

From the Publisher's Desk

Welcome to the April/May issue of Bird Dog & Retriever News. Thank you: subscribers, organizations and advertisers for supporting us.

Well as I finish this issue going to press I hope I'm watching the last snow of the year. You couldn't ask for a better year for the birds, not too cold or too much snow. If we don't get rain-outs around the Memorial Day hatch, expect a banner year.

So what do we have in this issue? We start with our Meet The Breeder column I have been doing for 25 years. I have done articles on most of the great breeders and trainers in the midwest. This issue we took a drive a few years ago to pick up a springer for Ellen at one of the top ten English Springer Spaniel Kennels in the world: Jim & Cindy O'Shea's of Flush 'Em High Kennel of Glendive, Montana.

With completive shooting season upon us Frank Neumayer get's us ready. George Hickox takes us through some of the basics of dog training. The medical issue this time is heartworm and how to prevent it. As banquets thin down our calender is filling with hunt test and field trial dates.

Our Buy the Book selection takes us to the Banks of The Chesapeake and the waterfowl hunting they do there. With the latest school shootings the NSSF, our industry representative, is working to get the RIGHT laws in place AND ENFORCED!

We got you a GREAT recipe: Quail & Bacon, who could ask for anything more?

Finally we end with the latest state news, some pictures of our NEXT generation of hunters and a laugh or two.

I have one last simple request for those people that may have never ventured out to a dog event, find a Hunt Test in your area and go out for a few hours without your dog and get involved, it's well worth the time!

Enjoy!

See you in the field and at the shows & events!

Dennis Guldan

Publisher Bird Dog & Retriever News
E-mail: Publisher@Bird-Dog-News.com Worlds largest read hunting/dog publication A great publication, that makes you smile!

Meet The Breeder

Mountain Springers

By Dennis Guldan

Serendipity is a powerful thing. It makes a good portions of the decision we have in life. Such was the case then Ellen and I were looking for a Springer for her. We like to own two dogs of similar age so they can grow and learn to hunt together. It makes it easier and cheaper to replace carpets and furniture every dozen years as the both pups turn two than every six if we get them at that pace.

So, when Mark & Sophie of Pine Shadows contacted us saying the female pup we had sent them a deposit for never appeared in the litter we were on a fruitless hunt for a springer litter of the quality expected from a dog writer.

As we were researching MN & WI breeders my phone rang. It was Jim O'Shea one of the God's of the Springer World from Glendive, Montana. Jim & Cindy O'Shea's Flush 'Em High Kennel was well known for a quality kennel that produced great dogs that looked and scored well. The only problem I hate shipping dogs. God knows what can happen to a pup in the process. But I knew he had great dogs and Serendipity DEMANDED I ask: "Jim do you have any upcoming litters with an unspoken for female in it?"

Jim said, "Well yes I have a great little female just born, but I called about advertis-

ing." Well you know how men are and I'll let you figure out the rest of the conversation. Needless to say, below this article is an advertisement for Jim & Cindy and Ellen got her springer.

So, a month or so later we rented a compact car to do a 8 hour one way death run to Montana and back on the rainiest weekend we have seen in years.

When I'm on a trip away from home I like to do my Meet The Breeder column. I have one requirement to doing the column: I MUST see the kennel. The kennel tells you a lot about the people and their dogs. The problem is Jim & Cindy's kennel is in the middle of some great bird country. But it's also five miles in on some great wet country dirt roads. Not a great fit for an economy rental car designed for freeways.

If you are from the snowy north and you don't get stuck



you know the trick of NEVER stopping your vehicle. So, when the 4x4 passed us and just stared at us, shook her head and asked if we needed help I'm sure she thought we were crazy city folk. Driving in axle deep mud in god's country, thankfully the driver was on her way out to the kennels we missed as we passed and took us to see our new springer.

We walked into the well-kept kennel to see Cindy waiting for us with the soon to be named Sadie in her hands. Ellen & Sadie bonded in minutes.

We never met Jim, he was out of town giving a springer training seminar. When Jim is not hunting upland game birds and waterfowl he is training all breeds of gun dogs or judging AKC Spaniel field trial events, for some 33 years. He & Cindy grew up in Pennsylvania but have been in Montana since 2013.

Sadie fit in well at home and took no guff from our older and much bigger Vizslas. We have had Sadie for 18 months. I always choose the smallest female in the litter because I like a smaller dog and to stay alive and be the smallest you had better have spunk and Sadie is all of that and more. Some days perhaps TOO much drive for us. She would retrieve 20 hours a day if someone would throw the ball. Every night we have a 9 O'clock ritual of putting the tennis ball to bed i.e. the drawer. Else we would get no sleep. And compared to our two Vizslas twice her size and age, she is the unchallenged boss at 18 months of age.

