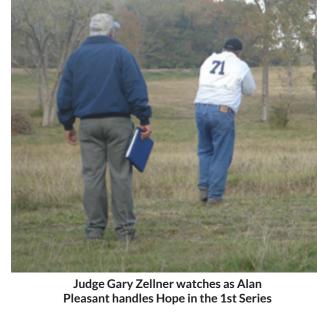
MONDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2008



The morning started out beautifully with temperatures right around 70 degrees at 6:45 in the morning. Clouds scattered the sky and there was a slight wind out of the East. However, the radar showed a large storm system headed our way colors ranging from Green to Red.

Complete Test 1

At 6:55, the test dog team of Nike and Danny Martin came to the line to run the single test run of the morning. By 7:20, the first running dog, #71 Silvertip's I Hope So with handler Alan Pleasant, came to the line. Unfortunately, she kept in the trend of yesterday's runs and had to be handled to right hand short bird. Dog #76, CK's Nero with handler Mark Mosher, looked to be doing an excellent job. But, when he returned to the line with the last bird, he froze the bird and was ultimately dropped from the competition.



By 8:00 am, dog #78, Jerry Lee with handler Lynne DuBose, was sent for her first bird. Right at this



same time, the storm system that appeared on the radar this morning was rearing its ugly head and

was headed toward us out of the South-Southwest. At around 8:20 the rain had started and was quite steady for about 30 minutes. The rain eventually halted for a bit as the test came to an end and it didn't show itself again until the next test had been set up.



dogs 71, 72, 74, 75, 79, 81, 83, 84, 85, 88, 89, and 92.

Shortly after the end of the test, the judges had their callbacks ready and it was announced that numbers 2, 26, 42, 51, 60, 62, 68, 69, 76, 83, and 96 had been eliminated from the competition. This brings the field to 93 dogs. Dog #14 FC Abby's Little Cooper with handler John Henninger will

Combined Test 2 Land Blind and Test 3 Water Blind The next two tests of the 2008 National Retriever Championship were combined, meaning that they were ran back to back with one trip to the line. The are to take place at the same location

located.

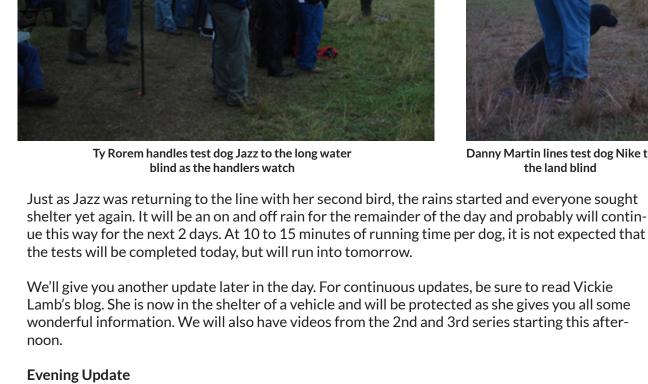
begin the next test.

as Test 1, moved slightly to the North and utilizing the road on which the gun stations had been



of the road. The dogs must first pick up the land blind and then may be sent for the water blind. A

gun is shot before the judges signal the handler to send the dog, giving a false impression of a mark. The first test dog team of Danny Martin and Nike came to the line at 10:21. It took about 12 minutes for this team to complete the tests. After Nike returned to the line, the land blind was moved about 10 to 15 yards further down the hill to its above described location in order to give more separation between the two paths to the blinds. At 10:34, the test dog team of Ty Rorem and new test dog Pinehurst's All That Jazz, LF, came to the line. (FC-AFC Freeridin Smooth Operator had fallen ill last evening and has been replaced for the rest of the competition by Jazz.) It took approximately 10 minutes for Jazz to complete the tests.



dog to run was #81, FC Colonel Bowie's Revenge, with handler Karl Gunzer. There have been no pick-ups so far in the combined 2nd/3rd and every running dog has been invited to run the 3rd.

