

Lenape Tracking Club of Central New Jersey

COMMON SCENTS

May/June, 1997
Vol. 21., No. 3

From the President's Desk

The weather was a bit on the cool side for TED 97, but at least the rain didn't materialize, with the exception a few very brief sprinkles. Heartfelt thanks goes out to all the members who gave their time to make the day a success.

The board reviewed the feedback sheets from the participants at their May meeting. The comments were generally good, but we have made some notes from them and from our own observations, to be incorporated next year. We are always open to suggestions and ideas to make the day go smoothly.

Much of the land near the Lebanon Township Municipal Building will be transformed into a park for our residents. That's the bad news. The good news is that Ralph Mac Kinnon and his Land Committee are hard at work, looking for other places we can use. Some fields have already been located and permission to use them has been granted. But we are continuing to look elsewhere for areas with contiguous fields within a reasonable distance from a site that could be used as headquarters for training sessions, TED follow-up days, the certification workshop and tests.

If you have any ideas please call Ralph at 908-735-7793.

The cool, wet spring has delayed the farmers cutting their hay fields, so we do not have a place to hold the Follow-up session scheduled for Saturday, June 7th. We have changed the date for that session to Sunday, June 29th. We are sorry for any inconvenience this causes our TED participants and the members.

The board has decided that it needs to hold a board meeting every month and has set the third Friday night as the date for these meetings. We hope that by meeting more frequently we can keep being energized watch out "pink bunny," the tracking dogs may run you over.

The board also reviewed the survey results in detail. We are looking into having a program on Variable Surface Tracking since many members expressed an interest in at least knowing more about this test. Ideas and suggestions for other programs from the survey are being worked on. We are also working on scheduling regular training sessions for our members.

The board is listening to your suggestions. But we need our

members to participate in these events. Hopefully, to slightly rephrase the line from the "Field of Dreams" movie, "If you schedule it, they will come."

Happy Trackin'

Peg Forte

Dates To Remember

Follow-up 1 and 2

.....Sunday, June 29

Meeting & Program

...Saturday, July 19 (tentative)

Follow-up 3

.....Saturday, August 9

Certification Workshop

.....Sunday, September 21

Tracking Test

.....Sunday, November 2



Mariah O'BRIEN earned her CD in style. Vizsla Nationals - 197 (1st); Lower Camden - 196.5 (2nd); Chesapeake - 194 (1st); Chambersburg - 196 (4th); Harrisburg - 198.5 (1st & High In Trial); Baltimore Co. - 198.5 (2nd); Rock Creek - 197.5 (2nd)

President - Peg Forte ♣ **Vice President** - Barbara Greenfield ♣ **Secretary** Mimi Ruch-
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Summary of Minutes Board Meeting

May 9, 1997

Correspondence

- Thank you from Seeing Eye for honorarium.

Old Business

- TED
 - Review of feedback - generally good. Suggestions included start on time and keep lectures within time limits.
 - Board suggestions included make food assignments more clear; have more snack-type foods available during the day; make notation on flier that there are distances to walk; instructors must use the same methods, not their own personal methods; each group leader should receive a copy of the guidelines
 - Peg will inquire about Round Valley Youth Center as a possible alternate location.
 - June follow-up, Barbara will send out fliers. The July follow-up may be rescheduled to avoid the July 4 weekend.
 - People who did not get into TED can come to observe but may not work their dogs. Club training sessions would be open to members only. In order to be considered for membership, a person must participate in at least two club events. John Etchells will serve as membership chairman.
- Fall Match We do not have a judge yet. Peg will get a list of the people contacted from Anna. Moving the match one week earlier could be a possibility

- Fall Test - Romaine Halupa will be unable to judge. Dolores Dedek has accepted the assignment.
- Survey Results - More than half of the 35 respondents are interested in club training sessions and an intermediate test. Sixteen people are interested in VST and interest in programs for general meetings was expressed.
 - Training sessions: dates and locations to be set up.
 - VST - request (local judge) make a presentation late August or October
 - Intermediate test - set up committee to lay out. (Distant judge) might be invited to do a workshop on the certification match weekend.
 - Programs - schedule general meetings. Possibly ask other groups such as 4H to attend.
- Land. Ralph will have a report for the June Board meeting
- Hunterdon County Library Lenape will sponsor *Dog Fancy* for the library. Peg will make poster/plaque.

