

LENAPE TRACKING CLUB OF CENTRAL NEW JERSEY

COMMON SCENTS

JULY/AUGUST, 1995
Vol. 19., No. 4

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK



The follow-ups were well attended. We've had an abundance of Lenape members helping out. Unfortunately, the fields at Deer Path Park have been covered with

thorn bushes, which takes some of the fun out of it for us and the dogs. We've managed to avoid the worst fields, but the pesky little briars seem to be cropping up everywhere. It looks like at least a couple of the new teams will be candidates for the Certification Workshop in September. I believe we have some possible new club members from this year's participants as well.

The Certification Workshop is coming up in September and we'll be looking for a group of really big stinky tracklayers to help out that weekend. Now is not the time to diet! Mollie Heidi has been helping out in this department by passing out boxes Gummi Bears at the follow-ups. Seriously, though, we'll take anyone who is a certified tracklayer even if they are petite and shower often as many of our members do.

And we will be holding a Tracklayer's Certification on October 28 at the MacKinnon's farm. We also hope to assemble a panel to discuss starting TDX work - as well as having a potluck picnic. Mark the date!

Anna Burbank

DATES TO REMEMBER

Certification Workshop

..... Sunday, September 24, 1995

Tracklayer Certification/Meeting

..... Saturday, October 28, 1995

Tracking Test

..... Sunday, November 5, 1995



PAT BLAKE's pointer **Madge** finished her CD at Hunterdon Hills and took 2nd place.

BARBARA DRESSEL's Cocker **Skimmer** took part in the AKC's invitational tournament in St. Louis and placed 8th overall.

The HEIDEs have a litter of 10 Flatcoat puppies, born in early August.

PAWS WALK AGAINST CANCER

The American Cancer Society is having a fund raising dog walk on Sunday, October 22, in Montgomery, NJ FMI: (908) 752-4664

PATCHES

Lenape patches are available to members for \$4. We'll have them at Club functions or call (908) 236-2423 if you want one mailed.

President - Anna Burbank * **Vice President** - Peg Forte * **Secretary** - Pat Etchells
Treasurer - Linda Riley * **Board Members** - Pat Blake, John Etchells, Hope Meaker,
Pat Paulding, Dot Vail * **Editor** - Pat Etchells, PO Box 326, Lebanon, NJ 08833. deerhill@aol.com

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MEMBERSHIP

The following persons have submitted an application for membership. They will become members 30 days after the mailing of this newsletter unless the secretary Pat Etchells, PO Box 326, Lebanon, NJ 08833 receives any letters of objection within 30 days.

Kevin & Kathy Davis, 80 First Street, West
Keansburg, NJ 07734 (908) 787-3540
German Shepherds - Blitz & Caesar
Sponsors - Vicky Brown
Anna Burbank

Kathy Gaynor, 384 Bonnie Burn Rd,
Watchung, NJ 07060 (908) 322-1959
Chows - Zack & Shadow
Sponsors - Anna Burbank
Pat Etchells

Susan Keenan, 328 Amberly Rd, Brick, NJ
08723 (908) 262-9484
Rottweiler - Simba
Labrador - Bud
Sponsors - Anna Burbank
Barbara Greenfield

Jane Modjeski, 3151 Meriden Road,
Boonton, NJ 07005 (201) 335-1734
Bearded Collie - Boomer
Sponsors - Anna Burbank
Pat Etchells

Mimi Ruch, 179 Grove St., Somerville, NJ
08876 (908) 722-9723
Labradors - Abner & Angus
Sponsors - Anna Burbank
Pat Etchells

Priscilla White, 761 Grace Ave, Great Neck,
NY 11021 (516) 487-3629
Basset Hound - Muffy
Sponsors - Anna Burbank
Pat Etchells

CERTIFICATION WORKSHOP

A flier is enclosed about the workshop. Plan to come and watch even if you don't run a dog. We are running this as a mini seminar and Sue will be giving tips to the handlers and the gallery as well as being available to certify those dogs who are ready. It should be a great learning experience for everyone. (And Pat Blake promises to organize a great kitchen!)

