

OPEN FIELD TRIAL - BURNCASTLE, SCOTTISH BORDERS

Judges: Mr F Alcock (2166) and Mr C Gray (3242)

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Date:

6th November 2015

General:

The trial ground was composed of two shallow valleys opening out onto a large flat boggy area, cover was largely white grass and rushes interspersed with bracken on the drier banks. Whilst the bracken was a little problematic, because of its height, the dogs were all generally given runs where they could be viewed clearly for nearly the entirety of the run. The wind was a moderate South Westerly breeze and every attempt was made to keep the dogs running into wind throughout the day. Game encountered was largely pheasants with an odd snipe for variety. Game was scarce enough that the dogs had to hunt for it but plentiful enough to ensure that all dogs had some contact during their runs. In short, the ground could not have been better and was a credit to the steward of the beat.

Results:

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------------------------|-----|------------|
| 1 st | Trudvang Lara | GWP | A. Johnson |
| 2 nd | Monkey Business at Moorrinner | GWP | J Jay |
| 3 rd | Not Awarded | | |
| 4 th | Esshesdown Elysium | GSP | K Hamilton |

Judges Critique

Trudvang Lara

The dog was brought in first for a retrieve from the previous dog, a 50m blind into a bracken strip. This was completed in good style with minimal handling. We moved a little up the valley to get in to fresh ground for the start of the dogs run and in doing so changed our angle to a cheek wind. The dogs first cast to catch the wind took it directly into some heavy bracken from which she did not reappear. We followed the handler with a gun and carefully went in search of the dog which was found about 100m away on solid point at the edge of the bracken. The gun moved up to the dog and just as we were waiting for a second gun to get in to position a bird broke 10m forward and left of the dog. The bird was shot and fell dead in full view of the dog which remained staunchly on point. The handler indicated to us that the dog was pointing a different bird so we asked for a production. The dog flushed its bird, strongly, on command and it flew to a gun standing remote from proceedings and was shot but only winged and could be seen making off into a further bracken bank. The dog which was steady throughout was asked to retrieve the runner which it duly did, bypassing the dead bird in full view to get out to the mark of the second bird. The lively runner was expertly brought under control and delivered tenderly to hand.

The second run took place out on an open boggy area contained on one side by a dry stane dyke, it was a head come cheek wind. Here the dog had an opportunity to show off its ample power, speed and range cutting the ground nicely and making all the way to the dyke on the left. Several times at the dyke the dog indicated game ahead but was not unduly distracted making good its ground before she eventually slowed right down and started to indicate in a small tight patch of rushes adjacent to the dyke. Luckily a gun was on the ball and having noticed the dog's demeanour was already in place when a sneaky cock pheasant jumped just behind the dog and straight up and over the dyke.

The bird was shot, blind of the dog but close. Given the presence of a barbed 'scare' wire on the top of the dyke the dog was not sent directly but taken 70m away to a gate for access. This actually improved the quality of the retrieve as it was longer, blind and with little chance of help from the handler. The dog showed good initiative and dealt with everything in good style again. The water test was completed with confidence. A commendable performance in both runs which showed off the dog's natural aptitude, style and above all understanding of what was required.

Monkey Business at Moorrinner

The first run for this dog took place in a shallow rushie gully ending in a solid bracken bed, the dog benefited from an almost true head wind. The dog covered her ground well if a little flat, showing excellent obedience and attentiveness to her handler who in turn handled the dog quietly ensuring no ground was missed. She kept this up for most of her run before cautiously indicating, then disappearing, into a solid bracken bed where we found her staunchly on point. A smart production was followed by a clever touch when the dog stood on its back legs to 'mark' the fall of the shot bird in the high bracken. She was steady throughout and did not move from the spot. Her mark was perfect and the retrieve was completed in an efficient manner, the dog did 'adjust' her grip on the bird on the return but this was wholly spontaneous requiring no intervention on the part of the handler and was understandable given the thickness of the bracken. The delivery was also very good.

Her second run was out in the open with a dry stane dyke bordering her beat on the left and on this occasion she had a head/cheek wind. Again the dog showed us that she was very attentive to her handler's wishes and again covered her ground well leaving no stone unturned, unfortunately her second run was blank despite the dog's best efforts.

The water test was completed in excellent fashion. A very good performance in both runs showing her experience particularly in the work around and immediately after the shot.

Esshesdown Elysium

We started the day with this dog at the head of an open gully the bottom of which was full of thick rushes into a true head wind. Her first run was largely uneventful other than a rather convincing empty point on a recently vacated haunt. Her hunting was reasonably good though needed some direction from the handler in order to ensure the ground was covered adequately. She was however obedient to the handlers commands.

Her second run took place on a steep bracken covered bank where she was rewarded with a point at the top of the bank shortly after being slipped. She remained staunch whilst we all clambered up there and got ready, unfortunately the bird had moved on somewhat by this time and the dog had to draw forward to relocate. Whilst this was going on the pheasant could be seen running ahead of the dog and it flushed in the open and was subsequently shot. A straightforward retrieve was completed competently and without incident. We gave this dog a third run in order that we might see her hunting in an open environment and give her the opportunity to consolidate on the previous work. Whilst she tried hard unfortunately her third run was blank. This dog's water test was also performed very well.

Conclusion

On behalf of Fred and myself I would like to thank the German Shorthaired Pointer Club for this opportunity to judge. We had a great day on ground that really allowed the dogs to shine and were delighted to be able to give out these three well deserved awards. We would also like to thank all of the competitors for attending, it was great to see so many good dogs and we wish everyone the best of luck for the remainder of the season.

Chris Gray