

2017 National Derby Sedalia, Missouri Championship Stake

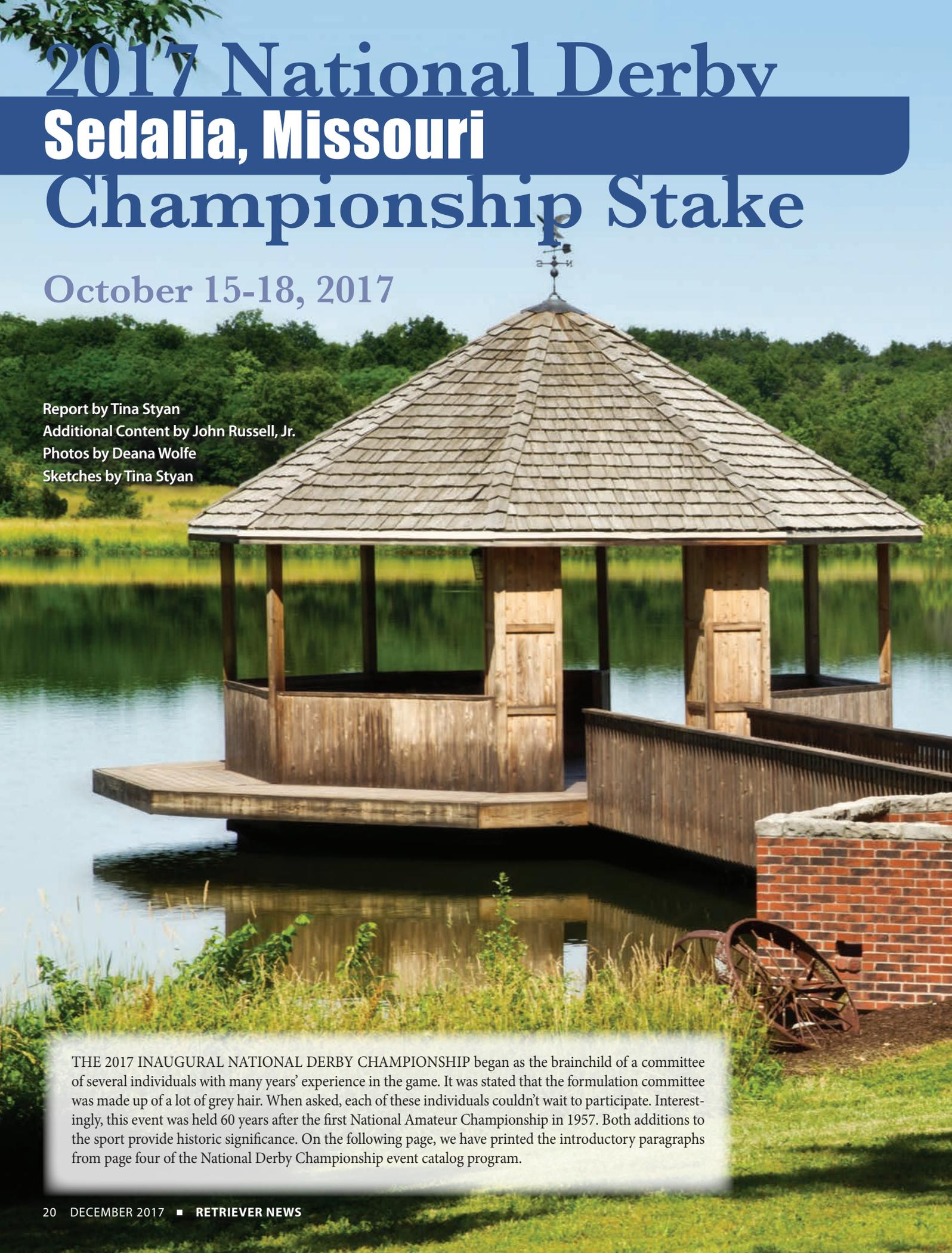
October 15-18, 2017

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Additional Content by John Russell, Jr.

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Sketches by Tina Styan



THE 2017 INAUGURAL NATIONAL DERBY CHAMPIONSHIP began as the brainchild of a committee of several individuals with many years' experience in the game. It was stated that the formulation committee was made up of a lot of grey hair. When asked, each of these individuals couldn't wait to participate. Interestingly, this event was held 60 years after the first National Amateur Championship in 1957. Both additions to the sport provide historic significance. On the following page, we have printed the introductory paragraphs from page four of the National Derby Championship event catalog program.

The 2017 NRDC Judges, shown left to right:
Jerry Kamphuis, Northern Region
Yvonne Hays, Southern Region,
John Goettl, Western Region.



Test One



A Word from the President of the National Retriever Derby Club

On behalf of the Board of Directors and the formulation committee, I take great pleasure in welcoming all of you to Sedalia, Missouri for the very first National Derby Championship. It has been approximately 1-1/2 years since the inception of this event. The reality of this event in such a brief time is the result of a lot of hard work by many people, the incredible generosity of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Hayden (our landowners), and the tremendous cooperation of the American Kennel Club and Doug Ljungren.