New Business

- Board Meetings will be the third Friday of the month unless they are coupled with general meeting/program.

(Minutes taken by Mimi Ruch)

What is an Obedience Title Really?

Author Unknown
Reprinted from ADOA
Newsletter

Not just a brag, not just a stepping stone to a higher title, not just an adjunct to competitive scores, a title is a tribute to the dog that bears it, a way to honor the dog, an ultimate memorial. It will remain, in the record and in the memory, for about as long as anything in this world can remain. Few humans will do as well or better in that regard.

And though the dog himself doesn't know or care that his achievements have been noted, a title says many things in the world of humans, where such things count.

A title says your dog was intelligent, and adaptable, and good-natured. It says that your dog loved you enough to do the things that please you, however, crazy they may have sometimes seemed.

And a title says that you loved your dog, that you loved to spend time with him because he was a good dog, and that you believed in him enough to give him yet another chance when he failed, and that, in the end, your faith was justified.

A title proves that your dog inspired you to that special relationship enjoyed by so few; that in a world of disposable creatures, this dog with a title was greatly loved, and loved greatly in return.

And when that dear short life is over, the title remains as a memorial of the finest kind, the best you can give to a deserving friend, volumes of praise in one small set of initials after the name.

An obedience title is nothing less than the love and respect, given and received and recorded permanently.

Help - The Bait's Flying Away

At TED the question arose of how to deal with crows stealing hotdogs from the field. Never having been the victim of black marauders, I turned to the Internet tracking list for help.

Sean Reidy (sean.reidy@ul.ie) responded:

"Over the years, I too have had problems with crows stealing food off my tracks. If you track in the same place all the time, the local crows aren't slow to learn that the sight of someone laying a track equals goodies!

There is nothing they won't take. What I did was to either:

1. Bury the food deeply in the grass, if it is long.
2. If the grass is short, pluck some, and cover the food with it. You can use whatever is to hand to cover pieces of food so they are not visible from the air. I have used leaves, weeds, twigs, basically anything within reach. (As a matter of fact, this forces the dogs to use their noses better also, because they cannot find the food by sight.)
3. Use food that is not too bright. Something dark brown in colour is less visible from the air. Some canned dog foods fit the bill.

But, in the long run, the best way to avoid problems with



crows is to vary your tracking venue. Don't track in the same place too often, so the crows don't learn to associate people with food. Otherwise, they will queue up in the trees, waiting for you every weekend :-)"

Steve Kohlmann (kohlmas@eagle.dfw.state.or.us) offered this additional insight:

"Birds (with the exceptions of vultures) have no sense of smell. They find food entirely by sight. Using cryptic food items (small doggy bones, dark colored meat balls, etc.) in longer grass might help. I'm laying a lot of tracks in the forest, and I've never had crows or any other critter remove my rewards - crows like foraging in open areas, where they can detect predators (hawks). They seem to avoid areas that are wooded (for foraging). You could also experiment with food coloring (green?).

Alternatively, you could try avoidance-training the crows by putting common chemical bird deterrents on your hotdogs (but make sure the dog won't eat them!). After a week or two, you will notice that most crows will no longer touch a hotdog - they learn pretty fast. This would be useful only if you have no other area for training or need open spaces (golf courses) for your training.

To find out which repellents work best I suggest you contact the USDA National Wildlife Research Center, 6110 Columbus Ave, Sandusky OH 44870, or J.R. Mason at the USDA-APHIS Animal Damage Control Wildlife Research Center, Utah State University, Logan UT 84322."

PE

VST

reprinted from The Tracking Club of Vermont's *The Scintinel*

At our May meeting, Miles Garrod gave an overview of VST tracking tests and training issues. At the present time, only five dogs have earned the VST title. The title is proving very difficult to achieve, and Miles gave us an overview of some of the difficult areas.

