

KEYSTONE RETRIEVER CLUB, INC.

Presents

RETRIEVER TRAINING WORKSHOP THE AMATEUR-S PERSPECTIVE BY JOHN CAVANAUGH

On behalf of the Officers and Board Members we would like to WELCOME you all to our Spring 2000 retriever handlers training seminar. We hope you find our presentation informative and enjoyable. John has prepared this agenda based on the information received in your questionnaires. Our topic progression may not, in all cases, represent a complete orderly training program. We left out what most of you conveyed that you can already do well.

Thanks for Attending.....

KRC extends it gratitude for the use of the property **ARebel Ridge Farm.®**

THE AMATEUR-S PERSPECTIVE

More art/ tactics than science/ rules.

WEAKNESSES (lack of)

Grounds, Help, Birds
Polished Skills
Winter water
Winter day light
Training in trial environment

STRENGTHS

One-on-one rapport with your dog
Time to work out problems
Your agenda / your pace
Access to limited-access grounds (parks, etc.)

★ - Indicates new text or subject from last year

Agenda	
Time	Area
Day 1	
8:00 - 8:30	Check-in Notebooks and Meal Tickets
8:30 - 9:00	Orientation
9:00 - 9:30	Intro Remarks: Review Manual, Agenda, Key Ingredients
9:30 - 10:00	Force Fetch and Extensions to Pile Work
10:00 - 10:30	Collar Conditioning
10:30 -12:00	Double T Troubles: Bugging, Sloppy Sits, Discipline Casting
12:00 -1:00	Lunch
Pittman – Robertson, Your Training Notebook, Birds and Grounds detail	
1:00 - 2:00	Swim-by: How and Why
2:00 - 3:00	Cheating Work: water, land, and advanced drills
3:00 – 4:30	Transition to Cold Blinds: pattern blinds / blind drills Casting Drills, Lining Drills
4:30 -	Early Cold Blinds – water (taught), land cold, discuss literal casting
DAY 2	
7:30 - 8:00	Feedback, open forum questions
8:00 - 10:00	Marking Principles, early multiples, helper skills, teaching concepts
10:00 - 11:00	Steadiness and Manners Drills: intro's and remedial
11:00 - 12:00	Advanced Setup(s): fundamental tests and complexities, show / discuss
12:00 – 1:00	Lunch
Judging / Spectating, Amateur Training Schedule	
1:00 - 3:00	Advanced Setup(s)
3:00 - 4:30	Maintenance Drills: Shown and discussed, Advanced lining emphasis
4:30 -	Closing Remarks: Good citizenship, our future

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***RETRIEVERS SHOULD BE JUDGED ON THEIR NATURAL AND TRAINED ABILITIES**

Natural Abilities are of great importance and include

- Memory
- Intelligence
- Attention
- Nose
- Courage
- Perseverance
- Style

Trained Abilities include

- Steadiness
- Control
- Response to direction
- Delivery

The Ideal Retriever

- Marks the fall of a bird;
- Uses the wind;
- Follows a strong cripple; and
- Takes direction from the handler.

Retrievers should perform equally well on the land and in the water.
A retriever's performance should be a FINISHED job and pleasing to the eye.

TRAINING AND HANDLING APHORISMS / MINDSETS

- Believe what you see and react appropriately
- Walk in your dogs shoes - be empathetic
- Am I doing everything I can, right now, to help my dog succeed (or am I concerned with my own vanity)?
- Don't panic; this may be when your dog needs you the most
- Start your journey with the end in mind
- Our dogs will never be any better than we are (our shortcomings hold them back)
- Train a fast dog slowly and a slow dog fast (you set the tempo)
- ★ Watch for and respect behavior inflections
- ★ Education must precede expectation
- ★ Pressure: Appropriate level to change behavior (not more / not less)
- ★ Punctuate your commands!
- ★ Nervous? Abandon your fears, for your dog's sake!

INTRODUCTION

Why are we here?

- We love dogs and working with them
- Training and Succeeding is rewarding
- Because we are able (Health, Wealth and Friendly Cooperation)

Why are there dog events?

- More than the opportunity for immediate satisfaction
- Enhance the genetic pool with sound competent workers
- Winning/Passing results should exemplify this
- We ALL CAN'T succeed all the time
- We ALL CAN contribute to the protection and advancement of purebred dogs (AKC's purpose)

Why are we training the dogs we have now?

- To win/pass with them
- ALSO - to become better trainers for the dogs in our futures

PRINCIPLES OF TRAINING

Natural skills: Physically fit, running, swimming, hunting.

Expected and Intended Outcomes

- ★ You must be very confident about what the dog will do
- ★ You must be prepared to react (plan / tools)

Success Ratio:

- 70% without help or correction
- 15% Testing
- 15% Certainty of correction

★Note Keeping

- Inventory exposure to /status of fundamental skills
- Identify emerging problems
- Keeping balance: success/correction, land/water, marks/blinds, long/short, etc.
- Planning future training

Attitude / Confidence / Style Defined

- ★ Appearance of grace, even under pressure
- ★ Exuding Determination and high likelihood of success

Your Work Ethic: day after day, weather, planning, etc.

Consistent standards: obedience, steadiness, get in water, casting, head swinging, etc.

- ★ Establish good habits / avoid “bad baggage”

Selfish focus, as appropriate (your time is your time)

Birds: Pheasants and Ducks

★Physical Conditioning: dedicated exercise time, without the mental stress of training

House time, hunting, joining-up

Goals: Be CLEAR; start with the end in mind, write it down, visualize it.....

★If correction is needed on any aspect of a set-up, simplify the rest of the set-up. Avoid “piling-on” corrections for disparate faults.

GENERAL PROBLEMS / ISSUES

Introducing New Material

When to move on

Blocked? - Go around?

