

LENAPE TRACKING CLUB



COMMON SCENTS

JULY-AUG.
1988

VOL. 13 NO. 4

DATES TO REMEMBER

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 22 PICNIC [SEE FLYER ENCLOSED]

SATURDAY, NOV. 5 & SUNDAY, NOV. 6 CERTIFICATION MATCH

[SEE FLYER ENCLOSED]

CONGRATULATIONS to Beth Etchells of Lebanon, N.J. for designing the mast head on our front page. She did it on her new computer. Beth is the daughter of John and Pat Etchells, and will be a freshman at Cook College, Rutgers, this fall. When we figure out what the prize for this contest will be, we will present it to Beth, with our heartfelt thanks for a job well done.

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FOOTPRINTS FROM THE PRESIDENT

We realise that this newsletter is a little off schedule. It has been an especially busy summer. Our apologies. We hope everyone has survived the heat and now that the weather is cool again that more of you are getting your dogs out tracking.

We are still waiting for the AKC to tell us which of the name choices they will allow us to use. The by-laws changes were approved at the meeting in July and the entire revised by-laws are ready to send in to the AKC. We had expected, as per their letter, to hear soon about the name change. When that comes through we can vote that change into effect and send them the revised by-laws for their consideration.

They did say that they that "Upon submission of the name change, we will once again consider your club's request for recognition." in their letter dated May 20, 1988. We are hopeful that we will hear from them before the picnic on Oct. 22 so that we can vote the last change in the constitution at that time.

Picnic: A BIG Thank You to Katrina Johnson of the West Jersey Canine Search and Rescue Unit who has agreed to bring her agility course items to the picnic so our dogs can have a crack at them. I have been told that some of the obstacles will require at least introducing the dogs to them. So we plan to start the picnic at 10 a.m. so you can practice, then a break for lunch, followed by the real race through the course.

FALL MATCH: We need tracklayers and helpers. Please read the flyer and let Janet know if you can help.

One tidbit from the Forte household. Son Greg's sixth Seeing Eye puppy has been returned for training, a german shepherd named "Ty". His seventh puppy, a black labrador named "Kriaty" is already 4 1/2 months old. Greg and the two puppies were taped for two cable TV shows in August. One is being picked up by Public Television in the fall. It's entitled "Critter Club."

See you at the Picnic and the Match.

Peg Forte

The following people have applied for a family membership:

Sandra Hambrecht Dogs: Two dachshunds,
William Kuntz two mix breeds

109 Brindletown Rd.
New Egypt, N.J. 08533 609-758-8246

THE CORNELL UNIVERSITY COLLEGE OF VETERINARY MEDICINE'S
ANIMAL HEALTH NEWSLETTER, MAY 1988, ran an interesting piece
on a test of tracking dogs. Here's a reprint of what it
said.

PUTTING DOGS' TRACKING PROWESS TO THE TEST

Dogs have a solid reputation for being able to follow a trail (tracking) pretty much unerringly. That ability has been the backbone of thousands of adventure stories, to say nothing of more realistic reports about hound dogs on the trail of a criminal. Recently, two animal behaviorists at a division of the State University of New York decided to run a test to show just how well dogs actually perform in tracking. A total of 22 experienced tracking dogs of varying ages, but mostly German shepherd dogs, from eight different training groups from both the United States and West Germany were represented. The dogs were handled by their trainers. However, none of the dogs had been trained in this particular kind of test: to distinguish the direction of a track.

The purpose of the test, say its originators, S. A. Mackenzie and J.A. Schultz, was to determine whether dogs are physiologically capable of detecting the proper direction of a track or, to put it in the language of mystery stories, whether dogs have some natural "sixth" sense that guides them in choosing the direction a murderer takes without any false starts or back-tracking.


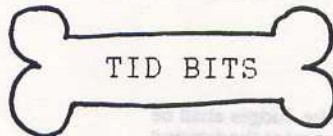
The dogs ran a total of three straight tracks, each 200 paces long, laid in grass with either an article of some sort or a man at the end. A flag was stationed at the midpoint, and the dogs were individually brought to this point and allowed to pick both the direction--left or right--and the track to follow. The results seemed to prove the point: A total of 66 tracks were completed, with 40 of them being followed by the dogs in the correct or forward position. Twenty-six tracks were followed incorrectly (back-tracked). When the records of the 22 dogs were examined the results showed that six dogs went in the correct direction on all three of the tracks, seven were correct on two tracks, eight correct on one, and one poor soul was wrong every time.