A VST track is slightly shorter than a TDX track, but occurs in an urban area that includes much different challenges for the dog and handler team. For example, while a VST track does not include physical obstacles like the TDX, some of the scenting obstacles can be much more challenging. Miles explained what scent seems to do when tracks are laid along or near buildings. Although most judges try not to include scenting traps for the dogs in their tests, a slight change in wind direction or weather conditions between plotting day and test day could cause an unwanted trap. Miles suggested that we lay tracks with legs well away from each other, and that don't double back on themselves. A good track design would resemble stair steps, for example.

He reviewed the rules for us and gave some examples of how handlers and dogs have been challenged by certain features of VST. For example, dogs seem to indicate differently on VST tracks, especially the variable surfaces, so handlers need to learn to read their dog's new indications. And handlers must be aware of all the places a VST track can go - for example, into an open parking garage!

Several of the dogs Miles has judged recently have come close to passing, but so far he has yet to judge a passing team. However, he is looking forward to the day when someone from New England earns this coveted title - and it could be soon.

Theory of Scent

reprinted from *Keeping Tabs on Labs*, July/August, 1996

1. Sweat consists of 99% water and 1% fatty acids, the latter of which contains the scent.
2. Man loses 1/64 of his total weight, or approximately 2 pounds of sweat, every 24 hours.
3. Scent is not due to finely divided particles of odoriferous matter, either solid or liquid, but to scent molecules dispersed as a gas and carried by air currents to the olfactory senses.
4. The individual scent track of a man is caused by a trail of odorous liquid particles (scent oil).
5. Scent oil of man derives its individual odor from the fatty acids of which isovalerianic and propanoic give out the most lasting scents.
6. The scent trail of a mixture of fatty acids forming synthetic sweat evaporates after 5 hours of exposure to sunlight.
7. Individual scent tracks of all animals are due to a trail of scent oil.
8. The most favorable conditions for scent are when a dog is tracking upwind and when the earth is warmer than the air (i.e., night).
9. Any sudden fall in temperature in the air causes scent to be good, and vice-versa.
10. Experiments prove that the earth "breathes." Scent is good when the earth is exhaling and vice-versa.
11. The earth "exhales" when its temperature is higher than that of the air, and vice-versa.
12. Scent is usually bad when the sun is shining.
13. The scent of grass is not greatly affected by sunlight.
14. Scent will not last longer than 5 hours during direct sunlight in warm weather.
15. No dog (including bloodhounds) can track a man after 5 hours of direct sunlight unless it has learned to follow the track of bruised herbage or other additional scent, which is independent of the natural and distinctive odor of the quarry (object of the chase)
16. Sunlight deodorizes scent owing to the ultraviolet rays.
17. It has been found that the track of a man may be deodorized more effectively during one hour of sunlight than by 10 hours of darkness.
18. A high wind causes eddy currents and makes scent conditions uncertain.
19. Scent is good in snow which has fallen before a frost and vice-versa.
20. Frost checks scent, which may reappear when thawed.
21. Heavy rain falling on a track obliterates scent.
22. Heavy rain obliterates scent, high winds dissipate scent.
23. Moist land carries a better scent than dry land.

The Theory of Scent was submitted to *Retriever Review* (June, 1996) newsletter of the LRC of Southern California by LRCSC member Dan Ellison. The author wishes to share the knowledge of his experience for the betterment of scent detection abilities of dog/man teams. These experiences come of 15 years as a professional dog trainer, and from the many fine dogs I have had the chance to be with.

The Four Types of Dog Vomit!

Author Unknown

YELLOW URKA-GURKAS--Dog runs around the house and hides under furniture while making a prolonged 'uuuurka-guuurka, uuurka-guuurka' noise. (This noise is the only thing guaranteed to wake up a true dog lover who is hung over from a post dog show celebration at 3:30 a.m.) After mad scrambling to capture the dog and drag him outside, the episode ends with an indelible ten yard line of slimy yellow froth from the living room rug to back door.