Escape Behavior

- Bolting, Shutdown, Cop-out

Handler Focus / Be Bold!

Highness: Trial vs. Training Behavior

Noisy

Moving on in difficulty (Hunt Test / Field Trial)

- Your Attitude
- Preparing Your Dog

Helping vs. Handle vs. Call back vs. Hunt it out

Repeating?

Attitude / Confidence / Style

Handling Strategies, Trial vs. Training

TRAINING SEQUENCES

Time of year: Water, Wind, Cover, Temperature, Next Event Date

Repetition of Concept → Singles → Multiples → Retired / Complexity → Singles (again)

Success / Attitude (Daily Schedule)

Keeping Pictures Clear and Pure

Avoid Conflicts among marking concepts / but strive for overall balance

★Blinds: isolate the component(s) of complexity and run multiple blinds on one component theme at a time

★Pre / Post Event: Avoid obvious situational contrasts

Singles for concentration / x - head swinging

- Reverse back - sliding
- Trial / Training Contrast Recognition (identifiable by dog)

Expected / Intended Outcomes and Success Ratios

Specific Trial Location Planning

- Cover / Terrain
- Type of Water
- Birds
- Size of Event

STYLE!

Style is apparent in every movement of a dog and throughout his entire performance, including:

- Gaiety of manner, approaching the line
- Alertness on line
- Eagerness and speed on retrieves
- Water entry
- Pick-up of birds
- Return with birds

Style makes for a pleasing performance, evidenced by:

- Alert and obedient attitude
- Fast determined departure, both on land and into water
- Aggressive search for the fall
- Prompt pick-up
- Reasonably fast return

WHISTLE AND CASTING SKILLS / CONTROL

Handling is a remote communication system

- Obvious use: Blind Retrieves
- Also, to re-connect with line and area of fall on marks

Fundamentals: Line / Go / Stop / Cast / Return

Teach Fundamentals independently; assemble them on the Double T

Prerequisites: obedience, force fetch, collar conditioning

Go / Line: Force fetch extensions: walking fetch, fetch / no fetch, directional fetch, stick remote pressure, collar fetch, and force to pile

Remote Stop (overlay whistle) :Obedience with collar reinforcement, steady drills in yard, remote sits on recall with rope, sits on route to mark with rope, sit to pile with rope and collar

Remote Casting / Three Hand Piles with Rope: left and right backs, return (overlay whistle) and casting drills. Hand throw 2 marks, send, stop, cast to other.

★Mini-T: assemble go, stop, casting and return (less than 50 yards, more rope than “e” collar)

Emerging from the yard/basics

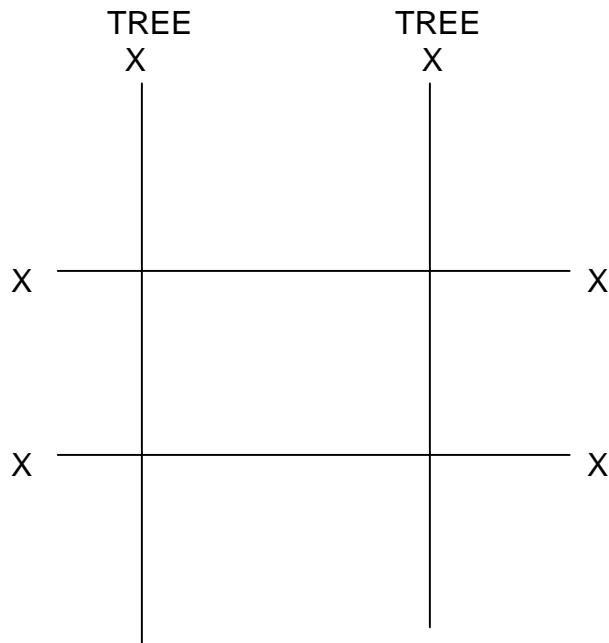
- Go to Double-T or Swim-by (depends on weather)

COMMENTS ON EARLY BASICS

- Dummy collar on pups 3 or 4 months old
- ★ Collar Conditioning (known obedience with collar reinforcement)
- Start with AHERE@
- “Ladder” and “Pyramid” fetch
- Remote Drop

DOUBLE AT@

- Double T Layout
- Discuss objectives
- Confront classic faults (i.e. bugging, no-go, popping, hunty attitude, flaring, slow sits)



Non-Conventional:

- two center lines
- tree as target
- don't stop and then cast where dog was going
- reverse order and run sideways

- Teach one center line (progressively move back)
- Teach other center line and alternate (Lining and Force)
- Teach long overs (Remote Casting)
- Send, whistle stop and cast to long overs
- Put in short overs, without teaching piles (dog learns to generalize a behavior)
- ★ Run by-s (bumper in mouth) on return. Casting around without popping (discipline casting)

Reinforce “back”, sit, here when sloppy / distracted

★Emerging from Double-T

- Go to Swim-by (weather permitting)
- Go to Transitions to Cold Blinds

★Transitions from Double T to Cold Blinds

Dog knows the rudiments of Go / Stop / Cast / Return with collar reinforcements.

In “Transitions” we take these skills to new physical locations and add distractions, to generalize the behaviors. Still a lot of “show and tell”.

★Pattern Blinds:

- Three 100-200 yard lines to recognizable yet new destinations. Start close, show pile, move back.

★Pattern Blind with Diversions:

- New location / single pile
- Identify the pile from line
- Run / Handle to pile
- Add Bird Boy to side, run to pile
- Throw / Pick up mark, run to pile
- Throw mark, leave it, run to pile, pick up mark.

Take the above Pattern Blind Drills to 3-5 new locations, until smooth. Generalized behavior emerges.

