

Retriever Training Manual



John and Max

Retriever Training Manual

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Retriever Training Manual

TRAVEL/TRIAL

Advance Preparations

Size of Trial, test emphasis

- Grounds Review
 - Hotel
 - A.M. Training: Where, What, With Who
 - Day Training
 - Dinner: Who, Where (Pro's, Top Am's)
 - Lunch/Dinner
- Boots/Shoes – handling wet
Boot Dryers
Handling Jacket – clean/dry
Black & White gloves
Rain gear
Treats for holding blind

Dog Needs

- Id Collars
- Extra Water / Jug
- Dog Food
- Crate Pads – clean/dry
- Cooler / Ice
- Medicines
- Cheewez
- Air Spray / motel room
- "Mighty Dog"

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TRAINING CHECKLIST

P.M. Prior

- Birds Thawed
- Radios Charged
- Collars Charged
- Food, Cooler, Drinks
- Dog Water, Fresh
- Weather: clothes, boots, extra shoes, socks
- Gas
- Conflict on Grounds: hunt test, etc.
- Towels
- Wind Direction
- Ice
- Ammo / Blanks
- Note Book
- Truck Packing List
- Truck Packing List
- Land Owner contact / o.k.

Weed wacker

Decoys

Waders

Boat Anchor, paddle, etc.

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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

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PERENNIAL NEEDS	
Equipment	To Do
Poppers	Fix Radios
Blanks	Clean Guns
Live Ammo	Fix collars
WD-40 / Oil	Label / # Radios, etc
Bird Food	Cut brush – at grounds (winter easier)
Toilet Paper	First Aid Kit, stock
Lace on collars	Find New Grounds
Bumper Weights / snaps / line	Land owner gifts
Lawn Chairs	Hunting License / Stamps
Collar Tab Leads	License on collars
Flash light batteries	Permit fun grounds
Judges Sheets	Clean Jackets
Water Jugs	Dog License / Rabies Tags on collars

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ANNUAL SCHEDULES

Club Memberships / Meetings

Seminars

Field

Non Field

Specialty Trials: Golden / Chesapeake / PRTA / Labrador

Tower Shoots

Hunting Seasons

Judging Assignments

TRIALS / TESTS

Clock Changes (2am first Sunday in April / 2 am last Sunday in October)

Health > Physical / Dental

CANADA?

AAA card in truck

Insurance ID Cards Auto / Health

Grounds

Thank Land Owners

Search for new grounds

Trophy engraving / returns

Training Days (Westchester, etc.)

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CLASSIC CONCEPTS / SITUATIONS CHECKLISTS

MARKS

Doubles / Mirrors

Configurations: hip pocket, behind chair, converging, equi-distant, in-lines, wide open middle, over / under, against tree lines, mamma-pappa

Triples / Quads: not complex

Singles

Stand alone, off multiples

Complex, key birds, SUPER long & "punch" doubles, obstacles

Run at Bird

winger, flyer (pheasants), launcher, long dummy throws

Secondary Selection

Retired Guns → modified vs tight lined

Wipe Outs

From bull dog, false flyer

Blinds

Multiples

Walking tune ups > tight to corner > run by "old" piles

Tight to chairs / diversions

Parallel Fence / Tree Lines

Cross Wind (Get dog wet first) don't "nag"

Hold direction changes: X sloppy sits vs. wind/terrain

Super Long: Control (sits/casts): Plant "backup" blind

Left side hazards / left turns and vice-versa

Slots, tight, hold line on 'out'

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CLASSIC CONCEPTS / SITUATIONS CHECKLISTS (cont.)

General

Terrain: hold line (add high cover) vs. slope, squaring > wanting to run up or down

Ditches / Roads: Angle and Recover - throw marks across

Super Long: Control (sits/casts)

Mounds midway / up front

Super contrary factors

Bad Paths: avoid

Double obstacles (extend distance) e.g. jump tree & shoreline

Difficult Throws/ Bird Placement

Across channel / to island

Down Hill, with square hill behind gun tendency

Base of Hill (tend to drive to top)

In water vs. on bank

Way-up-and-out

Across road / ditch

Angle into cover

"Y" drill

Mama-Pappa

Long Marks, throw into wind

Short Marks, throw with wind

Mid-distance

- Land spit, water in front/beyond
- Run around space deep
- Check down after obstacle, with longer gun out

