GSPIN
Newsletter of
The German Shorthaired Pointer Club of Indiana

**President’s Message**By Charlie Edwards

    It was suggested to me recently at a club function that our club has become too slanted to the ‘show dog people’ and getting away from what the club should really be about which is promoting the German Shorthair as a fine hunting dog.  While I acknowledge that many of our members have been quite prominent in conformation on a national level, I might add that many of them are also the same people who help organize and run many of our field events.  That’s the beauty of the German Shorthaired Pointer; the Germans bred it to be a multi-function hunting dog and a great companion family dog that is good-looking to go with it so it makes sense that they would be quite competitive in the show ring; much like the Pointers owned by the wealthy stockmen who formed the Westminster Kennel Club dog show to show off their breeding stock.

    When the GSPC of Indiana was first formed, it was largely comprised of people with field trial interests so the club tended to focus on that type of dog and event.  As the club grew, it became more diverse to represent the interests of a larger group of members.  That diversity is what has made the GSPC of Indiana one of the best GSP clubs in the country.  We try to be sensitive to the varied interests of our membership and to welcome everyone to our “family”.  Currently there is a nice blend of people with field and show interests.  We have been extremely fortunate to be well represented for a long time now in the show dog world by our members’ dogs at national events winning many placements.  This year was a banner year for our club as I pointed out in our last newsletter.  One of our member’s dogs bred and shown by club members won Best of Opposite Sex at our National breed specialty show.  That is an amazing honor that few have had the fortune to achieve.   But also at this same National specialty show we honored two of our former members’ dogs that were National Field Trial Champions.  What has changed, you say??  The field trailers have retired and have not been replaced by others willing to devote the money and time to that venue but instead have been replaced by people active in the conformation world and performance events such as hunt tests and agility.  We used to have people active in the obedience area.  That is not only another good competition particularly for retired show dogs but also it is applicable for field training.   You should teach your dog basic important commands like “come” before turning them loose. This is the ebb and flow of club dynamics.  Our course is determined by those people who want to be active in club events and help organize and promote them.  We currently put on four hunt tests a year (two in the spring and two in the fall) and ONE specialty show a year (We used to do two).   Four hunt tests in one calendar year are all AKC will allow.  One of our members recently organized a fun field day at Glens Valley Conservation Club where we hold our hunt tests.  It was really hot so the actual bird work was held to a minimum but people were able to get their young dogs out on some chukar left by the Cocker field trial just held and do some water work in the ponds.   There was also a really nice skeet setup that gave me a chance to try out that 16 gauge I told you about in the last newsletter.  It was a great day and just for fun.  I think we should have more of those because it is a chance for members to socialize in a non-competition setting and a club should promote the fun part of owning our dogs.

**For this club to continue to grow we need to reach out to everyone with a German Shorthaired Pointer and let them know we have something for them and their dog.**   It may mean you have to help put it on but we can do it.  But you say the show dog stuff has no value to me, I just want a hunting dog.  That’s fine but I still encourage you to come check out those conformation events.  You may learn something about your dog and you can help support your club.  Show events were designed to show off the best breeding stock.  Yes to some, dog shows have evolved into their own little world but the basic point of them is still a competition to pick the dog with the best conformation and thus be the best breeding candidate.  Ideally, particularly with sporting dogs, you would then go to the field where they would display their hunting capabilities also.  But the GSP is a multi-function dog where it can display its’ abilities at a variety of events.  **They are all important.**  If we strictly cater to one interest group we risk excluding others interested in belonging to our club.

    More importantly we need all of our members’ input on the types of events we are doing and YOUR HELP in putting them on.  All of the club members involved with the Glens Valley Conservation Club have been tremendously helpful in putting on our field events and I want to thank them for all their efforts.  It has become so hard to find places to put on hunt tests, etc. that we need to make sure we appreciate access to facilities like this.

