground is counted, by the same method, at the same time of year, for a number of years. We employ a method call Drive Sampling which we believe is a practical method for counting grouse, being broadly accurate and time efficient. The area to be counted is set out into a number of drives which can on a shooting moor be aligned with drives employed during a shoot day. Each drive is worked with a team of pointers and birds found recorded on a rough map. This data gives us a density map that generally shows that grouse are not evenly distributed across the moor. This allows us to investigate what reasons affect this i.e. water availability, extreme weather conditions, territorial behavior or pressure from predators. The data collected can be represented in many ways for analysis see chart for example.

In the pursuit of developing our dogs and our selves and seeking opportunities for suitable environments in which to work them, grouse counting takes us to some of the most wild and beautiful upland areas in the country. In the knowledge we are giving something back it is a pleasure to be part of the preservation of moorland biodiversity through grouse shooting and moorland management.

I would like to thank all involved for the friendship and knowledge you have shared with me over the last few years whether it is on the hill or in the pub after a thirsty day. Long may it continue?

Bar Graphs—Grouse Counts



“The generally accepted figure is that the UK holds 75% of the world’s resource of open heather moorland, and the majority of that is in Scotland.

An estimated 70% of our drinking water is collected from the uplands.

The UK uplands as a whole store some 5 billion tonnes of carbon – more than all the forests of Britain and France combined, and Scotland’s moorlands are the most important part of the equation”

Getting the Balance Right

Purina Pet care Team

To help him lead an active, healthy life, your dog's diet needs to achieve the right balance of the six major nutrient groups: proteins, fats and oils, minerals, vitamins, carbohydrates and water. Unless your dog is pregnant or nursing, or suffering from a particular condition, there is no reason to upset this balance from the early days of adulthood until the end of the sixth year when your dog reaches 'senior' status.

Dogs have different nutritional needs from humans. Whereas we are advised to eat fresh fruit and vegetables to provide vitamin C, bacteria in a dog's stomach produce enough vitamin C so they don't need any more in their diet. Dogs can also live without carbohydrates, but importantly they are not true carnivores and can't exist on meat alone. Ideally they need a combination of meat, cereals and vegetables to get the balance right.

All good quality manufactured dog foods have been carefully formulated to provide the proper balance of all the nutrients a dog requires, as well as tasting good. Despite the temptation, adding human food and scraps to a nutritionally balanced food doesn't do your dog any favours, and will often upset this fine nutritional balance.

Protein

Proteins, made from amino acids, are the building blocks of the body. The proteins you feed your dog (like chicken or beef, for example) are responsible for releasing energy and forming muscle, skin, hair, antibodies, enzymes, blood clots, haemoglobin and hormones.

Fats

Fats and oils provide the 'fuel' your dog needs to stay active - supplying more than twice as much energy as protein and carbohydrates. Fats, and fatty acids, are a source of vitamins, and are essential for good skin and coat condition and a healthy immune system. Fats are also important in improving the taste and digestibility of food.

Carbohydrates

Common carbohydrates like cereals, rice and pasta are an excellent energy source. Fibre also supports the digestive process.

Minerals

Minerals, such as calcium and phosphorous, are essential for strong bones and teeth, cell and tissue development, fluid balance and metabolic processes. Minerals must be carefully balanced; an excess of one can lead to a deficiency in another.

Vitamins

Vitamins are required in small amounts to help maintain growth, a healthy skin and coat, and to support the immune system. Too much of certain types can be harmful, whilst a deficiency in others can be equally damaging.

Fat soluble vitamins, (A, D, E and K) are stored in your dog's fatty tissues, whereas water-soluble vitamins (B complex and C) are excreted in the urine. Unlike humans, dogs do not require vitamin C.

Water

Water is essential for all living things and dogs are no exception. The amount of water dogs need depends on several factors including air temperature, exercise levels and whether or not they are eating canned or dried food. Water regulates the body's temperature, transporting nutrients around the body and removing waste. You should make sure your dog has access to clean, fresh drinking water at all times.

What not to feed

If you prepare your dog's meals from scraps or specially purchased meat, take care. These diets are often too high in meat and not rich enough in other important nutrients and minerals, like calcium. On top of that, some common human foods such as rhubarb, soya, onions, spinach, beetroot, and undercooked maize or kidney beans are poisonous to dogs. Chocolate can be extremely harmful, and should never be fed to your dog. As little as 3oz of cooking chocolate can kill a medium-sized animal!