The original thoughts were of a fast-moving, head-to-head competition of Derby dogs to determine and crown a singular national champion that would earn a recordable title. All of that would be consistent with the other national championships in our sport. Because travel with dogs can be difficult we have made an attempt to locate it as centrally as possible, to minimize inconvenience for the greatest number possible. We hoped that it would encourage more people to participate in retriever field trials, there is some early evidence that it has. Perhaps this will reinvigorate an entry level community to grow in our sport.

The bonus to all of this has been the cooperative effort between the amateurs and professionals to do something together to promote the future health of this sport. The assistance of the PRTA in this endeavor has been of great value, for now and into the future. Mike Lardy and Wayne Curtis in particular have immersed themselves in the thought, strategy, and execution to an extent that deserves all of our thanks. The amateurs that are listed in this catalog are all familiar names and have given freely of themselves in an effort to reach the goal line.

I must recognize a few in particular. John Stracka has given of himself in ways that defy convention for human investment in a hobby. My very good friend of many decades, Dennis Bath, has once again strapped on the gloves and answered the bell to go a few rounds with our traditionally very supportive sponsors. Loren and Carol Morehouse, along with their Kansas City Retriever Club, have put in a Herculean effort to insure the success of this inaugural event. Tina Styan and her team at Retriever News have worked very hard to pick up all the balls that I have dropped and keep this train



on the tracks. I must once again thank Bob and Barbara Hayden for displaying their support and love for our sport in so many ways. I would be remiss if I did not thank my wife Martha for her ongoing support in many ways and her continued tolerance of me.

Now it is time to look forward to the event itself. We have a premier facility, as fine a panel of judges as our sport could offer, and a very fine field of young dogs. All of this should provide for a very entertaining event. Sit back, fasten your seatbelt, and enjoy the competition. We trust that you will be as enthusiastic as we are. Enjoy your stay here in Sedalia, appreciate the grounds, and try to not overlook the excitement and anticipation of these fine young teams of dogs and handlers.

Please allow me one more line to acknowledge the great support this inaugural event has received from not just the entire country, but from all of the key components of the game.

Thank you, good luck, and "Guns Up."

John Russell, 2017 President National Retriever Derby Club

The night before the event began, a tremendous storm with high winds blew through the area. It had folks a little worried, but caused no problems and the end result was an agreeable drop in temperature and humidity – perfect field trial weather! Day one of the Inaugural National Retriever Derby Championship began with a pleasant and cool 52 degrees and a northwest wind at 15 mph. This helped dry the previous night's rain as the sun peeked through an overcast sky, warming temperatures throughout the day.

Test Two



The trial grounds for the National Derby Championship lay on the property of Robert and Barbara Hayden. Their sprawling Wood Dale Farm includes 513 acres of rolling groomed pastures, ponds and lakes with gravel and paved roads traversing the property. Bob stated that he purchased the property hoping that it would be used for National events; it was nice to see his dreams realized in this event.

Sunday, October 15 – Test One: Double with a Flyer and Dead Bird; Test Two: Double with Two Dead Birds

The First Series overlooked a terraced field. The mat faced south and a brisk wind blew from the NW at 12-15 mph. The first bird was a dead rooster on the left side of the field thrown to the left at 176 yards. The bird was thrown next to a patch of heavy cover. The dog must travel across some low cover of cut grass going down across three terraces to get the bird. The second bird was the rooster flyer shot to the left at 181 yards. The bird was right of the line and there were three terraces on the way to this bird also. The time for this test ranged from 3-5 minutes.

The first Test Dog, Willow Creek's He's Got The Moves, "Jagger," a male Labrador owned by David and Deana Wolfe and handled by David, was called to the line at 7:56 am. Jagger ran down the terrace left of the cover strip, was handled short left and quickly turned out to get his bird. For the dead rooster, he came in right of the guns and made a quick left turn to his bird.

The second Test Dog, Skywatch Polished Steel, "Chevy," a female Labrador owned by Lou and Ray Vreeland and handled by Lou, came to the line at 7:59 am. Chevy ran down the field, across the terrace right of the cover and straight to fall area and the bird. For the second bird, she came in right at the guns, turned left and worked her way to the bird.

The first dog to run the first ever National Derby Championship just happened to be named "First," Sandhill First Class, a male Labrador handled by Brad Arington. As the morning continued and the test progressed, conditions remained relatively stable excepting the wind, which began to blow a bit harder. The dog work continued to be about the same with some dogs having difficulty on the flyer. However, the lighting improved on the dead bird as the sun peeked out from behind the clouds occasionally. By midmorning, the sun had come out and shone brightly. The test concluded just before midday.

The three judges, Yvonne Hays, Jerry Kamphuis and John Goettl, called all 40 dogs back to the second series and did not drop any.

The callbacks to the 2nd Series were 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42. Remember that dogs 4 and 11 were scratches. The dog starting the next series would be dog #3 – Abbeys Blaze Of Glory QA2, "Legend," a female Labrador handled by Will Price.