    Also I want to give **Chris Snyder** a big thank you for organizing the fun field day in July at Glens Valley.  He suggested it and he made it happen and, even though it was really hot, it was great fun for those that attended.  I hope we can find a way to do some more of that type outing for the club.  There was something for the whole family in a non-competition atmosphere so it made for a relaxing afternoon.

    I apologize for it being so long between newsletters and board meetings but it has been a busy summer.  We will try to pick it up now that we are into fall to plan our club activities for the near future.  If any of you have some ideas, email me at: pntsttr@wcrtc.net or give me a call at 812-967-3444.

    It’s cooling off a little and I already have my first grouse-hunting trip planned.  This year Ricky (also known as Ch. Pointsetter’s Aftershock JH) and I are going to upstate Michigan.  It has been almost thirty years since I have been up there so I am quite anxious to see the Au Sable River again.  I hope to see you at our upcoming hunt test.

Charlie

 **4H & JUNIORS REPORT**

    The GSPCI is ALWAYS bustin’ with pride when we have the next generation to brag about.  Must mean we are doing something right when our dog activities can become a family affair and those among us less age-challenged catch the fire of our enthusiasm.  **Allison Moos**won Grand Champion in Dog Showmanship at the Hamilton County 4H Fair, going on to the State Fair to do her County and her instructor (our own **Becky Feigh**) proud.  **Caise Conley** enjoyed lots of success at various local county open 4H matches preparing for agility, obedience and showmanship competition at the county fair.  Caise had to forego the performance events this season after her Molly suffered a serious injury.  Undaunted, Caise has turned her attention to Molly’s young son “Argo”, and the pair won Henry County Reserve Grand Champion in Showmanship and are doing well in the AKC breed and Junior Show ring.  With Argo’s help Caise has moved from the Novice to the Open classes in Junior Showmanship, and Argo recently won his first AKC point at the Michiana KC Sept 25.

**Happenings & Brags**

     Some of our members are “Duals” meaning in this case that they also are members of the new Mid-Tennessee German Shorthair Club.  This impressively enthusiastic bunch hosted a Parent Club approved Water Test in August.  Our own ‘dual talented’ Greg Veatch served as a judge for this event, calling on his years of experience working with Labs.  Congratulations to GSPCI  members and their dogs who earned certification as Novice Retrieving Dogs at this test:  Mike & Lisa Stovall’s “Chip”, their girl “Maddie”,  and June & Johnny Johnston’s “Sonny”.

    Indiana dogs continue to excel in the show ring over the summer.   White River Let’s Dance owned by Char Rutar and Becky Feigh is a new Champion with three majors to her credit as well as Best In Sweepstakes and the GSPC of Ohio specialty.  Willow Run’s Violet Moon  owned and bred by Kari Sowinski was Winners Bitch at the Muncie KC show August 12.  Littermate Willow Run’s Montgomery Blue owned by Bill Moore took the points at the Greater Lafayette KC show September 12.  Travis Crum & Corey Rogers’ boy Smokeyrow’s Where I come From earned championship points at the Muncie KC show August 14 and the Anderson KC show August 15.  White River WP AllMale Revue knocked off his second major win in Lexington Ky at the Bluegrass Cluster August 28.

    Rick and Becky Feigh’s Ch White River’s Ziggy Stardust, JH has had himself a whale of a summer. He became a Canadian Champion in August on a trip to Winnepeg where he also won Best of Breed at the Canadian National Specialty Show, and three Sporting Group Firsts.  Ziggy also topped the Sporting Group twice more “Stateside” in Danville, IL  August 29 and  Belleville, IL.  September 4.

**Heat Stress and Other Field Care Tips**

**From Bob West (reprinted from Pheasants Forever Fall 2004 Journal)**

    While hunting and training, it is not unusual for field dogs to sustain various injuries.  Owners and handlers should have a field medical kit, available at many stores, and be prepared to administer first aid to an injured dog whenever necessary.