Go to early cold blinds

SWIM - BY

Ideal and compromise (cove, with anchored bumpers) water designs

Objectives

- Apply collar reinforcement to “go”, “stop”, “cast” and “here” in water
- Acclimate to sit/ tread water
- Initiate get-in / stay-in water behavior
- Build a skill for life long water discipline reminders

Steps (with rope on)

- Teach, then collar reinforce to pile across water
- Teach sit / water tread with rope: progressively longer waits (bumper in hand, throw left/right > cast, then recall to opposite end of channel)
- Establish piles as targets at ends of channel
- Teach / coax initially to stay in channel; walking with cast, rope to regain attention
- Meet at end/ pile, take bumper, sit on shore, throw toward other end of channel, coax to cast in/over....
- Progress to casting over with bumper in mouth
- Once dog has basic idea to go to pile across, sit/tread, cast (including bumper in mouth): apply nick for failure to maintain cast (i.e. dog looks at you for info after the cast: say “over” -nick- “over”)
- Keep arm down, extend arm only when the dog “pops” (looks back to you)

Future - uses

- Adjust water attitude when sloppy
- Correct return line
- Fight heavy cross-wind
- Out to sea and “dog-leg” blinds

★Emerging from Swim by

- Go to cheating singles (you are now able to handle into and while in the water)

CHEATING (SINGLES)

★Puppies:

- Recalls over obstacles (with rope): logs, boats, etc.
- Shift line to angle jumps

★Pre-force/Manual Teaching (with rope)

- Need high retrieve drive to rebound from “no-here”, when cheating
- Sensitivity to high success ratio
- Example: 3 correct, move back - fail? Move up for success again

White bumpers thrown progressively down channel

Handler moves line back

- Failure – “NO – HERE”
- Simply / move-up / re-throw to re-establish successful contrast (shows comparison)

Cheating Singles, rarely as memory bird

Complexity:

- Re-entry
- Angle entry
- ★ Angle exit

★Repeating: Yes, if line correction was effective on first try

Post swim-by dogs

★Recall vs. Handle - want to expose to both. Applying handling skills with clear visual objective, as well as not condone poor initial lines
(How to best reconnect with intended destination?)

★General rule on Recall vs. Handle

- Recall for poor initial line
- Handle for line deterioration (fading to shore)

★Emerging from Cheating Singles

- Go to channel blinds (show and tell first)

EARLY COLD BLINDS

Retrievers should respond quickly and eagerly to whistles and directions, meaning:

- Take the original line given
- Continue on that line
- Stop when commanded
- Take a new direction as given
- Continue on that line until bird is found

Blind retrieves should take advantage of natural distractions such as:

- Islands
- Points of land
- Sand bars
- Ditches
- Hedges
- Bushes
- Adjacent heavy cover
- Rolling terrain

PRINCIPLES

- Don't fiddle about precise lines – “kick-em –off”
- ★ Walk behind dog, as he runs, keeping the dog near to you. When you blow sit whistle, he will find you close by (like the distance from you when learning basics)
- Rope is a good idea
- Multiple planted blinds with emergency options
- Mix side sends and remote casts
- Chairs in foreground to distinguish lines
- Natural targets, like on Double T (trees, etc.)
- Avoid strong factors (Wind, Terrain, Cover)

WATER

- Channels - Long axis of swim- by pond is a good place to start
- Floating, anchored bumpers in swimming water
- Cheating singles type pictures, but less cheaty.

★Lining Skills, Progression

- Visible bumper/pile
- Known marker (trees, rocks, etc.)
- Choice of markers
- Relativity to markers (i.e. line between, chairs, tree, etc.)
- General acceptance of wherever you point/line them they will go!!!!

PUPPIES

Long Line (rope) useful on return (to control)

Food Training

- Obstacle training - recalls with rope, then food trust

Starting doubles (idea of going again) with hand thrown marks

Walking Marks: Let them watch gunner move

- Attention/ concentration (no struggle, watch fall to ground)
- Awareness that next one is in a new place
- White chairs in foreground
- Retrieving toys (vs. bumpers / birds)
- Multiple guns / helper calls immediate attention to next throw

Hand thrown concepts in yard

- Secondary selection
- Wipe-outs
- Hip-pockets, etc.

★ “Show and Tell”

- Using an older dog to demonstrate first (obstacles, water entry, etc.)

HELPER SKILLS

Communication

- Radios
- ★ Hand Signals (stand, throw, motion, Hey-Hey, retire, etc.)
- ★ Always acknowledge instructions / plan as understood before dog runs

Help Dog Connect / Reconnect with destination: Is dog looking? / attention drill / when to move / stand with dog at line.

Uses of the umbrella / camo net on retired guns

Reading dog's intent in route

- Watch eyes / momentum
- In front of gun?
- Getting in water?
- Looking for short bird vs lead out?
- Release from hunt to switch/ locale orientation while out of sight/ dirt-clod / stay-in-area drills

Intervention by helper

- Re-attract to hunt area
- Bird in air, then holler / shoot
- Body influences
- Blow whistle - safety /hearing / out of control

★Learning to shoot flyers

- Start with dead birds and shot gun (simulates flyer, too)

Preparedness

- Hazard Alert
- Check Handler Visibility
- Extra Birds
- Whistle
- Gun
- Umbrella / camo net

MARKING PRINCIPLES

Accurate marking is of primary importance!

A retriever should recognize the depth of the “area of the fall”, stay in it, then quickly and systematically “hunt it out”

Don't expect a dog to mark what the dog did not see.

- Focus vs. struggle / head swing
- Attention Drills
- Any Doubt? - Re-Throw!!

Run to bird (vs. Gun)

- ★ Targets (base of tree, rocks, mounds, etc.)
- Slots
- ★ Moving guns while dog runs to bird
- ★ “Y” drill (angle back vs. flat throws)
- ★ Long winger throws
- ★ Throws arching over visible features

Marks that require gun dependence (shorter birds, hip pockets, etc.)