Test Two: Double with Two Dead Birds

For the Second Series test, the mat faced south from the top of a hill. The bird stations lay past the bottom of the hill starting up the far side of the opposite slope. The first bird was on the lower right side at 243 yards from the line and was a dead rooster thrown to the left. The second bird, a dead rooster thrown to the right, landed farther up the hill on the left side at 284 yards from the line.

"Chevy" handled by Lou Vreeland hunted the right bird behind guns then went deep before coming back down the hill to her bird. For the left bird, she headed back to the right bird and had to be handled. The gunners then re-threw the bird and she had a good mark.

"Jagger" handled by David Wolfe went for the right bird and had a good initial line down the hill which took him straight to the bird.

Test Three



For the left bird, he had a great mark and ran directly to the bird.

As the afternoon progressed, both gun stations sat in full sun; despite the light, however, they did not stand out well. The temperature increased to 57 degrees with the wind coming from the northwest at 12 mph. Later in the day, the birds began to fall into sunlight. Most dogs managed the test, although a few switched.

The 38 dogs called back to the 3rd Series were 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42. The two dogs dropped were 6 and 14. The dog starting the next series was dog #15 – Beaverdam's Las Vegas, "Ace," a male Labrador handled by Martha Russell.

Monday, October 16 – Test Three: Water Single; Test Four – Water Double

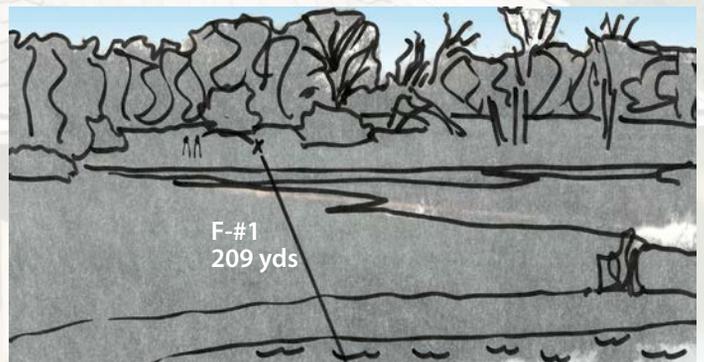
For Day Two of the National Derby Championship, there was a nip in the air and frost on the pumpkin with a chilly temperature of 41 degrees! The Third Series began late to allow the shadows to clear from fall area of the birds as the sun rose. The judges announced that the first running dog would be called to the line at 8:45 am, allowing the sun to rise higher for better visibility.

The mat for the Third Series sat on a high mound that faced east. This test was a long water single which included three pieces of water between the mat and the bird. Two of these pieces of water were very obvious. The third piece of water lay farthest away, located behind a long narrow point jutting out into the water. The line to the bird would take the dogs across this point and back into the third piece of water. However, the left end of the point connected with the land behind the gunners' station. Dogs that took the land had the potential to be pushed left of the gunners behind the gun station. The mallard duck flyer was shot to the right at 209 yards.

"Jagger" was called to the line at 8:22 am and had a no bird.

"Chevy" was called to perform next. She had a great line through the three pieces of water. She went up on the shore in front of guns, made one quick turn and ran out to the long flyer.

Jagger's rerun had found him taking all three pieces of water. He stayed in front of the guns and quickly ran out to get the bird.



The temperature rose to 54 degrees, the sun shone brightly and the breeze blew lightly from the west southwest at 7 mph. The test concluded and the two dogs that were dropped had extensive hunts.

The 36 dogs called back to the 4th Series were 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42. The two dogs dropped were 24 and 29. The dog starting the next series was dog #25 – Wolf River's Dirty Max, "Max," a male Labrador handled by Chris Christopher.

Test Four – Water Double

The Fourth Series was run from the same mound as the Third Series test; the difference was that the Judges moved the mat to face south. This series was a water test and the long dead drake was thrown left angle back at 320 yards south of the mat. The line to this bird required the dog to enter the pond and cross a levee into a second pond. The dog then had to drive up the hill and cross a road to get his bird. The second bird was situated on a levee to the right of the line. The dead drake was thrown back down the levee at shorter 85 yards. The line to this bird included going down the mound, entering the water and swimming past the guns to the bird. This test took approximately 9-10 minutes to complete.

"Chevy" handled by Lou Vreeland came to the mat at 1:30. She went for the levee bird first. She came off the mat into the pond and stayed in the water all the way to the bird. For the second long bird, she ran

Test Four



down the mound and across the large pond, over the levee into the second piece of water. She ran uphill of the guns, but turned left and went to her bird.

“Jagger” handled by David Wolfe performed much the same as Chevy, swimming straight to the levee bird. For the long bird, he swam straight across the pond, scaled the levee and went back into the water. Next, he went up the hill and across the road, breaking left out towards the mark.

The weather had warmed up to a nice sunny 62 degrees with a slight breeze blowing from the southwest at 7 mph. As the test progressed, the sun shone lower in the sky and cast shadows on the levee bird. Despite the decrease in light, dog performances were not affected, and the judges dropped no dogs during the Fourth Series.

The dogs called back to the 5th Series were 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 27, 28, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41 and 42. There were no dogs dropped. The dog starting the next series was dog #40 – Seaside’s Issheit, “Izzy,” a female Labrador handled by Jason Baker.