Help!

(NEED ARTICLES)

If anybody noticed, most of the articles in *Common Scents* are written by somebody in one of our newsletter exchange clubs! How about some of you Lenape members putting your pens to paper any giving us some of our own articles!

For many years we had been receiving *Tracking Scents*, a compilation of articles from tracking newsletters. It has since ceased publication, and I am unable to use any of the contents because the editors prohibited reproduction of any part of the issue. But maybe someone would like to take one of the topics they had covered and write down original thoughts on the topics.

Tracking Perils
Tracking With a Puppy
Specialty Clubs and Tracking
Map Making
Making Sense of Scents
Hazardous Vegetation
Tips for Turns
Reading a Tracking Dog
Slowing a Fast Dog
Transition from TD to TDX Training
Line Handling
Tracking in Other Parts of the Country
Canadian Tests
Crosstrack Training
Winter/Summer Tracking Hazards
What a Tracklayer Should Know
TDX Articles
Laying Your Own Tracks
Tracking in the Past
Corrections
Conditions which Guarantee Failure
Training a Handler (Dog's Viewpoint)
Tracking and Having a Full-Time Job
Tracking an Older Dog
ANYTHING ELSE YOU CAN THINK OF!

Lenape members are as well versed in tracking as those in other clubs!!! How about sharing some of your knowledge. You will be given a by-line, and I edit as little as possible. You can e-mail stuff to deerhill@aol.com or I can read 3.5 disks with the file in ASCII or Word (Windows or Mac). Or send a hard copy and I'll type it. PO Box 326, Lebanon, NJ 08833.

OFF THE TRACK

by Mel Lloyd (Provisional Tracking Judge)

reprinted from *The MTA News*,

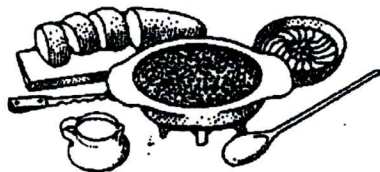
January, 1994

Our MTA editor has suggested that I put pen to paper and come up with some thoughts on the subject of tracklaying. To begin with, we must understand that a reliable tracklayer is as important to an aspiring tracker as a good plumber is to the owner of the "older" home. Point being that sooner or later things may not work right without one. The essentials of the teamwork necessary between and dog and handler are best developed when the handler has no idea where that track goes and realizes there's only way to find out. Hence, the oft heard expression, "follow your dog".

My view is that TD work can be done with a minimum of help from others, but a TDX requires help. Without our club's tracking program and its people, there would be fewer plaques on the wall. You will most appreciate that reliable tracklayer on the day some well intentioned friend can't find the turn, leg or "God, forbid", the article they dropped. I'm sure we're all grateful for the help we've been given, and acting as a tracklayer for clubs who need help is a way of repayment.

Some general very flexible rules to be considered in tracklaying might be:

First and foremost - know what the club's scheduled menus are. For example:
GLENBARD: chili-mac on Saturday and chicken dumpling soup on Sunday. RAND PARK: Sloppy Joes on Saturday and on Sunday there is bacon, eggs, toast and sometimes quiche!



Next, you have to have a real liking for early - early - morning walks, long ones in strange places. A reliable alarm clock, with a back up, is a must.

Make sure you have a reliable vehicle, with a full tank of gas to take you to new and "exotic" fields.

Appropriate clothing for any of the four seasons is a must, as the only sure thing about the weather is that it will change.

A compass is a good idea for the sunless day, when an "X" track takes you to strange new areas where no familiar landmarks are to be found.

Your trunk will be full of a variety of pointy sticks, stakes, poles, brightly colored clothes pins with ribbons attached. Also, the trunk will contain a goodly number of dissimilar articles such as socks, ski caps, mittens, glass cases, wallets, belts, scarves, plus an assortment of gloves. The only "article rule" is that no two gloves will make a "real pair" and none will fit you!