Go-bird past shorter memory bird (especially on water)

Thru hedge row

Against tree line

Over stone wall / log jumps

Angle back throw with quartering away wind

Mounds: on top, at base

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VARIETY (LOOK FOR OCCASIONAL OPPORTUNITY)

Combat creeping by first honoring the running dog, then run your marks
River marks and blinds / swim-by into the wind (moving water)
Guns moving in field as dog is sent
Retire back to flyer station
Hay bales
Double Shots / echoes/ simultaneous shot and throw / shoot at top of arc.
LINE MAT
WALK UPS: "LOOK OUT" ATTITUDE AT HEEL
Dark jacket/light background
Poor light/ colored glasses
Long waits/ multiple holding blinds
Wipe-out birds
Popper guns
Winger / Dummy Luncher (simulate long flyer)
Cold honor / go behind holding blind while first dog runs, then come out and run
Bulldog / land & water / flyer & dead bird / winger
Blinds before marks (sitting out)
Long single first > including over water
Field Decoys on land / open water - spread out decoys and put bird in them for wipe outs
False flyer stations: hold live bird / gun
"Can't go straight" marks: Recovery around Hay bales, cars, tree line
Help new comers (behind lines, picking up birds, etc)
All guns face line or neutral position / Face away from line
Do blind first or after cold honor, etc.
Blinds from behind mounds / hills / dykes
Set up line on uneven footing
Guns face line, not bird
Remote cast blinds (including with poison bird)
Sluce in water: water marks / before water blind
Black bird boys
Don't drop / Hand off birds until next send
Walking / walk-away singles
Blinds through tight slots - latently entry visible gun - dry shot
Run by / Swim by on return
Blinds with binoculars

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VARIETY (LOOK FOR OCCASIONAL OPPORTUNITY) cont...

- Load popper at short station
- Simulated Flyer two shots puff bird (double flyers)
- Retire to another gun station
- Retire "key off" A bird (the bird that helps remember where retired bird is)
- Dirt Clod Drill (apply to water marks)
- Uneven footing / line up
- Chair / bird crates drill
- Poison bird thrown in route to blind
- Out to Sea / floater**
- Bandage feet
- "Pop up" / non-queue mark on multiple
- ABC marking
- Over / under marks
- Handle in rain gear
- Run each others dogs
- Run past modified blind stakes / bird crate
- On lead in holding blind
- Blind planted remote from marker
- Run then retire mark short of it
- Snow
- Hunt test checklist
- Moving car - traffic in background
- DECOY TIED TO COLLAR, DRAG TO WATER MARK
- Send on back, on I??? marker?
- Difficult hearing blinds
 - Crunching corn
 - Running Water

Bird Calls/Diversion

Retired Gun Options		Dry Shots	
	Umberlla		Before Blind
	Holding blind		Mixed with marks
	Camo net		On Return with 1 st blind of a double blind
	Thrower lies down		
	Above in boats		
	Move into woods		
	Move to other gun station		
	Unseen thrower		

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LINE CHORES FOR IDLE TRAINERS

Help handler line up his dog
Sit in judges chair - give numbers / signals for birds / call for guns up, etc
Honor to correct/ Creeping/ noise
Toss diversion birds
Cold honor marks
Socialize pups
Get others dogs ready to run
Holding blind time, multiple holding blinds
Sort birds, etc/ prepare for gun changes
Multi gunners on each station/ false flyer station
Video / Audio taping
Keep other dogs quiet
Take delivery in honor box (clear the line)
Marks for little pups during setup / breaks
Clean up trash on grounds
Practice diagramming test, judging
Organize / Clean-up truck / equipment
Help new-comers (behind line, with basics, etc)

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Complexities

Distance (drive and fatigue)
Diversions / Tight or Remote
Sloping Terrain
Cross Wind
Cover
 Short cover / short birds (over run on fast surface)
 High cover / long birds (tough going, drag back)
Retired Guns
Live Bird attraction
"Tightness" (or lack of): lines or falls

Major Test Bird

Short (Retired) Guns / Secondary Selection
Long (Retired) Guns
Long Swims / Stay - in
Cross Points / re-entries (including scented areas on blinds)
Poison Birds
Long Blinds / Control