Tuesday, October 17 – Test Five: Land Double; Test Six: Land Triple with a Simulated Flyer

The Fifth Series was a challenging land double located in the north field. The mat faced northeast on top of another terraced field with a deep draw below and a high pond levee on the right. The first bird was

located to the right of the mat, a dead rooster pheasant thrown to right of the gunners at 277 yards. The second bird, a hen pheasant flyer, landed at 217 yards and was shot to the left of the gun station. The line to the long right dead bird had the dogs traversing the steep side of the pond levee. If they did not hold the hill, there was the potential for them to be thrown back into the area of the left-hand bird.

“Jagger” handled by David Wolfe was called to the line at 7:46 am. Jagger ran out to the fall area and hunted deep. It was a tough bird ... the hard find for the hen pheasant resulted in a very extended hunt which eventually led to him being handled to the bird. For the long right rooster, he fell off levee which put him behind the guns. After a quick hunt, he got it.

“Chevy” handled by Lou Vreeland was next. She ran out to the flyer guns, went a little deep, then started the hunt and quickly found her bird. Unlike Jagger, she held the side of the levee and climbed up coming out in front of guns and went straight to fall area and her bird.

This was a challenging test and by 11:00 am, we had five pick-ups within the last 10 dogs. The wind direction remained unchanged, although its volatility and intensity increased. The result of these changes was that, as the dogs ran out for the go-bird and established a hunt, they tended to see the dead bird station and were drawn in that direction, thinking that was the desired bird.

The 26 dogs called back to the 6th Series were 1, 2, 3, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 20, 23, 25, 26, 30, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40 and 42. The 10 dogs dropped were 5, 18, 19, 21, 22, 27, 28, 31, 32 and 41. The dog starting the next series was dog #8 – My Jack Of Hearts, “Jack,” a male Labrador handled by James Roberts.

Test Six: Land Triple with a Simulated Flyer

The Sixth Series was a Land Triple. The mat faced north on the side of a hill with a road that wound up the left side of the field. The first bird on the right was a dead hen pheasant thrown left angle back at 238 yards. The dog was expected to run down the hill and cross the road up the other slope to get this bird. The middle bird was second – a dead hen pheasant thrown deep left angle back at 252 yards. The line to this bird went down the hill, through some large rolled hay bales and across the same gravel road. The third bird down was a simulated

Test Five



flyer rooster pheasant shot to the left at 175 yards. The line to this bird lay past a group of trees and up to the facing slope.

The first test dog, “Chevy” handled by Lou Vreeland, came to the line at 1:10 pm. Chevy ran straight to pick up the simulated flyer on the left. For the right-hand hen pheasant, she ran out around the back of the gun station, then over to the left of the cover and to the bird. She had a nice line up the middle, went right of the guns then out to the middle rooster pheasant.

“Jagger” handled by David Wolfe got deep on the simulated flyer and established a hunt for a few turns before he retrieved his bird. For the middle bird, he went up the left side of the road, crossed behind the guns and quickly got the bird. He ran straight to the right-hand dead hen pheasant station.

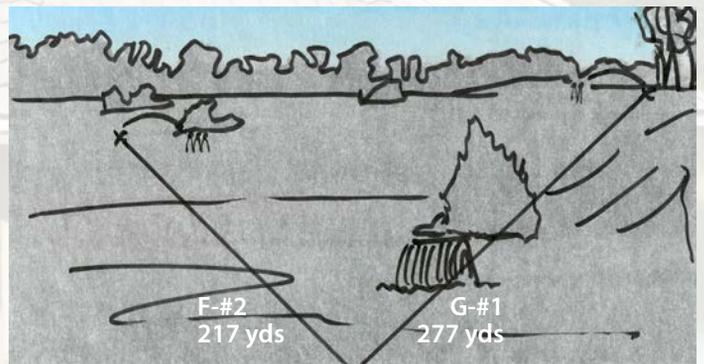
As we started the Sixth Series the temperature had warmed to a lovely 70 degrees, but the wind blew at 15 mph from the south south-west and probably became a factor in some of the dogs’ performances.

The 19 dogs called back to the 7th Series are: 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15, 16, 17, 23, 25, 30, 34, 35, 36, 39 and 42. The seven dogs dropped were 3, 20, 26, 33, 37, 38 and 40. The dog starting the next series was dog #16 – Double Creek’s Black Magic, “Maddie,” a female Labrador handled by Jason Baker.

Wednesday, October 18 – Test Seven: Water Double; Test Eight: Land/Water Double with One Retired

The Seventh Series overlooked a large cluster of four ponds. The left-hand bird was the first bird in this series, a dead drake thrown to the right at 324 yards from the line. The line to this bird lay down a slope, then across three ponds to the far side of the third and largest pond. The first two smaller ponds were divided by levees; the dogs then crossed a piece of land before swimming the largest pond of the three. The second bird was also a dead drake thrown to the left at 256 yards. The route to the bird lay down the slope, across the land and then across a small pond to get the bird on the far shore. Total time for this test was 12 minutes.