In the field: she's good looking, biddable, quarters well and her great natural genes means she's equally can handle big range pheasant and close working ruffed grouse. After some training

this spring Ellen hopes to start her in area Hunt Tests.

Would I get another dog from Jim & Cindy O'Shea? In a heartbeat. If you want more information about Flush 'Em High Kennel Springers they have a great website at www.Flushemhigh.com or give Jim a call at: 717-673-0664 they are good people. 

A bartender is just a pharmacist with a limited inventory.



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Shooting

Preseason Prep

By Frank Neumayer

Question: It's a new year, and I'd really like to get a head-start on improving my shooting performance. I know of a few things I need to work on... but what extra advice can you give me that will help improve my scores right from the start?

Answer: It's been a while now since the last registered clay target season ended. Many of us switched from our competitive clay target guns to our good old trusted field guns as the fall hunting season started.

For several months now we've enjoyed the thrill of live birds, foul weather, trying to keep warm and dry, and the distinct aroma of wet and dirty hunting dogs in the back of the rig. However, with the holidays behind us and spring in the forecast, our thoughts again are moving toward the up-coming competitive shooting season... and whether or not we'll be ready to perform as well as we would like.

Some serious questions arise as we contemplate just how ready are we for what's ahead? As we all prepare for the upcoming season, most of the questions I'm hearing from my fellow shooters center on three main areas of concern.

Am I physically ready? Are my guns and loads, new or old, up-to-speed? What goals and objectives should I set, and what should I be doing now to get properly prepared?

With these questions in mind, let's look into the details a little more, and try to dispel some of those preseason concerns.

First Point: You'll need to honestly evaluate your current physical and mental condition, and then seriously address whatever may be wrong or has changed. As a senior shooter, I've become painfully aware of my long time, nagging aches and pains, and how they can negatively affect my shooting focus, strength, and stamina.

Every year I find myself asking the same questions. How are my neck, arms, shoulders, back, knees, and ankles doing...

are they OK? If not, what do I need to do to get back on track?

For example, a friend of mine just went through some painful foot surgery just so he can be healed-up and ready to go when the competitive shooting season starts. Above



all, don't forget about your vision. My eyes have always been my main concern. For that reason I have them checked every year to make certain everything is fine, and that my prescription is still accurate.

As in other sports, good performance is tied directly to good physical and mental conditioning. If you are serious about competing, then it's imperative that you do whatever is necessary to properly prepare yourself for peak performance and success. "It's not the will to win that matters - everyone has that. It's the will to prepare to win that matters." Paul (Bear) Bryant

Second Point: Now is the time to reevaluate your guns, gear, and loads. If nothing has changed, and you're staying with what's been successful, then this part of preseason preparation will be fairly easy.

However, if new guns, new loads, and new lenses are in you plans, then you better allow for the necessary work required to get everything dialed-in correctly. If this is the case, then getting the proper gun fit and pattern performance becomes critical. Quality time on the pattern board, along with shooting at plenty of properly set targets, will become the drill. Remember,

be spending most of the season just trying to catch-up.

Third Point: Focus your attention on revisiting the shooting basics and fundamentals. Whether you've been shooting for years, or you're fairly new to the sport, having a solid understanding of the basics and fundamentals, coupled with proper execution, will bring about success more than anything else you do.

Start with revisiting your basic set-up and positioning for each break from each post or station. Then move through your gun mount, hold points, break points, and follow-through, for each and every type of target presentation. Having some experienced help or coaching - that extra set of eyes - will certainly help in making sure you're still doing everything correctly. Don't be surprised to find out that you'll need to re-establish the proper discipline, patience, timing, and movement needed to be breaking every target every time.

Now is also the time to focus on setting your personal shooting goals and objectives for the season. I recommend you choose no more than three. All of your goals should be challenging and attainable, with one set aside as being a stretch goal. This stretch goal is one that can only be achieved if you are willing and able to apply that extra hard work and commitment necessary to make it a reality.

Another important factor to being properly prepared for the upcoming season is to establish a good practice regiment, one which you will continue with throughout the entire season. To make your goals and objectives a reality, you'll need to make a personal commitment to dedicate enough time each week toward improving and perfecting your game.



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A skeptic is a person who, when he sees the handwriting on the wall, claims it's a forgery.