Also, don't forget a clip board, graph paper, mylar sheet, whistle, pencils with points, bug spray, sun block, water, and a first aid kit will be necessary some day.

In a slightly more serious vein, I think a tracklayer should:

- Not be creative or inventive; walk in an unhurried, normal manner with a comfortable length of stride.
- The judge should approve the choice of articles, possibly avoiding vinyl, rubber, wood, etc.
- When plotting, include more landmarks or reference points for turns and drops than you would ever think could be necessary
- Know that someday you will make an honest but silly mistake and yet will live through it. But LET THE JUDGES KNOW!
- Be fair to the dog and scent the articles well. No one needs to know how you do it, or where you've put the articles - just put them in the proper place.

Well, I've tried to come up with a few thoughts regarding the art of tracklaying. None are new, and thankfully we don't have to be rocket scientists. But being able to walk in a reasonably straight line is definitely helpful. Laying track for your own organization, or volunteering to help other clubs, is a real way of contributing to our great sport!

Here's hoping we will meet - at the glove!!

Not a Time to Panic

by Richard Knapp

reprinted from Tracking Club of Central Florida's *Cross Tracks*, April, 1993

While the first and thirty yard stakes at a TD Test should be our friends, all too often a handler becomes "brain dead" when reaching the start stake. Unlike every other part of each track, the starting stakes tell us where the scent is and where the track goes - shouldn't we save our panic for the first turn?!

How often do we see dogs fail the start because of the nerves of the handler? Too often, I suspect.

Whether you believe in a person's aura, magnetic field, body actions, or secreted adrenal scent, it is an accepted fact the emotions are detectable. Anyone can pick the groom out of the wedding party. He is the happiest or saddest person there (*except maybe for the father of the bride*). Wrinkled brows, dead or sparkling eyes, too much or too little talk, clenched fists or finger tapping are all give-aways to our emotions.

The better we know a person, the easier emotions are to detect. We pick up the little differences a loved one exhibits while a stranger notices nothing. We can frequently fool strangers about our emotions but can seldom fool a wife or husband - (*and God knows I have tried!*)

When it comes to our best friend, our dog, don't even try to fool him. Whether it is our adrenal scent or a dog's sixth sense (scent?), our emotions are clear. A dog knows the difference between a "training" angry we "put on" and the real angry over a broken Waterford Crystal glass. Dogs can sense the difference between the approach of a twice bitten adult and an innocent child. There is no hiding our real emotions from our dogs.

In training, our emotions are in control and we strive for positive results. We are oriented towards goals and rewards and accomplishments. We often challenge our dogs with new exercises or experiences but they are set up and we are prepared to react to any negative results so that we can make them positive. Most of us achieve TDx, OTCh, MH and Ch dogs in training because our attitudes and training are correct and we are in control of everything including our emotions.

When entry fees are mailed, however, our emotions begin to go hay-wire. Minor or major flaws in our dogs, real or imagined, begin to mysteriously appear. From a programmed and confident trainer, we are reduced to a panic-stricken novice trying to find quick fixes. Our final dress rehearsal convinces us we're insane to enter an event and that we should start our training all over again.

Try as we might to camouflage our emotions through quiet contemplation or open bravado, our dogs know what we are trying to hide. **Our dogs know how to react to our training emotions, but our Test emotions are so seldom exhibited that they do not know how to react.**

Nerves in tracking are understandable, as we have little or no control over what will happen at a Test. There is no prescribed ring routine to follow or to observe others doing. We cannot hide behind other spectators while the dog is working and we cannot rely on subtle commands or tricks in the ring to correct a faltering performance. We are out there all by ourselves in a large field where everyone can see us with nothing to fall back on except our training. We are there to pass or fail with no second chances tomorrow, no leaners and no ribbon for being second best.

