**Open Field Trial**

The Society held its 178th Breed Only Field Trial on Monday 14th November on the Ampton Estate, Bury St Edmonds by kind permission of Mr Peter Rushbrook and Head Keeper, Mr Alan Hammond.

The morning began with fog which was quickly burnt off by the sun with the temperature quickly rising to a mega 18 degrees. The Judges, Mr Roy Tomlinson, Mrs G Hillier, Mr D Barnes and Mr M Polley walked the dogs up through mustard cover and game soon began to flush. A plentiful supply of mainly English Partridge and Pheasant gave our excellent team of guns, Mr C Jones, Mr A Tyrell, Mr I Mitchell, Mr D Young, Mr D Dingley and Mr C Speath chance to prove their worth, providing a steady supply of birds on the ground. As the Trial progressed it became apparent that, sadly, the results this year were not going to reflect those of last year. Conditions played a large part as did a younger entry of dogs, this was coupled with lack of experience due to some having had minimal opportunity to work on game this season due to the impact of Avian ‘Flu closing shoots and subsequent loss of picking up.

Mr Steve Ashby’s dog, Thamespath Bracken of Tunnelwood proved himself steadily through the Trial for the Judges to happily award a Certificate of Merit and The Birch Challenge Cup for the Highest Placed Retriever and the Guns to award him with The Olaf Trophy for Guns Choice .

The Field Trial Secretary would like to most sincerely thank all those involved in making this day possible, our Judges, Guns, Land/Shoot owner, those who came to help on the day and those who ran their dogs, in some cases against their better judgement in order to fill the card. Without your support our breed would not be represented in Trial status and we must do all we can to preserve this right.