



COMMON SCENTS

January/February 1992
Vol 16., No. 1



Lenape Tracking Club of Central New Jersey

TENTATIVE DATES TO REMEMBER

Nominations Meeting

Friday, February 21, 1992 (snow date 2/28)

Annual Dinner

Saturday, March 28, 1992

TED

Saturday, April 25, 1992

Tracklayer Certification

Saturday, August 22, 1992

Certification Match

Sunday, September 20, 1992

Tracking Test

Sunday, November 1, 1992

WHO'S WHO

OFFICERS

President
Vice President
Secretary
Treasurer

Fran Wilmeth	215-862-2453
John Etchells	908-236-2423
Dorothea Vail	201-947-1835
Linda Riley	908-832-6226

BOARD

Betty Fletcher	201-543-2687
Peg Forte	908-832-7231
Martha Hamil	908-846-5333
Millie Hefner	201-267-5676
Charlotte Yurashek	908-735-7229

COMMITTEES

Tracking Experience Day
Tracking Test Secretary
Newsletter

Fran Wilmeth
Linda Riley
Pat Etchells

; FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK: ;

As I mentioned in the last newsletter, Lenape Tracking Club was asked to be a presenter at the Canine Learning Experience 1992 on January 25th. This two-day event is sponsored by the Lehigh Valley Kennel Club and covers all aspects of dogs sports. Many obedience clubs, breed clubs, breed rescue groups and other canine organizations have booths and provide information to educate the public and dog fanciers. (I saw my first Argentine Dogo there.) An eye clinic, tattoo clinic and Identichip clinic were there along with 4-H Seeing Eye puppies, agility groups and commercial booths. Talks and workshops were going on all day. These covered attention in obedience, breed handling, solutions for canine behavior problems, grooming, how to select a puppy - you name it, and it was probably represented. An obedience match was going on during all these other activities.

When I was first contacted by the program chairman, I hesitated accepting a speaking assignment, but after discussing the opportunity with other Lenape members, we decided to go with it. I was told we would be provided with booth space, which I assumed was our compensation for providing speakers. I know from other organizations I belong to that booth space is at a premium and the clubs pay for it. I want to thank Pet Forte, Pat Paulding, Edie Braginton, Linda Riley and Molly UDT, George Calverley and John Etchells for helping man the booth. There were enough of us that we could take turns wandering the aisles to see other booths, watch obedience, listen to speakers, spend money and talk to people interested in tracking. John and I did the presentation from ten to eleven in the morning - prime time, so to speak.

When I first arrived and was setting up a table, displaying tracking materials and such, a committee person came by and gave me name tags for our group, which entitled us to a free lunch, an unexpected bonus. Then when John and I finished speaking, the committee person appeared again with a check for fifty dollars for

the club! So it was well worth the effort, plus everyone had a good time. We've decided to return next year with a booth whether or not we are asked to be presenters. I should also mention that we displayed the large logo sign that Ruby Szczepaniak painted for us several years ago, so our booth was well identified. It was fun to chat with Gail Palmer, one of our long-time members who doesn't get to many of our functions any more but came after Peg let her know we would be there. Another long-time member, Lillian Puchalski, was there socializing a smooth collie.

As a result of the Learning Experience, the members who were there are now highly motivated to produce our own video on tracking so we can display it at such events. One of the agility clubs had a video running throughout the day, and it attracted many people who stopped to watch it. So don't be surprised if you get a call to help with the video by providing a tracking dog, serving as a tracklayer or whatever.

As I am typing, I realize that this will be my last President's message. By the time the next newsletter is due, we will have new officers and board members. It's been a very busy, active, exciting, and, at times, trying three years. We did achieve our goal of becoming licensed by AKC and have held two sanctioned AKC tracking tests in addition to continuing our spring workshop, fall certification test and track layer's test. This could not have been accomplished without a number of hard-working members who pitched in whenever asked or volunteered their services. My thanks to all of you.

Remember our meeting on February 21st and our annual awards dinner on March 28th. I already have our first entry for Tracking Experience Day on April 25th. Another busy year ahead. Keep on Tracking!

Fran Wilmeth



Ming FLETCHER, BETTY's Pembroke Corgi, got legs on his UD title at Morris Hills and Princeton.

MILLIE HEFNER's Poodle Galliarde finished up her CDX title in three straight shows, the last leg being at the Poodle Club of Lehigh Valley.

NOMINATIONS

The Nominating Committee, consisting of Fran Wilmeth, Joanne MacKinnon, and Pat Etchells, has proposed the following slate of officers and Board members for the 1992-1993 year. Additional nominations may be made at the February meeting.

President	John Etchells
Vice President	Marty Hamil
Secretary	Hope Meaker
Treasurer	Linda Riley
Board Members	Barbara Dressel
	Peg Forte
	Ronn Loos
	Ruby Szczepaniak
	Fran Wilmeth

A REASON TO TRACK

by Patty Armfield, member of the Obedience Club of Palm Beach County
Reprinted from The Hudson Valley Tracker, May, 1991

Most training activities have a purpose. Obedience makes a good citizen out of a dog. Agility impresses our friends. Herding gets the livestock where it belong. Hunting bags birds. Tracking finds gloves that were never really lost.