Danny Martin lines test dog Nike to Testing ended for the day at 5:20 pm, due to low visiblity caused by the increasing rains. The last

of the week. "A Pleasant Perspective" -- LUANN PLEASANT & BUDDY

Preparing to run a dog in the National entails a shift in perspective, according to handler Luann Pleasant. It's not that the marks are that different, she explains. It's "looking at the training differ-

This pro trainer's preparation strategy is to "get the dog comfortable doing more specific things." National marks are "more specific, not like weekend trial marks." Luann's shift in training focus

Furthermore, "It's not OK to set up the dog to fail," in contrast to regular training. "Set up work that they're weak on to strengthen them." Luann focuses on marking. "I'm not overly concerned about lines as I am with a dog that is comfortable and problem solving." Her example is a dog that goes out

began three weeks ago and includes check down birds, islands and long water birds.

Tomorrow morning, the test dog is slated to be on the line at 6:45 with the first running dog expected at the line at 7:00 am. Rain is expected to be the theme of the day, and probably the remainder

on a mark he doesn't exactly remember, hunts deep, then realizes he's not where he should be. "The problem-solving dog uses his training and experience to figure out where to go, instead of getting lost or returning to an old fall."

ently."

whenever I could."

com or by phone at 530-570-1187.

running Dog #54, "Buddy," owned by Susan Gould, MD. The first words that come to Luann's mind in describing Buddy are "very animated." Every time he's on the tie-out stake, Buddy springs into comedic action reminiscent of the Donkey character in the movie Shrek, jumping up and down as if exclaiming "Pick me. Pick me!" Luann, who has run Buddy for his entire competitive career, feels that the seven year old black

Lab's chances of winning this year in Texas are "very good." Luann believes that Buddy's experience is a major asset and that his age is a "very positive thing." Buddy has 21 Derby points, won two out of four Qualifying stakes and has run All Age Stakes since. Buddy and Luann have been to the Cana-

dian National twice and made it to the 7th series in 2005 and all the way to the 9th in 2006.

Luann (no relation to Alan Pleasant) owns Red Rover Retrievers in Oakdale, Calif. This year, she is

As for how to best deal with the stress and strain of running a dog in the National, Luann sums up her strategy into two words, "stay focused," adding, "You can't do anything different than what got you there in the first place." A particular challenge of running a dog in the National is to balance keeping the dogs "sharp, but not too tired. It's easy to tire the dogs out," she cautions, "especially older dogs." Luann turned pro in 1989 and averages 16 dogs in training. She does not have anyone else working

for her. The dogs generally come to her around 15 months, after completing their basics, for which

she recommends Carol Kachelmeyer. This is Luann's fourth National in the U.S. About other trainers who "always have dogs qualified for the National," Luann refers to that phenomenon as "pretty standard. That's not to say they're better or not. They just have good dogs." She adds that some pros have as many as three full-time trainers doing Derby, Qualifying, and Open training for them, and thirty to forty dogs among them. Luann credits "a lot of people" with shaping her training philosophies. Don Remien is responsible for the "foundation of everything that I started with. He was instrumental, just through example,

Another key influence has been Mike Lardy. "Mike has been responsible for helping me to see the dogs in a whole different way, helping me to understand the dog better and think 'outside the box' when it comes to training." By that, she means "seeing things the way the dog sees them and how they learn." She became familiar with Mike through his workshops and pre-National training.

in (teaching) how to teach people." She trained with Don in Montana and California "as an amateur,

Getting into a pre-National group is an essential part of going to a National and is based on who you know or whose training is most like yours, says Luann. Her first pre-National training was with Don, Danny Farmer and Judy Aycock. She's been with Mike Lardy's group since.

Luann points out that the handlers work "really close" together for two weeks, count on each other to show up early in the morning and be there all day, split off to work on something special occasionally, dine together and "hash over things." In summary, she ventures to say, "It's a family for that period of time."

Joule Charney is an owner/trainer/handler of hunt test Labradors from Paradise, Calif. You can check out her website (www.tenacular.com). She can be reached via e-mail at TenacularDogs@aol.

The three criteria are "a good fit," there has to be room, and dogs should be of the same caliber.