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BALANCE

Water

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

General

Long vs. check down (super-long & very short)
Tight vs. wide open
Singles vs. multiple
Run / Swim at bird vs. gun dependence
Blinds vs. Marks

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Water			Land		
		Shorline	B	*	Hill side / rolling terrain
		Up & outs	M/B	*	High cover (adjacent)
		Long Entries	M/B	*	Ditches
B	*	Points	M	*	Corn rows
		Long Swims			Flat/cross wind
		Moving Water			Tree slots
		Channels	M/B	*	Hedge rows
		Running Water	M/B	*	Cover changes(alfalfa)
		Tune-up drills	B	*	Bushes / bounce off
		Swim-by			Fences
		Sticks/lilies			Guns out of sight
		Out – to - sea			Long runs
B	*	Island			Plowed ground
B	*	Sand Bars			Roads
		Cross-channel throws			Mounds

B = Blinds

M=Marks

*=Cited in rule book

Refer to:
 Note Book
 Rule Book
 Trail Grounds
 Concepts

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WATER

Stay in Attitude / Long Swim effort

Past points

Parallel shoreline, long (not parabola)

Re-enter (staying in) into bigger water

Out to Sea

Birds in water or well out

Very long entries

Throws across channel, to island (memory), over obstacles

Recast into water, no refusal > do as a drill

Point drill

Cast in water drill (no slack)

Fight cross-wind

Poison bird with splash

Line past water then get in

Converging marks in corner

Stay-in to end of pond/cove/channel

Willow's pond by / over point lines

Long single first off multiple guns

Cheating singles, no second chances

****Fun water, fun attitude balance ****

Dobb's recall in water/angle drill

Guns sitting back from shore, throwing in water

Whartons multiple re-entries / long cheaty re-entries, too

River work: try Del Water Gap, too.

Run by (then get in) water: teach by "comparison marks"

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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

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HANDLING PLANS

Dogs turn left: hazards, "blind" spots

Sun (light) on jacket

Left/right side launch/watch each bird

Be certain dog is ready / locked to be sent marks & blinds

Where don't you want to be on this test - left/right deep/diversion etc.

Approaches to line

Return to side after creep: "Here" vs. "Heal"

What have other dogs done:

Should you expect a different results? Try another approach?

It's O.K. to feel challenged to your very core > stay focused

Never give up / Earn every ribbon / call back /bird

Wind awareness

Watch Flyers, not dead birds (watch dog=s head)

Shadow awareness when signaling

Side of mat for each send

Indicative casting

Binoculars

Don't just pick up, get your point across get the bird right....

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HANDLING IMPROVEMENTS

Footwork: stay limber, Line-up and bird-to-bird

Lining up: Get help
Don't over compensate in training
assume control, without "robotics"

Whistle modulation

Don't ever "give-in", x "blow-ups"

Directions changes, high standards

x Hand stabs

x "Wind-up", "Recover" foot balance both feet square underneath

I.D. effort, distinguish lack of effort from "mistakes" > correct accordingly

X babbling ques; Allow dog to settle in

Hands high / ready to cast x false motion

Field Trial Handling

Approach to line

"working the mat"

Plan route to line

Plan for "blind" spots: turning dogs directions

Returns after creep: choose "here" vs. "heel"

Your cast is a communication signal

Careful not to over emphasize (time build up may over emphasize balance)

use of voice of "get going" when ping-ponging

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MARKING PRINCIPLES

Experience / Success

Goal in mind/ discipline to maintain the idea

Use of eyes / Use of nose

Orientation and hunting skills

Clear destination: visibility (bird/gun)

Emphases: attention (no noise, re-throws)

Any doubt about visibility, always re-throw

Clean of other influences (factors)

Balance of experience

Progression

Stand-up singles

Retired singles (don't send until thrower concealed)

Stand-up multiple

Retired multiples

Add factors: wind, cover, terrain, fatigue, water diversions, distances (long / short and "mid-distance")

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

Retired guns are the "purest" marks: line and depth

Un-retired guns only when the sight of gun increases difficulty

Throws across road, channel, etc.

