

REPORT ON FLATCOATED RETRIEVER SOCIETY'S NOVICE FIELD TRIAL

Monday 5th December 2011 at Bretby Park Shoot, Bretby, Derbyshire
(By kind permission of Mr Perkins and Steve Newitt and his team of guns.

Judges: Mr Tony Brazier (A15) Mrs Dorothy Walls-Duffin (B2457) and Mr Robert Daws (NP2689).

Steward of the Beat: Mr Glynn Rowlands and Chief Dog Steward: Mrs Anne Sparkes

The Trial commenced walking in two grass fields with four guns and six dogs in line towards standing guns. This gave the dogs in line a very good test of heelwork and steadiness.

The first retrieve fell to Caroline Hewison with her young dog Maddistream Indigo Jack at Casblaidd, which was a blind over a hillock which she completed well and picked in style.

We then moved on to a field of stubble turnips where the Trial really got going with birds coming at a nice steady rate predominantly towards the left of the line. Caroline again picked a nice retrieve, this time a cock pheasant which had fallen into the hedge bottom.

We lost a dog at this stage which ran in on a bird shot behind the line.

A partridge was shot and seen to fall in the hedge bottom on the left of the line. Sadly, three dogs were unsuccessful in finding this bird, but No. 8, Rob Willatts Gowran Indigo Extra made a fine job of searching and locating the bird in the hedge which, at the end of the day, gave him the award of Guns' Choice.

Rob Willatts then picked another bird behind the line and Miss Laura Gwilliam made a fine job of picking a bird in the turnips. Another dog was lost at this stage, again running in.

A dead hen which had been down on the field for some time was then responsible for the loss of another four dogs. Unfortunately Rob Willatts dog was eyewiped by his daughter, Dr Diane Heywood's Houndswood Maple.

As we reached the end of the field, a sudden final flush produced several birds into the turnips. Caroline Hewison, Chris Gwilliam and Nicky Wellfair all went out on a bird picked by the judges.

This only left two dogs in the Trial, Mr David Field with Ridlands Coxswain of Artistryn and Dr Diane Heywood who was sent for one of the two birds which had been down for some considerable time and failed. David Field's dog managed to pick the bird which left him the only dog remaining in the Trial.

The Judges then moved David, sending him across wind on a very long cold bird. His dog did not quite make the distance and, as he was out of the area, the handler made the decision to call this young dog up. The Judges picked the dead bird and this resulted in no dogs being placed in the awards.

However, a very good day was had by all who attended and the hospitality of the Shoot was second to none. The judges, land owner, guns and all our willing helpers, especially Anne Sparkes who acted as my Chief Steward on the day, were thanked in the appropriate manner and we were delighted to be invited to return at any time.