Aside from the washout, the dogs seemed to have performed most impressively. But this is science, not mystery story, and Mackenzie and Schultz report that these results are "not significantly different from what would be expected from random chance," that is, the test gave no indication that the dogs were being guided by some physiologic ability that gave them the power to pick the right direction. Even worse, the results indicate that with standard training techniques, many dogs do not follow the track in the direction a trainer would

like them to. Of course, since the dogs in the test had no previous experience or training in this particular task, they might possibly have done better than "randomly" if they had worked on the same type of tracking for some time.

One further point the study makes concerns the choice between left and right. Tracking manuals have taken a divided view on which direction a dog tends to turn in--some say left and some say right. This study suggests that dogs don't really have a preference for either side, although some individual dogs may tend toward one of the other.

Obviously, tracking is a field where much is still being learned. As Mackenzie and Schultz suggest, new training techniques should be developed to get the dog to follow the track with out back-tracking.



June Oswald's black Labrador Retriever Clover Crest's Sea Scamp, Scamper to his friends, got his CD at 14 months of age. Here are his scores:


1st leg Philadelphia D.T.C. 184 on May 7, 1988

2nd leg Chester Valley K.C. 194 on May 14, 1988
Third place

3rd leg Allentown D.T.C. 195 1/2 on May 21, 1988
Highest Scoring Lab, Novice B
Highest Scoring Lab in Trial

Insurance leg Huntingdon Valley K.C. 192 1/2 on June 4
Fourth place

Scamper and June live in Erdenheim, Pa. Congratulations to you both!



Gail Palmer showed her 10 1/2 year old Bernese Mt. Dog, Ch. Tarte, CD in Veteran Obedience at the BMDCA National Specialty. She earned a qualifying score of 181 1/2 points. At the end of the "down" Tarte picked up Gail's armband and her lead and carried them out of the ring. The spectators applauded and laughed through their tears at such a splendid performance by "the old girl." You see, she was the only one entered!

Please send news of your special friend to be included here.

Please read through these proposed rule changes and send your comments to the AKC Bedience Department by Oct. 15th.

American Kennel Club, 51 Madison Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10010

Notice

The Tracking Advisory Committee met in Baltimore, Maryland on March 28, 29, and 30, 1988.

The Committee has recommended, as contained in the minutes, the following proposed changes in the Obedience Regulations and Guidelines for Obedience Judges. (The recommendations of the Committee are given in general terms: the exact language of the revisions in the Regulations will be developed by the Obedience Department.)

Letters with comments or suggestions concerning the proposed changes should be sent to AKC's Obedience Department by October 15, 1988.

1. Include "Tracking" in the title of the Obedience Regulations (Regulations) and in the title of the guidelines for Obedience Judges (Guidelines).

2. Place the applicable portions of the Guidelines in the Regulations, and reorganize the regulations so that they are in a logical sequence.

3. Allow Member or Licensed clubs to hold up to four tracking events a year.

4. State in the Regulations that a Judge may declare an entry as absent any time after the completion of the drawing for tracks. (Chapter 7, Section 3, Regulations.)

5. Prohibit the trading of tracks by entrants. (Chapter 7, Section 3, Regulations.)

6. When a combined TD/TDX event is held, a title will be awarded to dogs passing the test, provided that the total combined entry is 3 or more. (Chapter 7, Section 2, and Chapter 8, Section 2, Regulations.)

7. Prohibit anyone from being on the tracking fields on the day that tracks are plotted except the Judges, AKC officials, apprentices with prior approval of the Judges, the Test Secretary, and those required for the laying of tracks.

8. Prohibit anyone from being on the tracking fields on the day of the test except the Judges, entrant, AKC officials, apprentices with prior approval of the Judges, Test Secretary, and those required for the conduct of the test.

9. Require that the catalog include the name of the certifying Judge and the date of certification. (Chapter 7, Section 1, Regulations.)