“Jagger” handled by David Wolfe was called to the line at 7:56 am. For the right-hand drake, he went down the slope to the edge of the



pond and angled across and straight to the bird. For the left-hand bird, he went down the middle of the field into the second pond, skipping the first pond. Then he ran over the levee and down the shore just a bit before he got back into the far pond. He swam past his point, got out and went left of the guns, running the levee between the guns and the pond to his bird.

“Chevy” handled by Lou Vreeland went down the slope and angled into the pond where she came out on the other side right at the bird. She went into the first pond, then the second using the left corners of both. She consequently got into the third larger pond on an angle, but swam straight towards her bird and got it.

The sun had fully risen by halfway through the Seventh Series, allowing for excellent visibility. The wind continued from the south at 12 mph and blew over the handler’s left shoulder making it a downwind test.

The dogs called back to the Eighth Series were 1, 2, 7, 8, 9, 10, 13, 15, 16, 17, 23, 25, 30, 34, 35, 36, 39 and 42. There was one dog dropped, number 12.

The dog that started the next series would be dog #35 – Tippecanoe’s Sheamus, “Amos,” a male Labrador handled by George Wamsley.

Test Eight: Land/Water Double with One Retired

The Eighth Series began with a right-hand memory bird, a dead drake thrown right slight angle back at 218 yards. The guns retired when the handler sent the dog for the left-hand bird. For this bird,

Test Six



the dog ran down the slope, swam across the largest of three ponds and up the other side to get the bird which was thrown to the right near the woods. The second bird was a dead drake thrown angle back left at 218 yards. The line to this bird made the dog run down the slope, transverse a land bridge (or levee) and then continue back up the facing slope to get his bird. There was a large brush pile and several clumps of grass on the far slope that tended to push the dogs to the right instead of taking a more direct line to the bird. The test took 5-6 minutes per dog.

The first test dog, "Chevy" handled by Lou Vreeland, was called to the line at 12:53 pm. For the left-hand drake, she ran down the hill and across the levee up to the area just deep of the fall. She made a quick turn back down the hill to get her bird. For the right retired, Chevy went down the hill and swam the left side of the pond. She got up by the lone tree, then ran into the woods where she got her bird in the cover.

Next was the second test dog, "Jagger" handled by David Wolfe. For the left-hand mark, he ran down the hill, crossed the levee and climbed just deep of the fall area. He turned back downhill and scooped up the bird. For the right retired, he went down the hill into the middle of the pond left of the direct line to the bird. He got up the hill to the gun station holding blind and stayed in front of the blind in the trees just left of the bird. He then turned right and got it.

Despite some people's consternation at having retired marks in this Inaugural National Derby Competition, all the dogs did well in this

last and final series, which concluded at 2:42 pm. There had also been some talk about continuing to a Ninth Series test, but the Judges decided that they had their "Winner" after eight series, announcing that the event was concluded and also that everyone who completed the Eighth Series was a Finalist. So, no dogs were dropped and the Finalists assembled for the traditional "Finalists Parade" into the site of the closing awards ceremony.

Bob Hayden had selected the location for this final ceremony. It lay at the foot of "Swede's Mountain," a large mound shaped in a way that one could practically run marks 360 degrees. Bob and the late Eugene "Swede" Anderson had been longtime friends; as the years progressed, it became difficult for Swede to get around so Bob created this magnificent landmark complete with a handrail to aid folks wanting to run from the top. Those of us lucky enough to know Swede personally felt his warm presence at these inaugural Closing Ceremonies. He would have been smiling and bursting with pride at the thought of this event finally coming to fruition.

The Finalists "paraded" in their dog trucks as the gallery cheered and clapped. Preferential parking was arranged so that they could easily walk with their dogs to the receiving line. John Russell, President of the National Retriever Derby Club, congratulated each handler as their numbers were called in succession. The highly-anticipated time had finally come to announce the Winner - Dog #23 - Maplepond Great Expectation, "Tug," a male Labrador owned by Charles Bearden and handled by Jason Baker. All those in attendance cheered for Tub as Jason was congratulated by the other handlers present. What an honor, a history-making achievement for Tug to be crowned the first National Derby Champion - EVER! Congratulations to one and all.

The crowd dispersed and said their "good-byes," but many joined Jason at the Headquarters Best Western in Sedalia to celebrate this achievement at the traditional "Winner's Party," hosted by none other than Charles Bearden. Congratulations once again and we wish Charles and all the other owners and handlers much success in the future with their young prodigies. See you next year (just one week earlier) in Sedalia, Missouri for the second running of the National Derby Championship.