- Cues and gun help

Independence

- Ability to re-claim line vs. “go straight”
- Allowing hunts, sometimes behind the gun

Water momentum vs. technical lines

- Birds in water, with a splash, or way out
- ★ Long, square entries / Re-entries

★Retired Guns

- Intro: singles, “go bird” use umbrella or camo net

Hunt Area: tighten / staying – in / perseverance

- Dirt clod drill
- Allow dogs to hunt (intervene only for safety, switching, going to old fall, totally lost)

★MARKING PRINCIPLES / GAME FINDING ABILITIES

Experience / Success

Goal in mind / discipline to maintain the idea

Use of eyes

Use of nose, hunting skill

Orientation, hunting skill

Clear destination: visibility (bird / gun), attention, steady, quiet (otherwise re-throw)

Emphasis: attention: (no noise, re-throws)

Clean of other influences (factors)

Balance of experiences

Lining Progression on marks:

- Stand-up Singles
- Stand-up Multiple
- Retired singles
- Retired multiples

Add factors: wind, cover, terrain, fatigue, water, diversions, distances (long / short)

Selection issues

Recovery Skills

- Re-orientation after hunt
- Re-claiming line after negotiating obstacles / factor

Gun dependence / orientation

Go at bird confidence

Line hold / re-claim

Depth perception

MODEL MARKING SETUP

★Awareness of wind and all other factors / hazards

★Trial vs. training season

- One-two weeks before event, keep in balance (long vs. short, etc.)
- Normal training should accentuate concepts until solid (perhaps out of balance)

Expected / Intended outcomes

Plan, tools available and communicated to helpers (radio, extra bird, etc.)

Discuss options on how to run a setup (i.e. single / multiple / pickup order, etc.)

Your agenda - head swinging, line manners, multiple mechanics, specific concept?

Side to watch / send from options

Variety:

- Attention drill
- Retired gun, teaching (umbrella techniques)
- Short diversions - anti-head swinging (delay, bulldog, deny, wipe-out)
- Friendly order, driving past

Help / Correction Options

Behind Gun?

MANNERS / OBEDIENCE

Retrievers should sit quietly on line or in the blind, walk at heel or assume any station designated until sent to retrieve.

Control Includes

- Line Manners
- Walk tractably "AT HEEL"
- Assuming and staying in position on line
- Remaining quietly beside handler after delivery
- Return promptly when called
- Also: no creeping, no bird stealing

Obedience

- Heel around bird piles / flyer crates
- Heel away from obvious line distractions (bird pile, honor dog, etc.)
- Holding Blind Practice
- Heel to line and back to blind while other dogs run
- Use of lead, simulate trial protocols

★STEADY

Steady

- Steady means NO movement

Establish good marking habits

- Don't let young dogs / pups break for birds before the bird settles on the ground / water.
- Don't let them struggle wildly while birds are thrown
- Do whatever you need to do to calmly restrain them until bird settles
- If they break or struggle, Re-throw until they focus
- If you are concerned about maintaining a pup's understanding to go, keep the marks very short and visible

Poor Steadiness usually results from:

- Sloppy standards
- Thinking they'll get every bird seen thrown

Steadiness Tools:

- Line-mat, defines where to sit / stay
- Slip cord, until formally steady
- Stick or E Collar, which ever makes your dog less "jumpy"

Steadiness Drills

- Start in yard with remote sits, while you walk around / randomly tossing bumpers (no retrieving)
- Practice mechanics of putting hand in, calling numbers before sending to a single white bumper
- Attention drills
- Multiple dogs on line
- Honor other dog before (cold honor) and after your turn

Steadiness Corrections

- "Sit" – nick – "sit" or "sit" – stick - "sit" (not "here": as the infraction was the motion, your correction should reinforce "sit")
- After controlled break / creep / head swing, almost always re-throw until your standard is satisfied

Degrees of difficulty to work into steadiness drills

- Gun shots / bird calls
- Other dog jealousy
- Short marks
- Splash in water
- Flyers
- Walk-ups

MULTIPLE MARKS

Anticipation / habit of going again and again

Mechanics of Multiples (practice for handler and dog)

- Setting - up, watching, move from bird to bird, Return / Delivery, Lining-up, Footwork, Hands, Voice, Bird Handling (you and the dog)

Easing Into Multiples: Bird in mouth, diversions off line.

Momentum multiples vs. technical / stressful setups

- Just Go Get 3 or 4 birds vs.
- Key Concept Doubles vs.
- Line Critical Singles

★Early Teaching of Multiple Marks

Pre-requisites

- Steady enough to focus on marks (slip cord)
- Reasonable return / delivery
- You must have control over situation
 - Request help as needed
 - Physical barriers (fence / tree) to prevent switch / return to old fall
 - Use Factors (wind, terrain) to help lead dog to memory bird

ADVANCED MARKING

Retired Guns

The Difficulties are:

- Depth Perception
- Attraction / Repulsion of Diversions

Cheating Elements on Retired Guns

- Almost Never as memory birds
- ★ As singles: Good Drill work

Doing the Impossible Test (at the trial):

- If conventional rules aren't working, Try an alternative

Water Marks:

- Resist Temptations to always setting-up technical lines
- Need a regular dose of successful (go - get - um) water marks

FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFICULT TESTS

Cycle through these Each Season / Each Year

- Short (retired) guns / secondary selection
- Long (retired) guns
- Long Swims / Stay in
- Across points and Re-entries
- Poison Birds
- Long Blinds / Control

★CLASSIC CONCEPTS / CONFIGURATIONS

(READ JIM SPENCER'S BOOK "RETRIEVER TRAINING TESTS")