BLAP DISEASE--Dog exercises hard and
a) eats large mouthfuls of snow (Winter Blap Disease) or
b) drinks a bucket of water (Summer Blap Disease).
Within 2 minutes of returning inside the dog spews out large amounts of clear slimy liquid while making a distinctive 'blap' sound and sharp percussive noise as it hits the linoleum.

GARKS--Dog suddenly clears his throat with loud and dramatic 'gggaark, gggark,' noises, generally followed by prolonged 'iikssss' and then loud satisfied smacking noises. There is nothing on the rug. Don't investigate, you don't want to know.

RALFS-- Appropos of nothing, the dog strolls into the dining room and waits til the innocent dinner guests are all watching him. Then with a single deep gut-wrenching 'raaaalfff' disgorges the entire week's contents of his stomach on the dining room rug. **VARIATION:** then he eats it.

In all the above events, the dog is entirely healthy and indeed deeply pleased with himself.



Protect Yourself From Domestic Animal Attacks

June 9-14 is National Dog Bite Prevention Week

MANHATTAN -- With the recent publicity surrounding domestic animal attacks, a Kansas State University veterinarian offers advice that may help prevent such conflicts.

"A lot of things can trigger a dog bite," said Kathy Gaughan, clinical instructor at the K-State veterinary teaching hospital. "Often times it is motion. If dogs are running loose, a child is running, a person is riding a bike or a rabbit is running, they're motivated by motion.

"They're also motivated by noise," Gaughan added. "Dogs are more likely to bite when the person yells or screams."

Gaughan offers these tips to help prevent dog attacks:

- * Stay away from stray and unfamiliar animals. This includes animals behind fences, in parked cars or tied to a leash. It's very tempting to want to pet them, especially if you know the animal, but stay away. It's your best means of preventing a bite.
- * If you happen to be in a situation where a stray dog comes up to you, stand very still with your hands to your side and feet together. Be like a tree. Or if you're on the ground, lay on your side, tucking your chin and knees to your chest and placing a fist over each ear. Be like a rock.
- * Do not make any noise. Be as quiet and as still as possible.
- * Avoid eye contact with the dog because the dog may perceive this as a challenge. Stare straight ahead if you encounter a dog running loose.

Gaughan says any breed of dog has the potential to bite, but

some breeds tend to be more aggressive than others.

"Some breeds of dogs have been bred specifically for the aggressive trait. These dogs are often used for the purposes of guarding, protecting and herding, and as such are more prone to bite," said Gaughan.

When people think of domestic animal attacks, dogs usually come to mind. But cat bites are actually more frequent and often overlooked as being a danger.

"Cats can be aggressive in self-defense, especially if they are frightened or angry," said Gaughan. "People are frequently bitten or scratched when they try to stop a fight between cats or try to comfort a cat that is scared. A person in the wrong place at the wrong time can be a victim of a cat's redirected aggression.

"The cat is not actually mad at the person, but because the cat has already been aroused and is angry, it may attack any person or thing that comes near it," added Gaughan. "Also, when a cat is cornered, whether scared or just wanting to be left alone, it cannot escape and its only choice is to fight."

According to Gaughan, a cat's mouth is dirty and has a lot of bacteria. People whose immune systems are compromised, whether they have an infection or the HIV virus, are more likely to develop complications from a cat bite.

Gaughan says if you are bitten by your pet or someone else's animal, you should seek medical attention.

"If it's a very superficial wound, clean it really well," said Gaughan. "Run water over it for 10 to 15 minutes and clean it with mild soap."

Gaughan says medical attention needs to be sought for any bite or scratch wound that is deep, reddened, swollen, painful or draining.

Prepared by Robyn Horton. For more information, contact Kathy Gaughan (pronounced GONE) at (913) 532-5690.

This has been a post from KSUPET-L

Labrador Sense

reprinted from Keeping Tabs on Labs, Jan/Feb, 1995

Several years ago, an environmental scientist with Esso Resources Canada Limited had tested 33 methods for detecting pipeline leaks and decided there was no efficient or cost-effective method available. Then he tried dogs. A field test showed that a dog's nose was superior to the best oil field laboratory equipment. A gas chromatograph could detect 0.2 parts per million of a specific scent. A dog could detect a specific scent in one part per billion-billion with 100 percent success. Tekscents is the chemical odorant used by Esso for detecting pipeline leaks.