Dogs can tell when a Test day is coming by our change in emotions and our changes in routine. We almost set our dogs up to fail and not pass. In training we seldom travel 3 hours to our practice site, or stay in a motel. We seldom sit in our vans with our dogs awaiting our track, or ignore our dog for the same period. When we walk our dog in training it is a casual thing; at a Test we do it 5 or 6 times, each time it is being more critical than the last time. When our track is called, we can never seem to find our lead - the one with no knots in it the day before, but which mysteriously appear out of nowhere. When we put the harness on, we put it on upside down or on the wrong end of the dog. Simple buckles become Chinese finger torture devices. The holes in the harness have disappeared having been healed by one of those preachers we cannot avoid on Sunday morning radio.

While trying to put the harness on we start talking to our dog and the judges. We tell the

judges we are not total idiots and don't need help with the harness - but ask anyway if we can track without it. We then go into our best Pat O'Brian imitation of Knute Rockney and tell our dog about the "Gipper." If that doesn't work, we remember the preacher on the radio and recite a Psalm that begins - "Yea through I walk through the shadow of .."

Is it any wonder that so many dogs have trouble at the start? Most dogs don't know if they are going out for another walk or if they are supposed to genuflect at the first cross - stake that is. We sweat so much at the start the odor overpowers the tracklayer's scent and all the dog can think of doing is getting away from the handler and going to the second station of the cross! Away from the handler, but still attached to him with a vibrating, tangled, restraining lead, the dog doesn't know if it is supposed to be tracking or heeling. The first turn is always easy in training, but the handler won't let the dog go and the dog has to circle and circle hoping the handler will become dizzy and just follow the dog.

When the dog fails at the start or first turn, our emotions change - boy do they change. We react differently and so do our dogs. For the most part though, handlers will finish the track with a void of emotion and the dog will work better than in any training session. The dog has not charged, we have.

So, What Can Be Done?

Fear and anxiety are natural and I won't bore you with clichés about them. What I can do is repeat some things I have said before - bore you twice? - but show a new application.

1. In training, understand your dog and how it tracks. Don't kid yourself about how good or bad he is. Hope, but do not expect that a dog will track better at a test than it does in training. The more you know your dog and the better prepared you are, the more comfortable you will be at a test.
2. Establish an easy to repeat pretrack routine and stick to it. The best routine is one that can always be repeated now matter how brain dead you are. **Your total responsibility to the dog and track is to get the dog to the starting stake prepared to track, not a difficult job.**
3. Once your dog leaves the start, the track belongs to the dog. It is his to pass or fail. All of your actions should be controlled by what is best to help the dog track and not how best to screw up the dog.

Normally, the best action you can make is no action at all. Any dog can have a bad or off day, that is OK, really it is!! When a handler interferes with a dog's tracking, however, woe be to the handler.

4. There will be another day! A few years ago there was more pressure at Tests because they were often 4 months to one year apart. Now we have 10 to 12 tests per year so there always seems to be next month! Also, once a dog knows how to track, he knows it? Six months or a year off will make little difference.

There is nothing we can do about the invisible emotional lead that connects us to our dogs except understand it and use it to the best of our ability. We must learn how to best train ourselves and dogs to get to the first stake in the best condition possible. We have to learn how not to interfere with the dog before or after the start. We must remember that everyone at a Test is there hoping you and the dog will pass, that a dog's failure is OK but a handler's failure is taboo.

Don't forget, you don't have to follow a track, only your dog has that responsibility. So, cool your jets and try to enjoy tracking tests. Your job is such a minor one, there should be nothing to be nervous about.

TRACKING IN CYBERSPACE

For those of you who have access to the Internet, there is a list devoted exclusively to tracking.

To subscribe, send an e-mail message to

listserver@reepicheep.gcn.uoknor.edu

with the message

Subscribe tracking *Your Real Name*

(i.e., Subscribe tracking John Doe)

Although there is an application process for some of the other obedience lists, to the best of my knowledge the number of subscribers here is still low enough that it is open to all. The volume of mail is moderate - maybe 10 messages a day. Topics discussed vary from TDX and VST to starting a dog, and posters include tracking judges and authors to people just starting out.

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