    The biggest problem during early fall hunting is poorly conditioned dogs worked too long and too hard.  Another very real concern today is that many dogs are overweight and with weight comes a greater risk.  Heat stress became a national issue last fall when many dogs dies during the unusually warm South Dakota pheasant opener.  Gun dogs need six to eight weeks of conditioning prior to the hunting or field trial season to help build up muscle and cardiovascular systems, and to generally “toughen up” so they can perform safely.

     It is also important to keep dogs hydrated.  Remember, even slight dehydration results in poor performance and problems with over heating.  When working a dog, we advise giving it a little bit of water often, but don’t let your dog gulp or drink too much.

    As dogs begin to tire or stress, you’ll notice less animation.  Dogs have facial expressions too, not unlike people, that show concern or apprehension as stress or overheating become factors.  An experienced handler can tell fairly easily.  They watch for a slowed gait, less tail action and other indicators of stress.

     Dogs may slow their pace even thought they are trying to do their job.  If they wobble or pant excessivley or excitedly, the dog may be approaching real problems and should be stopped from hunting or work, moved to a cool shady, well-ventilated area and cooled down.

    When your dog can’t cool fast enough, the brain begins to protect itself by shutting down different body functions, panting accelerates and sounds dry and shallow and with less effect.  Under these conditions it makes good sense to flush the dog’s mouth and clear the tongue to allow for more eficient cooling too.

    A dog’s respiratory and circulatory systems are very important to temperature maintenance.  Blood flows to organs such as the tongue, gums and lungs and is cooled by the panting action that moves air across.  At the same time, critical gas exchange occurs as the lungs dissipate carbon dioxide and acquire needed oxygen.  The cooled, oxygenated blood then re-circulates to cool and supply oxygen to the internal organs.

    If a dog shows signs of overheating, immerse it in cool water or spray it with a hose.  If water is not available, apply ice packs to its head, neck and belly.  Move it to a cool place.  Use squirt bottles of cool water to flush its mouth.  Monitor rectal temperature if possible, and consult a veterinarian quickly.

    Editor’s Note:  Mr. West’s words above caution against overworking a dog out of condition and overweight.  Coincidentally, the Veterenary News pages of the September AKC Gazette report some pretty stiff numbers on canine obesity resulting from a recent and very large study.  In addition to the dangers noted above, obesity has been definitely linked to many other health problems in dogs; hypothyroidism, ruptured cruciate ligament, urinary tract disease, cardiovascular problems, glucose intolerance and diabetes, high blood pressure, immune dysfunction, bladder and mammary cancer.  Since this newsletter is about dogs first, and the resources consulted are veterinary, we won’t mention but let y’all infer that it might be a good idea for both dog and hunter to start a conditioning program now, in anticipation of a great hunting season.

**Fall Hunt Tests Set for Oct. 30 & 31**

     Your premium lists are enclosed, and the rally cry now goes out to all GSPCI members to come to Glens Valley Halloween weekend, smile and welcome newcomers and visitors, roll up your sleeves and work your butt off doing whatever menial or glorified task needs done, and have a great time!   Chairman Jason Barile (317-882-8862, or jason\_annabarile@insightbb.com) is short-handed this time around due to some other commitments taking away some of his key staff.  He’s a new father and far too busy changing diapers to find the time to spend hours on the phone begging for help.  Give him a break, and a call, to let him know you will be there to plant birds, start the line, serve as gunner, dish out chili, record scores, hand out ribbons, clean up garbage, tend to the horses, play host to the judges, park cars, break up fights, catch loose dogs, create a diversion for the AKC rep, or whatever else may come up.  If you can’t find Jason, call Charlie.  Reread Charlie’s message on the first page and for God’s sake don’t sit back and wait to be asked to join in on an important activity all about our breed and so very rewarding.

Casie Conley and “Argo” placing first in Junior Showmanship class.

 Mike Stovall with a very “Hands On” approach to training his dog for the ‘Novice Retrieving Dog’ certificate and title awarded by the German Shorthaired Pointer Club of America.

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