Test Seven



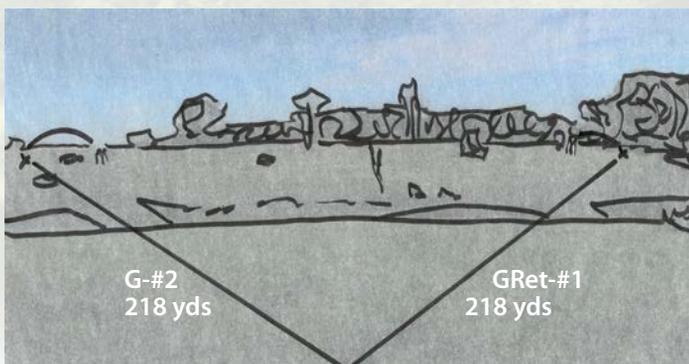
2017 National Derby Championship Finalists

1. Hockley Creek's Southpaw, "Lefty," male Labrador, handled by Robby Bickley
2. Holland Cliffs Blade A Fine Line, "Dozer," male Labrador, handled by Alvin Hatcher
7. Quackaddict's Heavy Hitter, "Blitz," male Labrador, handled by Hunter Street
8. My Jack Of Hearts, "Jack," male Labrador, handled by James Roberts
9. Buckhead's A Dog Named Desire, "Stella," female Labrador, handled by Jason Baker
10. Ridgecrest's No Rhyme Or Reason, "Nora," female Labrador, handled by Betsy Broyd
13. My Rocks Borrowed Time At Yellowtale, "Lulu," female Labrador, handled by Clint Avant
15. Beaverdam's Las Vegas Ace, "Ace," male Labrador, handled by Martha Russell
16. Double Creek's Black Magic, "Maddie," female Labrador, handled by Jason Baker
17. Whitewater's Susitna Susie, "Susie," female Labrador, handled by Bill Barstow
23. Maplepond Great Expectation, "Tug," male Labrador, handled by Jason Baker
25. Wolf River's Dirty Max, "Max," male Labrador, handled by Chris Christopher
30. Vinson's Nez Boueux Noir Zeke, "Zeke," male Labrador, handled by James Vinson
34. Sandhill First Class, "First," male Labrador, handled by Brad Arington
35. Tippecanoe's Sheamus, "Amos," male Labrador, handled by George Wamsley
36. Bird Creek's Doc Holiday, "Doc," male Labrador, handled by Chuck Cagle
39. Truckee Too, "Truckee," male Labrador, handled by Jack Unbehaun
42. Good Idea's Punt With A North Wind, "Punt," female Labrador, handled by Brad Arington

And the Winner is...

23. Maplepond Great Expectation, "Tug,"
a male Labrador owned by Charles Bearden and handled by Jason Baker

Test Eight



2017 Annual General Meeting

The 2017 Annual Business Meeting of the National Retriever Derby Club was called to order at 3:00 pm at the Best Western Headquarters in Sedalia, Missouri by John Russell, President. John welcomed all the contestants to the first inaugural Nation Retriever Derby Championship.

The first order of business at the Opening Ceremonies was the recitation of the Pledge of Allegiance. After that, we observed a moment of silence in honor of those who were not able to attend.

The NRDC Board of Directors were introduced as President, John Russell; 1st Vice-President, Ray Vreeland; 2nd Vice-President, Larry Morgan; PRTA Director, Wayne Curtis; and Secretary/Treasurer, John Stracka.

Secretary/Treasurer John Stracka did not proceed with a roll call, instead stating that 25% of the clubs were either represented in person or by proxy, which was enough to hold an official club meeting.

John Russell gave the report of the Officers Nomination Committee for 2018 stating that the new officer elected for the Southern Region was Michael Robicheaux. The other officers were listed as follows: President, Ray Vreeland; 1st Vice-President, Larry Morgan; 2nd Vice-President, Michael Robicheaux; PRTA Director, Becky Eckett; and the Secretary/Treasurer remaining as John Stracka.

The report of 2018 Judges Committee was read by Ray Vreeland. The venue for the second running of the National Derby Championship in 2018 will again be Barbara and Bob Hayden's property in Sedalia, MO. Please note, that the date was moved up by one week to

October 8-12th, 2018. The event will begin on a Monday so as to not interfere with the trials held in close proximity to this event. *Please be sure to mark your calendars accordingly!*

The 2018 Field Trial Chairman was announced as Robby Bickley and the Chief Marshal was to be Bobby Lane. The 2018 Judges Panel will be Clint Joyner from the Southern Region, Steve Kompf from the Western Region and Jeff Lyons from the Northern Region.

Dennis Bath, the Corporate Sponsor Liaison, began recognizing our sponsors with a special shout-out to Starline Brass (an ammunition company owned by Robert Hayden), which donated the Winner's painting. After this, Dean Reinke and Karl Gunzer from Purina received a standing ovation for all Purina has contributed to National events over the decades. Avery Sporting Dog, represented by David Carrington, was then recognized; so was Kent Cartridge for all the live shots and poppers. Starline Brass, represented by Bob Hayden, was thanked for the Set-Up Party, Cocktail Party, the donation of the Winner's painting by local artist Stefanie Aziere-Sattler, and for generously opening up his home and property. Dennis Bath continued to thank other sponsors including Garmin for the donation of product, Dogtra for the donation of collars and WetMutt for giving kennel mats to each contestant.

Field Trial Chairman Loren Morehouse acknowledged the land-owners for their generosity allowing their properties to be used for pre-National training and the test grounds. He stated they had a good week setting up the myriad tests necessary for a National. He also thanked Bob Hayden for everything he had done to prepare the immaculately groomed property for the event. Bob had worked so enthusiastically, in fact, that Loren had to be careful about comments regarding what he wanted to do; he often found that, when he returned to the property, his ideas had already been carried out.