Labradors were chosen to work on the pipeline for the drive, instinct to retrieve, and stamina. Because they work in adverse weather and in dense underbrush, their size and coat are well suited to the task. Many of the pipelines cross rivers, streams or muskeg, so the dogs also have to like water. Another story that shows the versatility of the Labrador.

The information above was abstracted from Terri Perrin's article, "The Great Canadian Lab Experiment," in *Dogs in Canada*, March 1991.

What Happens to Dogs in the Car

by Pat Schaap

via *Shenanigan Shetlands* via DTC of St. Petersburg, FL via *Imperial Polk Obedience Club*, Lakeland, FL, via *OCOTC Courier*, Oklahoma City OTC via Des Moines OTC *Waggin' Tales*

There's been an accident - you couldn't avoid the wet patch on the curve, or the oncoming car. You are unconscious and your dogs are in the car with you. Possibly hurt, too. What will happen to your dogs?

The chances that you will be involved in an automobile accident grow stronger every time you put the key in the ignition. Statistics show that most automobile accidents occur within half an hour of home. Trips to the vet, training classes, and to the park probably fall within that half hour range. Should the statistics catch up to you, and you and your dog are in the accident, how would your dog fare? Ask yourself that question, but add "If you are unable to communicate with the emergency rescue team"? Well, the answer depends on how prepared you are for an accident.

Scenario 1: At the time of impact your dogs are traveling on the back seat, their leashes are on the front seat next to you and each dog is wearing a collar, without tags. When the emergency teams arrive to extricate you from the car, they open the doors and you are removed for the trip to the hospital. One of your dogs slips out of the open door unnoticed. The other continues to huddle in a corner. When you are able to communicate with the police officer at the hospital, he doesn't know anything about your dogs, but promises to check

it out. Pain, worry and heartache.

Scenario 2. Your two dogs are in crates firmly anchored to the body supports of your car. Signs on the crates request that in an emergency the crates be removed from your car with dogs still in them. The emergency team arrives and eventually removes the crates and turns them over to the police, along with your other personal effects. While you are on the way to the hospital, police collect your personal effects, including crates of dogs and follow you there. Emergency numbers have been taken off the crate tags and someone is called to come and pick up your dogs. At the hospital the police officer tells you that a friend is on the way to get your dogs.

I was fortunate. After a rather bad accident, I was able to rescue my dog, put a leash on her, and hand her to safety before being freed from the wreckage myself. Piper had been riding in a crate with the door open in the back of a van. She was injured and hiding. Had I not been conscious, well, I am not sure my dog would have survived.

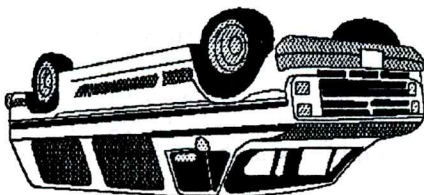
So what will happen to your dogs? Plan now for the accident you hope never to have. Begin (as all of us have been told dozen of times) by having all dogs that are traveling in your car in crates that have been firmly anchored. Generally, emergency teams (or the tow truck drivers) will look into crates to see if they are occupied. Next best is some sort of "pet seat belt" to keep the dog from flying around.

Crates should be empty of anything that will move (toys, dishes, etc.). These items are

likely to cause injury to a dog that is thrown around. All equipment (tack boxes, water containers, grooming supplies) should also be anchored. Crates should have your identification on them (a business card will do) that includes your address and telephone number and several emergency numbers. I replaced the standard bolts in the side centers of my airline crates with an eye bolt, making it easier to attach a bungee anchor. I do not use wire crates in my car any longer. In my accident an airline type crate was forced against a wire crate containing my dog and the wire crate collapsed (the airline type crate was undamaged).