- Hip Pocket
- Behind Chair
- Converging
- In-Lines
- Over and Under
- Mamma-Pappa

CORE COMPLEXITIES

As your dog master the fundamental tests, begin adding these complexities to the set-ups:

- Distance (Drive / Fatigue and Depth Perception)
- Diversions, tight or remote
- “Tightness” (or lack of): Lines and Falls
- Sloping Terrain
- Cross-Wind
- Cover: High Cover / Long Birds (tough going / dragback scent) Shorter Cover / Check Down Birds (easy to over run)
- Retired Guns (Depth Perception)
- Live Bird Attraction

BIRD PLACEMENT IN TRAINING

GENERAL

Water: In the Water, with a splash, or Well up and out
Consider: Hard to get to, Easy to find
Easy to get to, Hard to find
Avoid conflicting messages from bird to bird
Momentum: Long / Square water entries: Friendly water work

MARKS

★ Retired guns: Avoid cheating memory birds situations (without the gun exposed, you can't clearly read dog's intent to cheat vs. having mis-marked line to bird)
River Marks with weighted bumpers (simulates cross-wind)

BLINDS

- ★ Avoid tapering away shoreline as destination (always results in giving in to shore)
- Know exact location; avoid "HUNT IT UP" ending

REPEATING

Natural behavior for a dog = back-trailing, scent orientation (it's hard for people to appreciate this - we have poor noses)

A lot of field testing is based on tight, but distinct, line recognition that is sight oriented.

Much of our training requires that sight orientation skills over-ride scenting instincts.

Repeating lines to the same destination reinforces the "wrong" navigation skills.

Better to repeat the concept (not the spot) under "cold" scenting circumstances.

Yet, in a measure much less frequent than people seem to think, repeating the same retrieve may be beneficial.

★Don't repeat marks unless:

- Clear potential for visual orientation (correct line / destination choice is easily distinguished)
- On initial (failed) attempt, there was successful intervention and re-orientation was achieved (clean handle, for example)

ADVANCED BLINDS

MODEL BLIND SETUP

★ Awareness of wind and all other factors / hazards

Expected / Intended outcomes

Strategies / Remedies Planned

Come to Line

- Line - up: Push / Pull, use of Hands / Feet, side to send from

Initial Line

- Plan Approach to/exit from Hazards

★ Handle Away from Hazards and Into Visibility

Momentum Preservation

- Allow to fight factors, even if off line. Re-orientation cast should be easy
- “Reading the Momentum Gauge”: Whistles and Corrections and Attrition run it down
- Don't let young dogs get into “Deep Holes”: down wind, down hill, along shoreline
- ★ Prevent trouble: Quick intervention, don't hope for dog to discover his error and re-gain his line

End Hazards

- Come-in Whistle, Downwind Drift tendency

Attitude: Components of blinds, Tune - up approach, Non- conflicting, Successful outcomes

Solve acute problems (tune-up approach) before attempting more advanced skills: (popping, whistle stops, etc. must be ironed-out first.)

ADVANCED BLINDS (cont)

★Effective Casting (Trial vs. Training)

- Anticipation / Planned approaches to and exits from Hazards
- ★ Maintain standards in training (literal casts)
- ★ Maintain survival at the trial (momentum casts) and if the first cast didn't work get more suggestive / emphatic (but keep your cool)

★Rarely run a single complex water blind in training (too pass / fail, non-instructive)

Components / Tune-Up (Series) Approach

Cold Drills, Ending in Successful Understanding

Examples for drills:

- Entries
- Re-Entries
- Cast into Water
- Stay-Ins
- Up & Outs
- Poison Birds
- Chair Drills
- Past / Over / Off Points
- Obstacles

Complexity of Blinds

- Diversions, poison birds
- Tight Lines/ Multiples Blinds
- Factors: Wind, Terrain, Cover, Distance, etc.
- Water entries

★Typical Problems on Blinds

- Lack of solid basics
- Control at Distance
- Hunty Attitude
- Bugging

MAINTENANCE / COMMUNICATION DRILLS

Wagon Wheel Lining (with Guide Stick and Pull Tab)

- Slots / Row of Trees
- Occasional Long Retrieve, for drive attitude

Push - Pull Drill, Follow Inside Leg

Heeling Drills

- Control Leg nearest dog, heel forward and backward
- Handler Move/ Dog Called into Position, 360 heeling
- ★ 1/3/5 Step heeling, figure 8, etc.

Water Drills

- Line-In
- Cast-In
- Stay-In
- Point Drill
- Straight-in recalls

Tune-Up Drills

Marking Drills

- Attention
- Dirt Clod
- Moving Guns
- Slot to Bird
- "Y" drill

Casting Drills

- Walking Baseball
- Wagon Wheel: straight back becomes "no-hands"
- ★ Split back pile, for direction change reminder

"Chinese" Set-ups

- Marks (simple) combined with blinds, run in "CRAZY" orders

HANDLING STRATEGIES

GENERAL

Consider Where You Don't Want The Dog to Go

- How Can You Influence to Go Where You Want:
 - Side of Send, Lining, Voice, Order of Pick-up
- What Have Other Dogs Done? Should You Expect a Different Result?
 - Consider Alternative Tactics!!!!
- Wind Awareness: Influence on Line; Scent Cones
- ★ Awareness of all factors / hazards
- ★ Awareness of dog / handler visibility
- Plan Side to Watch / Send from on Each Bird
- Plan Side of line mat to send from on Each Bird; Paths?
- Paths from prior dog work?
- ★ Arrive in time to watch test dog and to view line conditions shortly before you run
- ★ Never give up! Earn every bird, every call back and every ribbon!
- ★ Don't be cynical. Concentrate on how to do the test, not on what's "wrong" with it!