10. Require that the Test Committee be present at the drawing for tracks and that the drawing be held in a public place.

In addition, require that the following information be mailed to the Obedience Department within 3 days of the drawing: owner's name and address, dog's name and registration number, and names and addresses of interested people present at the drawing. This list of entries, showing the order of drawing, shall clearly indicate those who have received the available tracks, and the alternates shall be listed in the order drawn. (Chapter 1, Section 26a, Obed Regs. and Chapter 6, Page 28 of the Guidelines.)

11. Only one of the Judges shall be required to be present at the drawing for the order of running of each participant, so that the other Judge can observe the laying of the first tracks. (Chapter 6, Page 29 of the Guidelines.)

12. Require every Judge to walk every track on the day of plotting, unless prohibited by extenuating circumstances. In those cases where a Judge is unable to walk each track, the extenuating circumstances shall be noted in the Judge's Book. (Chapter 6, Page 27, paragraph 2 of the Guidelines.)

13. Allow bitches in season to participate, at the club's option, under the following conditions: (A) When the premium list specifically states that "BITCHES IN SEASON MAY PARTICIPATE." (B) The Test Secretary and Judges be notified prior to the drawing of tracks. (C) Bitches in season will only be allowed to participate in a test after all other dogs and bitches not in season have been tested. (D) The Test Secretary is responsible for insuring that bitches in season are allowed on the test site only immediately prior to their running.

In the event the handler of a bitch in season does not comply with the applicable conditions outlined above, he or she shall be excused from the test site, and any awards will be withheld. The Judge shall notify the AKC of any infraction by making the appropriate entry in the Judges Book. If the owner or handler violates the intent of this section at a second tracking test, the AKC shall initiate any action considered to be appropriate. (Chapter 1, Section 17, Regulations.)

14. Require those applying to judge Tracking to have continuously participated in some phase of the sport of Tracking for at least 6 years.

15. Include the following statements in the Guidelines relative to obstacles: (Chapter 7, Tracking Requirement, Paragraph 4.)

- a. Obstacles are an important characteristic of the TDX.
- b. Handlers have the responsibility to train for obstacles of varying difficulty.

The purpose of an obstacle is to test one or more of the following:

- a. The dog's ability to adapt to changing scent conditions.
- b. The dog's ability to continue scenting while overcoming physical obstacles.

- c. The dog's ability to continue scenting under different handling conditions.

16. Prohibit a dog and an entrant from running a track which was laid by a tracklayer who is a member of the household or a member of the immediate family of the entrant. (Chapter 7, Section 3 and Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

17. Prohibit repeated restraining which influences the dog's direction, but allow limited restraint in case of an unusual distraction. (Chapter 7, Section 3 and Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

18. Prohibit a cross track from being within 50 yards of a turn. (Chapter 8, Section 4, Obed Regs. Chapter 7, page 42, Requirements for Cross Track Plotting, paragraph 5, Guidelines.)

19. Prohibit the positioning of articles in TD and TDX which would cause them to be visible to the handler and Judges from a distance of more than 20 feet. (Chapter 7, Section 4 and Chapter 8, Section 4, Regulations.)

20. Require that the articles in TD and TDX be inconspicuous in color in comparison to their surroundings. (Chapter 7, Section 3 and Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

21. Develop a video tape on Tracking which will cover: (A) General interest, (B) Judge's education and (C) Other areas of interest to participants.

22. Allow plain water to be provided to the dog by the handler, with the Judges' approval, when on the tracking field. (Chapter 2, Section 22, Regulations.)

23. Prohibit on the tracking field at any time on the day of the test food, toys, balls or any other items not officially required for the test. (Chapter 2, Section 22, Regulations.)

24. Require that all tracks be started in cover typical of the tracking field. (Chapter 7, Section 4 and Chapter 8, Section 4. Obed. Regs., Chapter 6, page 27, Things To Avoid, Guidelines.)

25. Prohibit tracks from being run on the same field within 3 days of a previous test. (Chapter 7, Section 1 and Chapter 8, Section 1, Regulations.)

26. Require tracklayers to go to the first flag, pause, and proceed in walking the track. This would prohibit circling the flag and scuffing the feet around the flag. (Chapter 7, Section 3, Chapter 8, Section 3, Obed. Regs. and Guidelines, page 27, paragraph Tracklaying)

27. Provide a letter to all Judges and clubs emphasizing the requirement of Chapter 7, Section 3, which prohibits guiding. The letter will state that the requirement must be enforced even between the area of the first two flags on a TD test, and should include a requirement that Judges caution handlers that a dog that is continually guided will be failed. The letter will also stress that the dog must be at least 20 feet in front of the handler before the handler moves.