Food supplements

Supplements are not necessary when a normal, healthy dog is being fed a complete and balanced food. However, factors like feeding table scraps, inconsistent exercise or stressful changes in routine can leave dogs with special nutritional needs.

Some pet owners believe that extra calcium should be added to the diets of pregnant and nursing bitches and growing puppies. Whilst it is true that more minerals are needed at these times, they should be obtained through a high quality, nutritionally balanced diet. Adding them out of proportion to other nutrients can contribute to skeletal deformities and other problems. A good quality manufactured puppy formula diet will provide your pregnant or lactating bitch with everything she needs.

Fifty (not quite) Years of Grouse Beating

Geoff Wood

My earliest recollections of Grouse beating go back to the late 1950's when I was at secondary school and about 13/14 years old.

The moor that I used to go on was Peak Naze and we all assembled at Blackshaw Farm. The first problem was getting there! At the time I lived in Hadfield, which was a 3 mile or so walk before starting, most of it uphill with a shortcut through Glossop Cemetery to get the legs moving. In those times shooting was on Saturday, so no need to risk having a day off school.

The organisers of the beating team were the two farming tenants of the moor, the brothers Harold and Robert Rowarth. I remember that I always preferred to avoid getting in Robert's team as he almost ran to get us lined out, and it was a struggle to keep up with him. All of the lining out was on foot, no lifts in 4 wheelers! We carried our lunches until the end of the first drive when they could be left in the butts. I can't remember the footwear, but probably black boots or wellies. My water proof was my elder brother's oilskin cycling cape. One of the farmers had a smart pair of gaiters – the top part of a pair of wellies slipped down over his boots!

The majority of the beaters were schoolboys, out for the day to get a bit of pocket money, which I recall was about 12/6d for the day. My own personal motive for going beating was to get money for new fishing tackle. The beaters were organised and controlled by the few adults on the team. I cannot be certain, but I don't recall any of the beaters having dogs. I suppose we were set off on the drives by someone with a watch. At the end of the day, our main interest in the bag was how heavy it would be to carry off the moor, back to Blackshaw Farm. This for me was followed by the 3 mile walk back home!

Once I started work, I had little contact with the beating scene – diverting my interest to many other things!

Some time during the late '70s, following a chance meeting with Brian Finan at Mottram Show, I got my first HPR, a solid liver GSP that led to my acquaintance with the Northwest Group. It was ownership of this GSP that re-kindled my interest in hunting on the moors. During the early 80's I became acquainted with Maurice Kettlewell, the North-West Water gamekeeper on Crowden Moor, he invited me to join his beating team, shooting day was Saturday. At this time, almost all of the beaters were adult men and only a couple of us had dogs. I had the impression that most of the beaters at this time were out for a day walking the moors, and not particularly interested in the sporting side of the day. The lining out of the beaters was controlled by the gamekeeper as was the start of the drives, according to the timescale agreed with the guns. We had the luxury of a lift in the back of a Land Rover to Holme Moss before the first drive. Bags in those times were usually between 10 & 20 brace, but often in single figures. As Maurice developed the shoot and shoot day planning, two way radios were introduced along with a system of two teams of beaters, which allowed an increase from 4 to 6 drives on a day. Another significant move was the increase in the numbers of dogs in the beating line, particularly HPR's. A fair proportion of them were North-West Group members. During good seasons (for Crowden) the average bags increased to what I believe was a record to 53 and a half brace. One Saturday morning, everything changed – half way through the second drive, we were interrupted by a host of "antis", who had made their way onto the moor. Their protest was potentially quite dangerous as they were intent on stopping the shoot at all costs, including wrestling with one of the guns. The shoot captain gave the order to evacuate the moor when they started to roll boulders down the hillside towards the shoot members and vehicles. From then on Saturdays were out of the question.

By the end of the 1980's, Peak Naze Moor and Arnfield Moor were added to our area of cover. By this time, most of the beaters were "dog men" (and women)

Of course, throughout the latter period, HPR's very being used on Mossy Lea shoot, but that's another story.

We have enjoyed our sport on Crowden, Arnfield and Peak Naze moors up to this past season, but sadly, we have recently learned that Crowden and Arnfield have been let by the landowners (United Utilities) to the RSPB for 7 years – does this herald the end of Grouse Shooting in one important area of the Peak District?