BLINDS

Position Dog for next Likely Cast

- Handle Into Visibility and away from trouble

Handle Away from Adjacent Hazards

- Consider Dog's Turning Tendency on Sit Whistle

Handler Standing in Sunlight (facing to keep shadows off arm signals)

Approach the Line on a Path Suggesting the Initial Line to the blind

If Your First Cast Isn't Working, Stop!!! Slow Down!!! Try an Alternative

Communicate With: Voice and Whistle Modulation and Casting Tempo

Handle Right to the Bird; Stay Focused at End

Come-in Whistle; Tendency to Fade Down-wind.

MARKS

Approach the Line on a path for the dog to View Key Bird

Watch Dog's Head as Marks Are Thrown

- You Only Need to Watch the Fall of the Flyer

Shadow Awareness When You Signal

Preparatory and sending voice: drive vs. relax?

HUNT TEST PREPARATION (vs. FIELD TRIALS)

Handler May Carry Shotgun and Point at Birds

Walk-Ups

Remote Sends (Marks & Blinds) / handler in blind, dog outside

Remote Honor

Hidden Throwers

Short / Tight Marks

Winger Throws, Long and across hazards

Steadiness

Bird-Calls / Shots at Line and behind line

In Route / Return Diversions (Bull-Dog)

Send from Boat

Camo Handling Clothes

- ★ Sit (vs. stand) next to dog
- ★ Decoy spreads: water and land
- ★ Diversion gunner (mid-field) shoots at distant thrown bird

★JUNIOR TO SENIOR TRANSITION

Steady (should have been steady before attempting Junior, despite allowance for restraint)

Package of skills

- Calm in blind
- Heel to line
- No creeping
- No bird stealing
- Walk-up marks
- Honoring

Multiple marks (Land and Water)

Basic Blinds (Land and Water)

★SENIOR TO MASTER TRANSITION

Extra Steady / Honoring

Marking

More marking series (3 series and extra birds)

Triples / Quads

- Delayed marks
- Diversions marks / shots
- Marks and blinds integrated

Blinds

Diversions

Poison Birds

Scent

Tough Standards (Remember this is a foundation for the genetic pool)

★HUNTING PREPARATION

Upland

- Dog bell on walks
- Bull dog sits / master sit to flush
- Hunt-em-up drills

Water Fowl

- Remote stationing / steady perch
- Long sits / down, remote
- Big decoy spreads (push through)
- Camo vest acclimation
- Lie down / cover – up with tarp / blanket
- Bird Calls, up close
- Shots overhead

Game bird familiarity

Keep a few “usual” birds in freezer, show and tell before hunting

- Grouse
- Woodcock
- Dove
- Teal, etc.

TRANSITION TO FIELD TRIALS

The purpose of a retriever field trial is to determine the relative merits of retrievers in the field.

Can you accept a low success rate????

Do you feel you could benefit from Watching more accomplished Dog and Handler Teams?

Test Distinctions?

- Distance
- Concepts, Exaggerated
- Straight Lines and No Cheating

Derby: Pin-Point Marking; Much more than natural abilities

Qualifying: Difficulty varies by trial, the good dogs don't stay there long

Amateur: Pro-Trained Dogs and some poor handlers

Open: A Bare-Fisted Game: Sharp Dogs, Sharp Handling

★ GROUND (What you need / How to use)

List the grounds / water you need based upon fundamental skills and local event ground characteristics.

Inventory what you have, matching the characteristics to what you need.

Identify what you are missing and go find it.

Memorize N/S/E/W, to predict sun and wind conditions before you arrive on the grounds.

Plan where you need to be training according to learning phase and event schedule.

Finding water

- Topographic maps
- Dairy Farms

★BIRDS (Use, Storage.....)

Don't let bird use become a contrast of training vs. trials

Bird familiarization:

- Hold / delivery
- Recognize shapes (in the air / on water)
- Drag-back trails
- Appealing distractions

Birds are the rewards / incentives that maintain attitude and bridge **tough** learning gaps.

Bird storage needs

- Freezer
- Drying Rack / Drying Box (away from files)
- Feed sacks (fly proof, but not air tight)
- Flyer Box
- Bird Pen?

★ BIRDS, MISCELLANEOUS TIPS

Where to get them (Live and dead)

- Ask at / after trial / hunt test
- Tower shoots
- Game farms (yellow pages)
- Bring bird crate / bags with you

Birds can be used in many sessions by

- Drying wet birds before freezing
- Thawing birds the night before training
- Drying and re-freezing

Mixing fresh flyers with old / wet birds will quickly ruin the fresh birds

- Separate by the “eye test”

Freeze / store birds in bird bags in a quantity to supply a single gun station at typical training session (perhaps 6 / bag)....

- Thaw / carry only what you need

Use both Peasants and Ducks all year, but don't mix scents at the same station.

Don't get pheasants wet.

Learn to throw / shoot flyer by practicing with dead bird and aiming popper gun.... Good flyer simulation, too.

Rotate responsibility among training partners for getting flyers each week.

Discretion about public view / talk and humane handling are paramount!

