

DRUMOCHTER GROUSE POINTING TEST

Judges: Anne Johnson and Craig Graham

By kind permission of Lady Nickson and Mr Alistair Finlay

Date: 10th April 2016

Gradings:

Excellent

Duncansby Dieta	GSP	Stephen Sargent
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Very Good

Piper of Spey Bay	GSP	Colin Franklin
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Good

Stubblemere Ember	GSP	Mick Canham
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Judges Critique:

The weather started fairly cold with a light breeze that didn't favour the direction we had to take on our allotted piece of hill. With this in mind we decided to start with the Adult group giving the Juniors the possibility of a stronger wind and better conditions on the higher ground.

The adult dogs had a capricious wind, sometimes non existent, and often from the side or even behind. Not ideal pointing conditions but unavoidable. The terrain was undulating at times making it difficult for the handler to keep the dog in sight.

We lost two adults and one junior to the delights of "following" the hare.

Several very experienced dogs seemed unsure of their birds and failed to lock onto a solid point. It was a difficult day and handlers and dogs struggled to cope with the conditions.

Adult Group (8 entries, 6 Gsp, 2 HV)

Colin Franklin's GSP Bitch, Piper of Spey Bay. Very Good.

The first real partnership of the day with the handler working to help the dog use the wind. The dog responded well to commands. Sensitive nose work from a staunch point resulted in the dog producing a grouse that had moved a short way behind the dog. Very good work on a difficult piece of ground.

Junior Group. (7 entries, 4 Gsp, 2 HWP, 1HV)

Steve Sargent's GSP Bitch, Duncansby Dieta. Excellent

This partnership ran uphill into a reasonable wind and the dog made good use of it by immediately coming onto a staunch point and dropping to the flush of a pair of grouse. In the presence of scent, she took a short time to get into her stride and then covered her ground with speed and style. This girl always looked like a "serious" dog knowing exactly what she was looking for and never taking her nose off the wind. Another point in a depression saw her drop to flush and then handled out to the left to cover ground she had not yet covered. Further on a long draw onto scent resulted in a staunch point and a perfectly controlled flush. A very promising partnership.

Mick Canham's GSP bitch, Stubblemere Ember. Good

Running into the wind this very young bitch took a while to get into her stride due to the presence of a lot of scent. She had several points standing steady with tail wagging and waiting for her handler who took her forward in a controlled manner. There is no doubt that she knew the birds were there and that they were often a long way from her, indicating the sensitivity of her nose. The young dog has yet to judge the distance that the birds will tolerate her presence but this will soon come with further experience. Also pointing twice on hare this girl was very steady. I am looking forward to watching her progress.

Many thanks to Lady Nickson and Mr Findlay for allowing us onto their beautiful estate and for the charming Duncan who escorted us round with good humour all day.

Anne Johnson