All crates should be individually anchored to the automobile body structure (not to plastic around the windows, etc.). Stacked crates should be tested with a quick test stop in the driveway (without dogs) before you leave. Remember the TV safety message about the use of seat belts with children - a 30 pound child becomes a 150 pound projectile. This is also true of "flying" crates.

A leash should be attached to the door of every crate with a dog in it (don't depend on finding leashes in a tack box after an accident). If the dogs don't have collars on, attach one to each leash. I have developed a tag system that I use with my dogs. I have generic tags attached to collars (my name, address and phone number) that I keep in the car. Every dog in the car will have one of these collars on, when traveling with me. Each dog also has a preprinted card in a plastic envelope with a snap on top (the kind hunters put their licenses in). I keep these tags in the car, and put them on the appropriate crate doors each



time I travel. If the dogs stay in the crate this information is important to their care. I use the cards to note information such as name, description (colors, etc.), medications, allergies, temperament (shy, aggressive), in season, vet's name and telephone numbers and so on. I also include a message that "If possible, please leave the dog in the crate to remove it from the car (for the safety of

the dog as well as the safety of the rescuer).

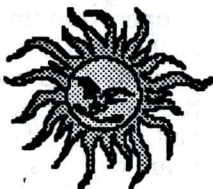
If a bitch is in season, mark it clearly on the crate door. Should your dog become a temporary responsibility of an individual or the animal shelter, you want to be sure she is kept isolated. If a dog is on medication, mark it clearly on the crate door along with the type of medication and dosage.

Emergency teams (police/fire) may only be able to care for your dog on a short term basis and may have to call in the local animal shelter to take "protective custody" of your dogs. When someone goes to the animal shelter to collect your dogs, be prepared to identify them - a collar with ID on every dog that is not tattooed will save you a lot of trouble.

In Summer's Heat, Prevent Canine Heat Exhaustion

MANHATTAN -- It's not just the canine athletes -- the Frisbee leapers, the runners and jumpers -- that are susceptible to heat exhaustion. Every dog is a potential victim of summer's heat.

One of the most common causes of heat stroke is leaving an animal in a hot car.



"Even on an 80 degree day, the temperature inside a car can get up to 130 degrees fairly quickly," said Dr. William Fortney, a veterinarian with Kansas State University's Veterinary Medical Teaching Hospital. "Leaving a window cracked doesn't prevent heat build-up."

Fortney says leaving a dog in a car on a warm day is risking the dog's life.

"Dogs don't sweat, and they don't have an efficient way to cool themselves down. If they are panting, it may be because they need the oxygen because they've been exercising, or it may mean they are trying to get rid of built-up heat in their bodies."

Long coats also hold in body heat. Clipping the dog's coat a

little shorter for summer will also help to keep the dog cooler, Fortney said. "Be sure not to shave the dog, though, because that could lead to sunburn, which would be very painful for the dog."

Black dogs absorb the sun's rays, so they get hot more quickly than lighter-colored dogs.

Fortney says it is impossible to give specific recommendations on how long dogs can be out in the sun exercising.

"There are so many variables, depending on the physical condition of the dog, its age, its coat length, its breed," he said. "A well-conditioned dog with short hair can play longer in the heat than a long-coated dog not accustomed to getting much exercise. The owner also must take into account the age of the dog and any health problems it might have. Very young or very old dogs are more at risk. Breeds like pugs and Pekinese have more difficulty in the heat because of their facial shape."

The first signs of heat exhaustion:

- Excessive panting
- The skin on the inside of the ears becomes flushed and red

Fortney says heat exhaustion quickly deteriorates into heat stroke, with signs of:

- Weakness
- Walk becomes wobbly
- Fainting/loss of consciousness

"Your quick action can save your dog's life," Fortney said. "If your dog starts getting weak and wobbly, faints and loses consciousness, cool him down as fast as possible -- don't wait to get to the veterinarian's office. Those few minutes could mean the difference between life and death. Hose the dog down with cool water. Apply an ice pack to the dog's head -- a cooler with ice can come in handy -- just place ice inside a towel or other fabric before applying the ice."