★SLOPPY TRAINERS / HANDLERS

- White jacket not buttoned up
- No white jacket
- Hands in pockets (use your hands to communicate)
- Whistle dangling in dog's face (keep it in your mouth)
- Transmitter / Stick in pocket, not ready
- Staggered stance (not square)
- Babble at dog vs. crisp punctuated commands
- Plan / tools not set / communicated to helpers

GOOD HANDLING JACKETS

- Reach to and stay at the wrist
- Very white / Flat white (not shinny)
- Stay trim to body / arms, not harboring shadows
- Don't become transparent when wet
- Don't Hang in dog's face

★FITTING TRAINING INTO A BUSY SCHEDULE

Marks

- AM face west
- PM face east

Blinds: North / South lines (need forward / backward visibility)

April & October: blinds, singles and drills (limited time)

Drills under flood lights:

- Schools
- Shopping centers
- Traffic islands in parking lots = land tune-up drills

Paid Help vs. training partners

★JUDGING AND SPECTATING (Winning / Qualifying standards)

To orient your journey, become familiar with the destination:

- Observe All Age / Master level work at events
- Attend a national (field trial, hunt test, breed specialty)
- Observe professional training, including skills you're about to work on (double T, swimby, etc.)
- Apprentice judging assignments
- Distinguish between testing setups (where outcomes are less than certain and varied) and training set-ups (where outcomes should be deliberately predictable)

LOCAL PROFESSIONAL TRAINING

Ed Forry	302-378-1002
Rick Milheim	610-746-3490
Pat Nolan	301-824-2402
J.J. Sweezey and Kay Sweezey	410-778-2220

VIDEOS

Mike Lardy	
Total Retriever Training	
Total Retriever Marking	800-848-5963
Jim Kappes, Bruce Curtis, and Wayne Curtis	
Try contacting Darrell Frisbie	612-675-3102
★Rex Carr and Dave Rorem	218-285-7213
★Jackie Mertens	
Sound Beginnings / Retriever Puppies	800-848-5963

TRAINING EQUIPMENT

Dogs A Field	800-863-3647
Dobbs Training Center	888-326-5527
★Lion Country Supply	800-662-5202

BOOKS

Walters, D.L and Ann	
Training Retrievers to Handle	
Interstate Book Manufactures, Olathe, KS	800-447-7367
Dobbs, Jim and Phillis	
Retriever Training	
Tri- Tronics, Inc. Tucson, AZ	888-326-5527
Spencer, James	
Retriever Training Tests	
Arco Publishing, New York, NY	800-777-7257
★Gwaltney, Dr. Jack	
Training and Campaigning Retrievers	804-973-2620
(new edition in 1999)	

BOOKS (cont.)

Hillmann, William
Training Retrievers for Field Trails 850-893-5746
(new edition 1998)

Loveland, Cherylon and Rutherford, Clarice
Retriever Puppy Training
Alpine Publications 800-777-7257

★Quinn, Thomas
The Working Retrievers
EP Dutton, New York, NY 800-207-0799
(new edition in 1998)

★The following manual may be printed from www.weebegoldens.com/john_cavanaugh/

PERIODICALS / SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

The Retriever Journal	800-447-7367
Retriever (Field Trial) News	414-481-2760
Retrievers OnLine Magazine	705-793-3556
Working Retrievers Central	http://www.working-retrievers.com
North American Hunting Retriever Association NAHRA News	540-286-0625
Hunting Retriever Magazine (United Kennel Club / H.R.C)	616-343-9020
Gun Dog Magazine	800-767-4868
AKC Afield Magazine	919-233-9767

LOCAL RETRIEVER CLUBS

Keystone Retriever Club (Hunt Tests Central PA) Rick Wise	717-252-2386
Swamp Dog Club (Field Trials, Hunt Test) Eastern, PA Mindy Bohn	610-779-9499
Waterland Retriever Club (Hunt Tests Eastern PA) Ann Hunter	215-646-3263
Del Bay Retriever Club (Field Trials, Hunt Tests) DE/MD Lyn Wharton	610-793-2402

WORKSHOP PARTICIPANT LIST

Name	Address	Phone	Dogs
Linda Arble	1301 E College Ave, Bellefonte, PA 16823	814-383-2846	Artee
Denise Balides	7221 Peppermill Rd, King George, VI 22485	804-274-4396	Cheif
Ruth Barbetta	1109 Sweet Arrow Lake Rd, Pine Grove, PA 17963	570-739-4718	Stormy
Angie Becker	39 Montmorenci Rd, Ridgeway, PA 15853	814-776-2332	Diva
Steve Brenner	825 Merrybell Lane, Kennett Sq, PA 19348	302-695-7354	Dozy & Huck
Gene Byrd, Jr	1906 Madison Ave, Baltimore, MD 21217	410-669-4594	Doc & Sassy
James Cameron	1327 N Front St, Harrisburg, PA 17102	717-236-3755	Tori, Grace & Eddie
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Lois Gebrian	1306 Biggs Rd, Wilmington, DE 19805	302-994-0034	Ranger
James Harris	922 Byram St, Reading, PA 19606	610-370-0480	Pond Hollow Argos
Seth Hodes	155 Brandon Rd, Baltimore, MD 21212	410-8255-0339	Gunner
Brian Huss	238 W Ridley Ave, Ridley Park, PA 19078	610-521-4744	Rudy
Lloyd Ingerson	221 Schoolhouse Rd, Kirkwood, PA 17536	717-529-4083	Buddy
Robert James	922 19 th Street Apt #2, Arlington, VA 22202	703-601-3471	Major
Janet Kaplan	5401 Linton Rd, Sykesville, MD 21784	410-549-6852	Rex & Trevor
Sue Kuch	626 Llewelyn Rd, Berwyn, PA 19312	610-644-5259	Camp
Patti Larkin	859 New Cut Rd, Earleville, MD 21919	410-275-8980	Taylor & Morgan
Joe Lescisko	8 Lynch Dr Route 7, Lebanon, PA 17042	717-273-5964	Duke