Wait a minute - tracking dogs find lost people - kids, criminals - right? To be real truthful, in most situations, the practical application of tracking skills is as far above TDX as Utility is above Novice. So why spend long hours out in all sorts of weather just for a little title that means something only to other trackers?

What is the dog trained to do in tracking? Not much. We can't smell as well as a dog can, so we don't know exactly where the track is. All we can do is to come close. We can't make the dog find the track with a collar correction. Therefore, our training consists of teaching the dog what to follow, not how to follow.

In tracking, training is motivating the dog so he wants to find the glove at the end of the track more than he wants to do anything else. What this translates to in everyday terms is that the dog is the boss and he always wins. He always find the glove even if the handler has to surreptitiously help him.

For a shy or insecure dog, the change in overall behavior is very positive. The animal becomes more stable and outgoing in every situation, not just tracking. For a

bold, pushy dog, tracking allows him an acceptable outlet. Taking the pressure off can enable him to do better in other activities where he has to give up control.

The benefit to the handler-dog bond is inestimable. Because the dog can do something the handler can not do, the handler gains respect for his dog. This respect leads to better communication with and confidence in the dog. This in turn reduces the frustration with which the handler views any problems his dog may have. This helps him look objectively at the problem - the first step to solving it. For a shy dog, simply having confidence in him can go a long way to solving his problems in other areas.

Tracking is a no-lose situation. Even if the track is not done well on a given day, the bond between the handler and dog is strengthened. The dog is still in charge, right or wrong, and he learns from his mistakes as well as his handler does. When he realizes his handler isn't upset about mistakes, the dog learns to trust his handler a little more. When he does the track well, the handler trusts the dog more. Succeed or fail, trust is built and the bond strengthens.

When we learn to value our dogs for the truly remarkable creatures they are, we begin to realize the potential they hold.

Corners

Reprinted from Cross Tracks, July, 1990, by Mardee Edelstein

Dogs usually track in a straight line with no great problems, but corners are another story. Here are some ideas to help your dog understand corners.

1. Lay your track aimed at a fence, wall or building so that he will be stopped mechanically and have to search for the next leg. That is, lay the first leg perpendicular to the obstacle, and the second leg parallel to it.
2. Lay a simple two-leg track with a garden roller or lawn mower. This has worked really well.
3. Lay the first leg going up a hill.
4. Lay the first leg into the wind. This way, scent will not be blown past the leg. Walk heel-to-toe on the second leg.
5. Lay the second leg into the wind - so it will blow towards him while he is on the first leg.
6. Make a scent pad at the corner, using your hands as well as your feet, about a yard square.
7. Triple-lay the first ten yards of the new leg.
8. Curve the turn, instead of making it a right angle.
9. Angle the turn by making a short connecting leg between the two legs of 30, 45, or 60 degrees.
10. Practice corners - both directions - using short legs. Using leg lengths of 10 and 5 yards (for first and second legs), or even less, you can lay a lot of tracks on a very small strip of grass - especially if you lay them with the leg diagonal to the grass edge (instead of perpendicular or parallel). If you have a narrow strip of grass, accessible from both sides, make "chevron" pattern tracks - if only accessible from one edge, make tracks in a "pinking" pattern.
11. When you've tried everything and there is zero improvement, try smearing hot dog on the sole of your shoe about one yard before you make the turn - and leave a piece of hot dog about 2 yards after the turn on the second leg. If it is easier for you, use grated cheese (homemade or from a shaker, as long as it has a yummy smell), and leave a piece of cheese on the second leg at the end of the cheese trail.

Turn Indications

Reprinted from Cross Tracks, December, 1990

For years I have heard about how dogs indicate turns, but I have always had trouble finding anything my dog or others did specifically at each turn to show a turn. Some people say their dog's tail goes up or down, their head goes up or down, left or right. I have seen this from time to time but never consistently by any one dog. I have come to the conclusion, after all these years I guess I am a little slow, that dogs do not have a turn signal.

Dogs tend to track consistently in a straight line. Sure, there are glitches here and there when a dog may pick its head up, or stop and circle for a second, but they always seem to get back to work. These glitches become part of their consistency of straight line tracking (SLT). The turn indications then become acts by the dog not

consistent with SLT. When a dog loses a track, it acts differently than when SLT. Simple?

When a dog loses a track, it is apt to do all sorts of things, but seldom does the same thing as consistently as it does SLT. At a left turn, many dogs circle right before going left. Some dogs pick their head up and start air scenting for the track. Others seem to wander, going nowhere in specific. On any one track, given terrain and wind variables, a dog is apt to show different things at every turn. The one specific is that it is not acting like it does when SLT.

Perhaps we should pay more attention as to how our dogs track in a straight line than we do at turns.