John Russell acknowledged the presence of AKC Representative, Jerry Mann, Field Director of Sporting Breeds, who, after his introduction, stated he would not have considered missing this inaugural event of the National Derby Championship.

John Russell also acknowledged the Foundation Committee of the National Retriever Derby Club, thanking Dennis Bath for his work

respected judge throughout the country, judged two nationals, was the gun captain for the mountain time zone, and a fine ambassador for the spirit and camaraderie that this sport depends on. These things were no easy task from the remoteness of the Rocky Mountains, but he always found a way. As the sun was setting on Swede's time with all of us, he did not focus on himself and his achievements. Instead he was focused on the future of the health of retriever field trials and particularly the reinvigoration of the derby. He made requests of the Retriever News and the Retriever Advisory Committee a number of times to address these issues.

I'm sure that by now you all have an understanding why this inaugural event has a dual dedication. Two men that dedicated themselves to our sport for a half century. Could you choose between them? We certainly couldn't.

The 2017 National Retriever Derby Club Champion Trophy, generously donated by Kate Simonds, was highlighted by John Russell, who gave us insight into its meaning. The top Derby logo was made of sterling silver and represented the look of the past, while the base was made of granite to represent the look of the future. Please enjoy the story of the making of this magnificent trophy below from the inside front cover of the National Derby Championship event catalog program:

We are very fortunate to have a friend in our sport like Kate Simonds. Her love for and dedication to our sport continue to surface throughout the full breadth of retriever field trials. Kate has presented to the National Retriever Derby Club a truly unique trophy to be awarded to the winner for their possession and proper stewardship until the following year's competition. At that time, the next National Derby Champion will accept custody for the subsequent year. And so, a new tradition is underway.

Now on to the trophy itself. This trophy is comprised of the traditional look of a solid sterling silver, sculpted, retriever jumping through the "D." The two-tiered base is a granite finish, which is a new look. Together the presentation is a blending of new and tradition, much like the event itself.

The retriever was sculpted by Carol Bunyon of Stowe, VT and Brays Island, SC. The entire trophy was designed and constructed by Ferro Jewelers of New York and Stowe, VT.

The initial foundation support of the National Retriever Derby Club came from many individuals and entities. They should be recognized as an elite and generous group who formed the NRDC Charter Membership. The National Retriever Derby Club wishes to thank the following for their generous donations and support:

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| Dennis Bath and David Bath | Cheryl and Michael Robicheaux |
| Beverly and Robby Bickley | Mark J. Rosenblum |
| Alice and Scott Carruth | Martha and John Russell, Jr. |
| Terri and Wayne Curtis | Joey and Derek Smith |
| Laura and Alvin Hatcher | Mary and John Stracka |
| Barbara and Robert Hayden | Lou and Ray Vreeland |
| Yvonne and Charles Hays | Lyn Yelton and Jeff Lyons |
| Shirley and Andy Kahn | American Chesapeake Club |
| Susan and Fred Kampo | Golden Retriever Club of America |
| Cindy and Mike Lardy | The Labrador Retriever Club |
| Suzanne and Mark Medford | National Amateur Retriever Club |
| Lori and Larry Morgan | National Retriever Club |
| Linda and David Opseth | Professional Retriever Trainers Assoc. |
| Kathy and W. Clinton Rasberry, Jr. | Retriever News / Entry Express |

The next order of business was the trial announcements given by Chief Marshal Larry Morgan. He began by introducing the three test dogs and their handlers: Willow Creek's He's Got The Moves, "Jagger," a male Labrador owned by David and Deana Wolfe and handled by David Wolfe; Skywatch Polished Steel, "Chevy," a female Labrador owned by Lou and Ray Vreeland and handled by Lou Vreeland; and a back-up female test dog, Mead-



From the top of the page: The NRDC Cocktail Party was held at the Hayden Liberty Center in downtown Sedalia, MO; Wayne and Terri Curtis and Dean Reinke from Purina, the Official Dog Food Sponsor of the inaugural event; At the party, (L-R) Robert Hayden, John Stracka, Lester Langley and Wayne Curtis; and the Hostesses with the Mostest, (L-R) Lorei Morgan, Carol Morehouse, Missy Goettl and Carol Lattimore.



ow Woods Girls Just Do It, "Just," a female Labrador owned Judy and Tony Despenas and handled by Judy Despenas.

Chief Marshal Larry Morgan announced the trial procedure: after the Test Dogs ran, the first 10 running dogs would be able to view the line; next, the second 10 running dogs; finally, the rest of the handlers to follow after that. The last-minute Judges' instruction for the handlers was to have fun!

The no-bird policy was also announced: for a handler's first no-bird, they must move back six places in the running order and start seventh. For the second no-bird, they must again move back six places in the running order and start seventh. For the third no-bird, the dog/handler team must move to the end of the running order.