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MISCELLANEOUS IDEAS

YARD

Water, wagon wheel lining; visible, weighted bumpers, angle entry x bugging

Deep bumpers on wagon wheel / keep going attitude

MARKS

Longer wait to send on last bird - bring head back

-can't anticipate multiple

Vary fall areas / multi flyer area

Long bumpers throws - long flyers

Shot / Throw variables - shoot - delay - throw, etc

BLINDS

Emergency blind to exaggerate vs. factors

Put real blind deep of 1 or 2 visible bumper piles, long distance control

I.L fat at point, cast past point (Remote Send)

FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS - Conditioning / comfort / confidence

Running

Swimming

Go straight, obstacles

Hunting

Re-gaining Line

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YARD

(Develop drills to teach skill - see other objectives)

Long - distance casting drills (with remote helper)
Head - swinging relate to bugging
Out of sight, sits/downs - no creeping
OB in grass, other locations/ both sides > whole routine
Pivot here/heel >one command, slow down -> reaction

Walking baseball

Steadyness

Hillman head swing drill -> attention

Returns to heel & sit without verbal

Traffic island blinds.... tune-up drill

32 bumper lining drill

Develop drill for straight come-in vs. hunting way in (staccato vs. trill whistle)

Wagon - wheel lining (in water, too) put tape recorder in pocket...
effective communication?

Tune-up, walking - obstacle / chair/ building corner

Split - back - pile / direction change

Dobb's "Push/Pull" drill

Work ob drills during field training

Front door obedience, in house / visitors

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ATTITUDE

Pleasant / Good Sportsmanship
Respect , mutual -> command vs. plead
* Control, in all instances
Positive, Enthusiastic (dog and handler)
Read your dog
Modulate whistle up front
Attrition (call in) don't nag
Slow/deliberate
Cast to communicate
Train to improve, not "make or break"
Burn / level appropriate vs. temper
X frequent call backs

MONITOR SUCCESS RATIO

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TRIAL GROUNDS

Maryland

Spring: Training Ponds, Plowed fields
Flat: configurations, crosswind, corn fields
*Ditch angling, open field marking, points of woods
Ocean City: up and outs, channels, cross winds

New Jersey: chigger / tick protection!!

Assunpink: Bowl rim, cornfields, (spring) plowed fields
Collier Mills: Stick / Lilies boat marks, floater blinds
Lataurot: Stick / Lilies boat marks
Long flat land work, cross wind
McNeils: LONG re-entries / up & outs, Hay Bales, cross roads & ditches

Delaware

Canal: Technical water, long angle entries, side hills / bowl
Rebel Ridge: Technical water, entries / re-entries, up & outs
Bombay hook: FLAT, cross wind, corn fields, long open field marking, running water, ditches, plowed fields

New York

Upstate: High cover, strips cover, stick ponds
West Chester: Rock / mowed out croppings, golden rod, bushy fields, side hill, boat marks / sticks
Western: Sticks / Lilies, cat tail walls

Connecticut

West Thompson: Big out to sea!!!, mounds / rocks, cross channel throws

Pennsylvania:

Strocks: big hills, through tree lines
Brick yard: cross island / channel throws, shoreline, out to sea
Dan's Pond: Long Entries, up & outs
FT Pitt: High grass strips / hay bales / heavy lilies / boat marks

Vermont

Stowe: Big hills, high lush cover strips, stick ponds, long technical entries, hay bales
Addison: Stick ponds, boat marks, hay bales

Long Island

Sag Harbor: High cover, running water, pocket cove marks, out to sea blinds
Manorville: corn / grass / crop fields, running water, high cover, >??????, boat marks / lilies

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FALL / SPRING
STRONG CROSS WINDS

HUNT TEST

Mark off gun: follow the barrel (pointing gun) - Clayton Crawford
Bull-dog diversion
Remote sends (marks & blinds) / handler in blind, dog outside
Remote Honor
Walk - ups
Hidden throwers
Duck / goose calls & shots from / behind line
Camo handling jacket
Sit next to dog
Send from boat
Shorter marks
Decoy spreads: water and land
Wingers
Diversion gunner (mid-field) shoots at distant thrown bird

FUN HUNTING EXERCISES

Diving bumper
Point bb gun water marking
Trail running
Mass Honor: send one at a time
Shotgun shells rattle in paper bag pheasant flush

ADD TO "variety"

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HUNTING EQUIPMENT CHECKLIST

Shell Bag

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

Dogs

- Towles
- Food / water
- Dishes
- E-Collar (Charged)

Guns/ Cases

- Thermos
- Raingear
- 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

SEE TRAVEL CHECK LIST

BOOK ON TAPE!!