In summary, what has changed and what remains the same?

Changes

The make-up of the beating line has gradually moved from youths out for pocket money, to adults out for a walk on the hills, to enthusiastic dog owners, out on the moor to enjoy seeing their dogs in action as well as the overall ambience of a sporting day.

The organisation has moved on to a more technical slant with two way radios being the norm these days. Shoot days – now almost exclusively mid-week to reduce the chance of "antis" getting involved, Clothing and equipment have improved technically as well as they have been made more affordable, rather than making do and hoping for the best.

Pressures on the land have increased from all sides. Agriculture, leisure, economy and ecology complicate the moorland habitat

Constants

The Grouse are still the same fascinating birds that defy predictions and fly as fast as ever.

The hills are just as long and steep as they ever were, just harder to climb (for me) these days.

The moorland weather, even in summer is as unpredictable as ever, all four seasons can be experienced during the relatively short Grouse shooting season.

GAME TERRINE

Recipes kindly provided by Phil Ackley (our Culinary Consultant)

For this terrine you can use a mixture of game meat, if using feathered game only, use breast meat for venison use fillet, you can mix and match to give different textures to the terrine

You will need
Loaf tins

For the forcemeat
500 g good quality sausage meat
200g chicken livers chopped
1 egg
1 tbsp chopped thyme
150 g blueberries
150 g pistachios
2 garlic cloves crushed
3 tbsp brandy
1 pinch salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the game
900 g pheasant, duck, partridge breast or venison fillet the choice is yours
3 tbsp sunflower oil
400 g streaky bacon

Method

- 1 Preheat oven 180* C gas 4
- 2 Put all the ingredients for the forcemeat in a large bowl and mix well. Set aside
- 3 Cut game meat into strips
- 4 Heat the sunflower oil in a frying pan over a medium heat and fry the game strips on each side until brown
- 5 Stretch the bacon using the back of a knife and use it to line a loaf tin. Line top to bottom leaving an overhang on both sides.
- 6 Take one third of the forcemeat mixture and place it into the loaf tin in an even layer
- 7 Now place a layer of chosen game meat on top of the forcemeat mixture
- 8 Repeat the layers until all the forcemeat and game have been used. Make sure to season well between layers
- 9 Fold the strips of bacon over the top of the filling and cover with a sheet of tin foil.
- 10 Place the loaf tin into a roasting tin and pour in enough water to come three-quarters way up the loaf tin. Cook for 1 hour 30 minutes. Remove from the oven and peel away the tin foil. Cover the cooked terrine with a board held in place with a weighted object. The board can be made of cardboard cut to fit neatly on top of the terrine. Wrap the board in cling film or foil before placing on terrine to avoid contamination. Allow to cool thoroughly before placing in the refrigerator to set completely at least 24 hours, when set remove from loaf tin and slice accompanied by your favourite chutney

Top tip, line the loaf tin with cling film before placing the bacon in, this will make removal of the terrine easier. Before lining with the cling film wet the sides and base of the loaf tin, this will help the cling film to stick to the side of the tin

HASLET (PORK MEAT LOAF)

Recipes kindly provided by Phil Ackley (our Culinary Consultant)

INGREDIENTS

675 g Lean minced pork

110 g slightly stale bread

1 Medium Onion finely minced

Caul Fat (Omentum) this is the fat that the stomach is enclosed in, ask your butcher to order this for you, if he can't provide it or doesn't know what it is give him the sack. If you unable to source the caul omit it from the Haslet, unfortunately the loaf tends to dry a little during cooking if it is not used

Pinch Ground Dried Sage

Salt and White Pepper

Method

Pre heat oven 170°C 325°F Gas 3

Soak the bread in water for 30 to 45 minutes

Squeeze the bread removing as much water as possible

Mix the bread with the minced pork, add the sage and season with salt and pepper to taste

Mould the mixture into a loaf shape, wrap with the caul

Place on a greased baking tray

Bake for 60 minutes

Allow to cool thoroughly before slicing

Top tip place the caul in warm water before use, this will allow the caul to become more pliable

Gundog Equipment

Loan & Sale

Eddie Kania

The Group carries stocks of training equipment for the convenience of the members. Often using a soiled dummy can be counter productive. Keep your dummies clean and replace them when they become old and tatty. Below is a selection of training equipment that we usually have in stock. Other equipment can be purchased through the group. Please see Eddie for a quotation.