The First Series would consist of a Land Double with a dead rooster pheasant and a rooster pheasant flyer. The Callbacks would be posted at HQ and on the Retriever News Blog. The Finalists procedure was then explained: Finalists would be announced after the last series and a parade line of the Finalists would assemble to travel to the awards ceremony location.

A caravan would leave the Best Western HQ parking lot on Sunday morning at 7:00 am sharp. The first test dog would run at 8:00 am. The location for the bitch check would be in the North parking lot of the Best Western after the conclusion of the meeting. It was also announced that the various committees would be meeting directly after this meeting in order to organize their members.

The selection of the starting dog number was done by Bob Hayden who picked a numbered lanyard provided by Brenda Neil of Lucky Lab Pins out of a bag: dog number 34 would start the event. A remarkable coincidence in the FIRST National Derby Championship was that the FIRST dog to run was "FIRST," Sandhill First Class, a male Labrador owned by Hugh Arthur and handled by Brad Arington. Good luck to one and all!

The Field Trial Committee determined that the rotation would be 34, 3, 14 and 25 with a gun change at dog #14 in the First Series. There was a call for adjournment by NRDC President John Russell and the motion was seconded. We were off to our committee meetings and to get ready for the Cocktail Party at the Hayden Liberty Center. ■



From top of the page: The magnificent Derby National trophy; Jack Unbehaun and "Truckee" as NDC Finalists; (L-R) Chuck and Robin Cagle, David Douglas, David Wolfe and Kevin Polley; and Swede's Mountain, dedicated in memory of Eugene "Swede" Anderson in 2012.

"It is very exciting to be at a brand-new event and see so many new faces." – Larry Morgan

"I think it's a wonderful event. It looks like everybody is having a great time, nobody is bogged down all day. If I can buy a puppy and run it in next year's event, I am going to do it." – Dennis Bath

"I think it's a lot of fun and I have had much reassurance to that effect from a number of people." – Ray Vreeland

"It's very challenging to judge a Derby Championship, because we have a lot of nice dogs and you don't want to be like a weekend warrior and throw them out for going behind a gun, and still you have to have strong enough test that the cream rises to the top. It's a challenging, but fun thing to do." – Yvonne Hays

"We were given the privilege to judge in Disney World for the dogs and these most spectacular grounds on this ranch allow us to do anything we can think of. The workers have been special, the work involved in this Derby National is virtually identical to the other nationals. We were able to do tests that were fun and nice to watch and we as judges have had a wonderful time." – John Goettl

"The National Derby here has been a great event, beautiful grounds, great land owner, good judges, nice tests very wide open – we couldn't ask for better settings. Everybody seems like they enjoyed it from pros to amateurs. Just a nice event. We hope this enlightens everyone else to open their eyes up and compete and try to work hard to qualify for this next year. It's been a very nice event, perfect location, we could not ask for a better run operation – it's just the perfect venue." – Alvin Hatcher

"I think it's been a great week and this is a terrific venue to get more people involved. I think it's been a wonderful opportunity to have the infusion of enthusiasm and camaraderie with new people coming in." – Becky Eckett

"We have had a good week over here ... we set up lots of tests and have seen a lot of good dog work. It's a beautiful area. I think everybody is having an enjoyable time – at least we are hoping that! We are glad to be here and hopes everybody enjoys it." – Jerry Kamphuis

"We are enjoying the first Inaugural Derby Event National and it looks like everybody is having a good time. It's been wonderful seeing a lot of new faces and watching these young dogs work. Best wishes to everybody." – Tony Despenas

"I am so pleased that the people that came. I am hoping they enjoyed it as much as I do. The weather has been outstanding. I think these judges and these grounds and these workers have given us a tremendous foundation to build a new tradition. It is the first substantive of change in the way we run field trials in 60 years, since 1957 at the acceptance of the National Amateur. And I hope we can build the same tradition and prestige that they did, and these people have all given us a fine start towards that end." – John Russell, Jr.

"I may have said it a few times this week, but this may be the most memorable National I have attended, aside from the first I attended. This has been a fun, well run, exciting and fast-paced event with everyone running two series a day. We worried about so many things to make it just what a Derby Championship should be. The dogs were so talented, I was just amazed at how they kept doing so well. Great judges, great volunteer crew and super competitors. Can't wait until next year! – John Stracka

"I feel like this is an amazing event. I run minor stakes, just Derby and Q, so this is really exciting to have a national event for what I do and something to give my clients to really look forward to, and it gives me more motivation as well to get something to look forward to every year. So I am super excited about it. It's run perfectly. It's run like a top with all the help from the people that are working here. It couldn't be any more professionally run. I think it's a great event and I think it will be something that will get more people involved which is what we need in our sport. The way this event is held, it should bring more people to the game and get more people excited about younger dogs instead of just the Field Champions and the All-Age stakes. I am super excited about it, I am going to support it, and my clients are on board – Everybody is already geared up and ready for next year." – Brad Arington

"Swede Anderson and I thought about this 10 years ago and we said we need to get a game for young dogs so that we can bring younger people into this game. Everybody is getting up in years and so I said I am going to build my farm into a field trial grounds for a National and here we are!" – Bob Hayden