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Karen Molloy	915 Laburnum Lane, Wynote, PA 19095	215-886-0107	Indi & Tag
Bob Montler	PO Box 688, Philipsburg, PA 16866	814-342-0461	Sammy
Garry Moore	31 Belton St, Stanhope, NJ 07874	973-347-6401	Libby
Helga Moser	2921 Reifsynder Rd, Gilbertsville, PA 19525	610-326-5087	Lily
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Rick Percy	4 Handel Place, Newark, DE 19702	302-836-9559	Gunner
Tom Prendergast	3 Devita Rd, Branchville, NJ 07826	973-948-5705	Duncan
George Ruhl	40 E Fulton St, Ephrata, PA 17522	717-738-0696	Hunter
Donna Sanders	5073 Waterfall Rd, Harrisonville, PA 17228	814-685-3484	Storm
Bart Schlachter	1133 Colonial Rd, Lancaster, PA 17604	717-871-9175	Jenny
Tom Smith	758 Eisenhauer Dr, Telford, PA 18969	215-482-6108	Rocky
Joe Stambaugh	3368 Thompsons Mill Rd, Goldvein, VA 22720	540-752-5467	Kingstons Deeprun Yebo Tomb
Dan Swarm	238 N 3 rd ST New Freedom, PA 17349	717-235-8784	Mason
Margaret Ulmer	RR #2 Box 637C, Schuylkill Haven, PA 17972	570-345-2224	Bear
Ron Welch	13901 Congress Dr, Rockville, MD 20853	301-460-2634	Elvis
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Pam Wise	5196 Picking Rd, York, PA 17406	717-252-2386	Skeeter
Deborah Zirwas	RR #2, Box 2094B, Stroudsburg, PA 18360	570-476-4369	Rami

Retriever Training Book / sample pages

★TABLE OF CONTENTS

- ★Events and Personal Schedule (weekend map)
- ★Equipment Needs
- ★Equipment Inventory / values
- ★Trial Grounds Detail
- ★Training Grounds Detail / Owner Contact
- ★Bird Boy Contacts
- ★Bird Sources
- ★Helper set-up / Clean-up checklist
- ★State dog / training / hunting laws
- ★Licenses / Permits (dogs, rabies, hunting, training areas)
- ★Dog Details:
 - Pedigree, photos, negatives (reprints in case dog is lost)
 - Registration info: Entry forms / post cards, etc.
- ★Pre-trial, training, travel checklists
- ★Veterinarian Contacts, Hospital Emergency Location / Contact

- ★Training Notes
 - Strengths / weak areas (based on annual re-cap, etc.)
 - Maintenance work / drills
 - Balance
 - Success / Correction Ratio
 - Future Training Plans

- ★Rule Books
- ★Membership Lists
- ★Trial Premiums, up-coming events

- ★Various Checklists
 - Pre-Trial Set-up Designs
 - Balance in Training Designs
 - Fundamentally Difficult Tests
 - Classic Concepts / Configurations
 - Core Complexities
 - Hunt Test Preparations
 - Hunting Preparations
 - Hunting Equipment

- **Retriever Training Book / sample pages (cont...)**

★HUNTING EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Shell Bag

- Shells / shell box, gun kit
- Licenses /stamps
- Gloves > Shooting
- Regulations
- Compass
- Gun Sling

Dog

- Towels
- Food / water
- Dishes
- E-Collar (Charged)
- Crate Pad
- ID Collar
- Dog Snacks
- Field water bottle

Guns / Cases

- Thermos
- Rain gear
- Hats
- Whistles
- Camera / Film
- Boot Dryers
- Boots!!! Walking and in boat
- Snacks
- T.P.
- Dry socks / shoes
- Flash Light

Ducks

- Calls
- Face Net
- Neoprene Gloves
- Waders / hanger
- Dog wet suit

Upland

- Dog Bell
- ID Collar
- Cooler / ice

SEE TRAVEL CHECK LIST

BOOK ON TAPE!!!

- Legal shooting times
- Wind / weather radio (forecast)
- First Aid Kit

Retriever Training Book / sample pages (cont...)

★EVENING TRAINING TIMES (starting at 6:30pm)

Month	Hours of Training Time	Sunset (Philadelphia, PA)	Comments	
April	1 hour	7:35	Trial season	Build-up water skills balance concepts
May	1 hour 40 min	8:10	Trial season	
June	2 hours	8:30	Trial season	
July	2 hours	8:30	Concept emphasis	
August	1 hour 30 min	8:00	Concept emphasis	
September	40 min	7:10	Trial season	Maintain water skills balance concepts
October	0	6:20	Trial season	

Realistic Budget of time

Of set-ups

Land vs. water

Marks vs. blinds

Critical maintenance items

Travel time

Flyers / bird inventory

Water maintenance w/o light (Shorelines, up and outs, (re)-entries, cross-wind)

Long bird maintenance w/o light

Clock changes first Sunday in April and last Sunday in October

Retriever Training Book / sample pages (cont...)

★BALANCE IN TRAINING DESIGNS

Water

- Out to sea vs. shoreline
- Stay in vs. up and outs and long entries
- Fun vs. Technical

General

- Long vs. check down (super long and very short)
- Tight vs. wide open
- Singles vs. multiple
- Run / Swim at bird vs. Gun Dependence
- Blinds vs. Marks
- Success Ratios

Retriever Training Book / sample pages (cont...)

★PRE-TRIAL SET-UP DESIGNS

Singles with multiple guns out

Designs that are clear

- No out of control or multi-correction / infraction outcomes
- Polemic balance, i.e. short and long
- Mix up concepts vs. repetition

Use of flyer that enhances concentration

- Long single (past shorter guns – then do short bird – flyer suction beyond)
- Look past and drive by short false flyer

Match cover, terrain to anticipated trial settings

Include blinds, but outside of concept marks

- Long, cross-winds / terrain
- Simple poison bird, for control

Attention to basic obedience and line manners

- Use lead to and in holding blind

Pheasants?

Extra care about potential injury

- Feet
- Falling down (rough terrain)
- Eyes (high tough cover)
- Over-exertion

Avoid resentment reactions

- Nagging line-up - bugging
- Cold water
- Back-burn-back (promote over-runs)
- Thorny cover