28. Require TDX tracklayers to line up on the first and second flags, at a distance of about 30 yards before the first flag, and proceed along this line, so that there will be no turn at the starting flag. The second flag may be a turn flag or a sighting flag. While walking this line the tracklayer will pause only to drop the article at the first flag and will continue walking the track. (Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

29. Require TDX Judges to instruct the handler as to the location of the flag, at a distance of about 50 yards from that flag, so as to not indicate the direction of the track when approaching the flag. (Chapter 8, Section 4). In addition, add a statement that severe acute angles should be avoided when directing the handler to the flag.

30. Require that cross-tracklayers not get closer than 50 yards to any part of the track, except when crossing the track as part of the test, or to within 75 yards of any other track. (Guidelines, Chapter 6)

31. Require that TDX articles be placed more than 30 yards from any turn, obstacle or cross track. (Chapter 8, Section 3 and 4, Obed. Regs. and Guidelines Chapter 7.)

32. Allow a handler to remove the lead only if it is entangled. The dog must be under control and in close proximity to the handler while the lead is being untangled. (Chapter 7, Section 3 and Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

33. Revise the Regulations to state that "The tracklayer is required to pick up all but the first flag and the cross track flags." (Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

34. Require Judges to be present at the tracking site when tracks are being laid. (Chapter 6, page 29, Guidelines, "Day of the Tracking Test")

35. Delete the requirement that TD tracklayers wear shoes of leather or fabric. (Chapter 7, Section 3, Regulations.)

36. Require Judges to take a written review of the Regulations every three years or no longer be approved for assignments until the requirement is satisfied.

37. Change the times for laying cross tracks so that they start between 1 hour and 15 minutes to 1 hour and 45 minutes after the start of the track laying. (Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

38. Require the lead to be marked at a distance of 20 feet from the dog so that the marking is clearly visible to the Judges at a distance. (Chapter 7, Section 3, and Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

39. Better define the harness to allow only those that are constructed of strips of plain, pliable material, and designed for the minimum of restriction. In addition, allow a small non-decorative identification plate or tag to be attached to the dog's harness. (Chapter 7, Section 3, and Chapter 8, Section 3, Regulations.)

40. Require the handlers to have approval of the Judge before a second start on a TD test. (Chapter 7, Section 3, Regulations.)

41. Redesign the sample chart on page 44 of the Guidelines so that it provides for all required information, and so that only one chart would be needed for a TD or TDX test.

42. Design and implement an apprentice judging program. This program will require an individual to be approved as an apprentice, and observe and chart three tests at that level, before receiving provisional approval to judge. The apprentice test would consist of accompanying at least four different Judges with no two tests having the same pair of Judges. The apprentice would be required to complete charts in the same manner as the Judges and to submit those charts to the Obedience Department for evaluation.



"Beat it!"

CZARINA ANASTASIA NICOLLE

November 22, 1976 to August 5, 1988

An emptiness is in my home now. After 11-1/2 years of love and playfulness "Nicolle" is gone to the big "Tundra" (plains area of Alaska).

Nicolle was my first dog and first Alaskan Malamute. She earned her American/Canadian "CD" by the time she was 2-1/2 years old. She earned her Backpacking degree by the time she was four years old and walked many times thereafter with others looking to do the same.

Because of Nicolle I have met many nice people and have gone places I never would have gone without her. She taught me patience and tolerance. She introduced me to a world of people (obedience, tracking, rescue, and other malamutes) across the country and Canada that it would have been sad not to have known.

For those of you who knew Nicolle, you will understand the emptiness in my heart and home, but the joy too of having her cousin, "Niobe".

Farewell Nicolle, my lovely lady (for she always was a lady). Your Body may be gone, but the love will always remain.

IN MEMORY OF NICOLLE
Patricia Paulding

Our thoughts are with Pat as she recovers from the loss of her first dog. Most of us have gone through the loss of a dog, they are not easy times. Thank you, Pat, for sharing this tribute to Nicolle with us.

