

Shooting Dog Certificate held on 20th January 2018 at Shadoxhurst, Kent

(Report by Dick Pettet)

The day started with the six handlers who had entered meeting at The Kings Head Pub for breakfast with the guns. The Panel judge was Graham Stanley and the Field Trial Sub-Committee representative was Andy Snow.

The weather forecast for the day was not good with rain expected for pretty much the whole day, and unfortunately this time they were right.



The first drive was over a largely open grass field. Unfortunately the guns only dropped 3 birds on this drive with one of those being picked by a beater. We made use of the two birds we had and as the Guns left for the second drive we made use of the birds to test the dogs ability to enter water as a convenient pond was at hand. All dogs succeeded in this task.



The next drive was in rather more cover on the edge of a wood, in a large area of coppiced trees with a lot of ground cover. The guns dropped five birds here and four were picked. The fifth bird, a runner, entered the next drive and was picked later by a beater.



The next drive produced enough birds to enable the assessment to be completed, with Suzi Price's Dog remaining steady with a bird falling 3 feet in front and another just 10 feet away.

A hen bird was hit and dropped into the field behind and being a runner Andy Snow took Sarah Young and her dog over the fence to try and find the fall, this he did easily and tracked the bird under another fence and off into a flattened cover crop, some 100m, and picked, much to the delight of the Gun. The remaining game from the drive was picked. We also stayed on to pick up on the last drive of the day.

We then returned to the shoot barn to thank all concerned; the Guns and Pickers-up, and for disrupting their day, and above all to the Shoot owner and Keeper for allowing to use the venue at Shadowhurst again.

We have been told we can have a day in November next year, and details will be published on the website and elsewhere nearer the date.



Five SDC passes were achieved, with two "A"s and 3 "B"s. Unfortunately, there was one fail on this occasion.

The awards were as follows:

Suzi Price's Bitch Ruddleberry Songbird - SDC "A" Certificate

Jacqui Thomas' Bitch Tygwyn Ray of Light - SDC "A" Certificate

Sarah Young's Dog Foxpath Lelantos for Larksburn - SDC "B" Certificate

Gemma Jacobs' Dog Gemswin Rolling in the Deep JW - SDC "B" Certificate

Diana Irwin's Bitch Fenflush Anastasia - SDC "B" Certificate

Shooting Dog Certificate held on 1st February 2018 at New Farm Shoot, Odiham, Hampshire (Report by Jo Hewison)

The day dawned cold and clear, some respite from the recent gales and downpours recently. Of course, to enter a SDC, you have to have reasonable expectations of yourself and your dog, but you know that anything and everything can happen at the end of the season, when the dogs are fighting fit and very experienced.

We met in the yard at New Farm in plenty of time to meet our assessors; Panel Judge Joy Venturi Rose, accompanied by her husband Chris Rose, also a panel judge but on this occasion standing in as representative of the Field Trial Sub-Committee.

The day was on driven pheasant and partridge, with a few pigeons. Keeper Robbie Martin confirmed to the handlers that because he dresses all his own birds for local pubs and hotels, he wanted as many birds as possibly to be picked quietly and cleanly. There were three handlers; Suzi Price, Richard Hewison and Jo Hewison, and the picker-up was Clive Mellor with three more Flatcoats.



We were put at our ease by the Judge in the briefing talk, wanting us to do much as we would normally do on a picking up day and to forget that the judges were standing behind us. We started the day standing back from the guns who were in a valley below us. Birds were slow to appear, but when they did, some were spectacular. As the day went on we were tested in line and those who chose to try for an 'A' certificate were off lead in line. On one drive the pheasants were running around the handlers feet. Dogs were tested on very strong runners as well as dead birds all day and some excellent hunting was seen.

At the end of the day, the three handlers and dogs were tested in the only bit of water for miles in this wooded chalk downland. The water margins were very overgrown but all three dogs completed the water part of the assessment.

The awards were as follows:

Suzi Price's Dog Blacklake Oberon from Ruddleberry - SDC "B" Certificate

Richard Hewison's Bitch Casblaidd Tea Leaf - SDC "A" Certificate

Jo Hewison's Dog Casblaidd Very Ernest - SDC "A" Certificate