Fortney says that many dogs don't know when to quit exercising. They love playing Frisbee, or fetch, so much that they will continue to the point of exhaustion. It is up to the owner to use good judgment and decide when play should stop.

"I discourage that kind of activity in the heat of the day anyway," Fortney said. "Wait until the evening when it is cooler."

This has been a post from KSUPET-L, an electronic mailing list about pet health, utilizing expertise from Kansas State University veterinarians. This is a low volume list, providing one or two news releases each month.

Judges Foul the Start?

by Richard Knapp

reprinted from the Tracking Club of Central Florida's *Crosstracks* via the Tracking Club of Vermont's Newsletter

It is this tracker and judge's firm belief that judges are to fault for a percentage of the failures at the start of tracks. Failures are not always the fault of handlers, their dogs, or their training. All too often, judges and tracklayers unconsciously spend an inordinate and unnecessary amount of time at the starting stake on Saturday while plotting tracks in both TD and TDX Tests. At a recent Test I timed 5 people at the starting stake who took 15 minutes to start laying the track. Can you just imagine the kind of scent pad they left? Is it no wonder that even well-trained dogs can have trouble starting?

It is an established fact that dogs can detect scent 18 to 24 hours old. The AKC recognizes this and has changed rules governing the number of people in the fields during plotting and the time between Test tracks in the same field (3 days). Many judges will become irate when people leave the track during plotting as they have seen too many dogs take false trails accidentally laid the day of plotting. Any instructor will also tell you about tracking the previous days' practice tracks. We have all heard stories about search and rescue dogs following trails 2 and 3 days old. Dogs can detect 24-hour old scent, and when this occurs at the start of a track, which scent is the dog to follow?

Judges also gather at turns to discuss turn markers, yardage, problems, and the next leg and landmarks. Another scent pad is created which the dog often reacts to. Ever notice how many dogs in training do quick accurate turns, but at tests circle wide? Maybe the scent pad causes dogs to circle wide and that is why dogs don't pick up

the leg until they are 20-30-40 feet along into the leg, away from the turn (and scent pad?). Discussion and consultation are necessary many times during the plotting of tracks and most dogs can handle mid-track scent pads from the day before. There is nothing that can be done about this.

The most critical part of a track however is the start and the dog's identification of the scent to be followed. There is absolutely no reason or justification for judges and tracklayers to create a scent pad at the start - i.e., to foul the start! The solution: We don't need any more rules in our sport, and this problem relates to activities *before* the Test. I would suggest a change in the judges guidelines that would say in effect:

"Judges and tracklayers should confer and discuss the track to be plotted at least 20 yards away from the proposed starting area. Judges should plan their starting point and the direction of the first leg off the track so that they can walk to the starting area, plant the starting stake and proceed without leaving a significant scent pad that might confuse the dog on test day."

Some might say that trackers should do more training and less complaining, but that is not appropriate for this discussion. To this tracker it is totally unreasonable and unnecessary to ask trackers to train for fouled starts - it would take 5 or 6 people and two days to recreate the problem some judges create. We have rules to make Tests relatively equal and it would be easier to avoid the problem of a scent pad than to create rules that would create a fouled area equal to all.

Let it be known that the fouling of the start is an unconscious act by judges. Ask 100 judges after a day of plotting how much time they spent at the start and maybe one might be able to tell you. I cannot remember, and when I once asked John Barnard about what he had observed, he couldn't respond either. This is an area of judging we have just overlooked.

What brought all this about? Well, it was no one thing. The start has always been a tracking problem, but more so at Tests than in training. An article in *Tracking Scents* years ago discussed it, but only as a training problem. I just happened to time a few judges at the start of a Test. The next day, all dogs had problems at the start except one and this dog had the best TDX start in two years of Tests. What was different about this track? The start had been moved 20 yards into the field by the tracklayer on Test day at the direction of the judges - twenty yards away from the scent pad of the previous day. It then took 24 hours of thinking and putting all experiences together for this dim wit to realize the totality of it all.

However, changing the judges guidelines may only help a few dogs at the start and result in a few more passes. There is a lot more to tracking than the TD and TDX start.