DUMMIES

Puppy Dummies w. toggle

Intermediate Dummies

Dummies 1lb

Whistles

210

210

211

212

Thunderer 606

Leather Lanyards

Traditional Lanyards

Bolting Hare Elastic

Leads Rope

24" with clip

Choke chains

22"

24"

Long Blanks

Long Blanks RED

Short Blanks

Dummy Launcher O rings (Q)

Dummy Launcher O rings (TR)

Hi Viz Stretch Collar

Hand Made Leather Coat Slings

DVD

Pre-recorded DVD's have been donated by members of the Group. We have a selection of DVD's on HPR training. The above can be borrowed by members please see: Eddie Kania.

Dummy Launcher

Slightly different from the DVD's we need a £50.00 deposit returnable when the launcher is returned. There is no charge for the loan of the launcher. Blanks are available from Eddie

Embroidered Garments

North West Group



Polo shirts, Fleeces, Sweatshirts, and Caps are available. All have the GSPC emblem and North West Group embroidered thereon. Paul Dark can also arrange for your own items of clothing to be embroidered with these logos. Please see Paul at training classes or email on paul.dark@tiscali.co.uk

Insurance

Members should note that the insurance cover provided by the GSPC only covers official group activities. It is therefore advisable to make your own arrangement regarding insurance cover for other activities.

Hand Made Leather Dog Leads & Collars

All items are made from top quality bridle leather & hand stitched with waxed linen thread. Metal parts are made from cast brass & will not rust.

Because of the quality of materials used, apart from neglect, the products of my work should last a lifetime.

Several patterns of collars available including plain leather with buckle & D ring, leather & brass semi-choker etc.

Various lead types – Plain leather with trigger hook, plain leather slip with brass ring, plain leather to brass & leather semi-choker, "police" training style and "German" hunting type (round leather with stag antler fittings)

Also my popular "beaters coat slings", belts & gun slings.

Other non-standard items can be made to your request.

Enquiries to Geoff Wood - geoffwood46@sky.com or text to 07764 932773

**That's all for this year folks from
North of the Border!!!!**





SECRETARY: EDDIE KANIA,
DAISY BANK
LEADEN KNOWLE
CHINLEY
HIGH PEAK SK23 6DA

TEL 07974 168 188 FAX 01663 750973,
E-MAIL ekania@btopenworld.com

North West Group

REVISED 27.11.08 Dates and Venues for Training Classes during 2009

Meeting Times: -	Sundays	9.45 am. For a 10.00 am. To 12.00 pm
SUNDAY JANUARY 18 th	TANGLE HILL FARM, CASTLETON, MIDDLETON Gtr Manchester	
SUNDAY FEBRUARY 15 th	HOO MOOR TAXAL, WHALEY BRIDGE	
SUNDAY MARCH 15 th	LOAD BROOK, nr STANNINGTON	
SUNDAY APRIL 19 th	SOUTHDALE HOOTON ELLESMERE PORT	
SUNDAY MAY 17 th	RYLES WOOD, PLATTWOOD FARM, LYME PARK	AGM
SUNDAY JUNE 21 st	HOLLINGWORTH HALL, HOLLINGWORTH	
SUNDAY JULY 19 th	WATERGROVE, ROCHDALE	WORKING TEST.
SUNDAY AUGUST 16 th	GLAN LLYN UCHAF, BRYNFORD	
SUNDAY SEPTEMBER 20 th	BRUSHES CLOUGH, SHAW	PROGRESS TEST
SUNDAY OCTOBER 18 th	BRUSHESCLOUGH, SHAW	PROGRESS TEST
SUNDAY NOVEMBER 15 th	BOAR FOLD, CHISWORTH	
SUNDAY DECEMBER 20 th	RINGSTONES, FURNESS VALE	FOLLOWED BY XMAS LUNCH

VISIT www.hprgroup.co.uk for up to date group information

PLEASE NOTE.- If you do not attend training classes regularly please check venues with any member of the committee or the secretary. On arrival at the parking areas for the various Training Grounds please keep to the following Guidelines. Park neatly and quietly. **Keep all dogs in vehicles until we are ready to move off. Dogs to be kept on a lead, until we arrive at Training Grounds. Try to exercise dogs before arrival for training.**

DOGS TO BE KEPT ON LEAD AT ALL TIMES UNLESS UNDER INSTRUCTION