

Retrievers of the Past...

By Joule Charney

FC-AFC Creek Robber

Amidst the triumphs of today's dogs, Retriever News rekindles our memory of these special dogs ...

Our publication has remained dedicated to keeping the spotlight on the greatest retrievers of the field trial world. Along with our coverage of current events and topics, we have placed the the top achieving retrievers throughout history in a perpetual honor position.

The photo of a deceased Field Champion or Amateur Field Champion has adorned many of our covers; but, it wasn't until July 2009 that we formally introduced a series of in-depth feature articles to accompany these cover photos, and gave it a callname – *Retrievers of the Past*.

We also narrowed the criteria to qualify for inclusion in this special set of dogs. Candidates must be National Open and Amateur Winners, on the Top 30 *High-Scoring Dogs of All Time* list or Hall of Fame inductees. We have maintained our stringent standards for the covers and because of the challenges of finding cover-worthy photographs, we have utilized paintings of some of the featured dogs. The designated months are May, July, September and October.



FC-AFC Creek Robber.
Painting by Ross B. Young

FC-AFC CREEK ROBBER

OPEN	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	TOTAL
Starts	18	24	24	24	10	24	21	15	7	167
First	1	1	6	9	2	3	6	1	0	29
Second	0	3	4	3	2	3	3	2	1	21
Third	0	0	2	1	0	2	0	0	0	5
Fourth	0	3	1	2	2	3	1	3	0	15
Places	1	7	13	15	6	11	10	6	1	70
Jams	2	4	2	0	2	2	8	4	2	26
# Finished	3	11	15	15	8	13	18	10	3	96
% Finished	17%	46%	63%	63%	80%	54%	86%	67%	43%	57%
Open Points	5.0	15.5	44.5	56.0	17.0	27.5	39.5	12.5	3.0	220.5
Cumulative Pts	5.0	20.5	65.0	121.0	138.0	165.5	205.0	217.5	220.5	220.5
AMATEUR	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	TOTAL:
Starts	19	20	23	22	6	20	7	7	?	124
First	2	4	6	3	1	8	0	2	0	26
Second	1	4	6	4	2	1	0	1	0	19
Third	2	0	1	3	0	1	0	1	0	8
Fourth	0	0	2	3	1	4	1	1	0	12
Places	5	8	15	13	4	14	1	5	0	65
Jams	2	2	3	1	2	2	1	1	?	14
# Finished	7	10	18	14	6	16	2	6	?	79
% Finished	37%	50%	78%	64%	27%	80%	29%	86%	?	64%
Amateur Points	15.0	32.0	50.0	31.5	11.5	46.0	0.5	14.5	0.0	201.0
Cumulative Pts	15.0	47.0	97.0	128.5	140.0	186.0	186.5	201.0	201.0	201.0
ALL AGE	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	TOTAL:
All Age By Year	20.0	47.5	94.5	87.5	28.5	73.5	40.0	27.0	3.0	421.5
Cumulative Total	20.0	67.5	162.0	249.5	278.0	351.5	391.5	418.5	421.5	421.5

Owner: K. Jackson
 Birthdate: 9/2/98
 26 Derby Points

Avg. Open Points per year: 24
 Avg. Amateur pts per year: 22
 Avg. All-Age pts per year: 47

From "Retriever Field Trial Statistics 1941-1995," by Sue Reynolds.

HOW OFTEN HAVE YOU HEARD, "It's as easy as 1-2-3?" That certainly is far from the truth when it comes to getting a 1st, 2nd or 3rd placement in a field trial. And, to become one of the 1st, 2nd or 3rd *High-Scoring Retrievers of All Time*, it is astronomically farther!

First in the Past Quarter Century ...

Open and Amateur field trial points are combined to determine the rankings on the *High-Scoring Retrievers of All Time* list. FC-AFC Creek Robber earned the #3 spot with 418.5 points in 2008, ultimately finishing his career with 421.5 points in 2009. Owned by Ken "Ole" Jackson, Creek Robber ran under the callname "Auggie," earning his All-Age points in 2001 through 2009.

Only two retrievers in history have outperformed Creek Robber's point total - '72 '75 NAFC-FC-CNFC River Oaks Corky, "Corky," and '84 NAFC-FC Trumarc's Zip Code, "Cody." Corky was owned by Mike Flannery and Cody was owned by Judy Weikel Aycock.

To make it into the #3 position, Auggie had to surpass '78 NAFC-FC Kannonball Kate, whose career ended in 1983 with 410.5 points. "Kate" held the #3 spot since 1982 when she ended the year with 407.5 points.

It would be 26 years before her hold on the #3 spot would be overtaken. Her reign as All-Time High Point Bitch continues to this day. Kate was owned by the late Peter Lane.

Auggie is the first and only dog, so far, in the 21st Century to have rearranged the top rankings of the *High-Scoring Retrievers of All Time*.

Previous Retrievers of the Past features have been accompanied by a list of the *Top 30 High-Scoring Dogs of All Time* by Points; but, this list only has included the dogs' names, their lifetime points, owners and birthdates. Sue Reynolds graciously provides detailed statistical charts on each of the *Retriever of the Past* dogs we have featured. However, to our knowledge, records have not been maintained that show which year all of the dogs on the Top 30 list actually achieved their rankings. We are working to bring you that information in a subsequent issue.

The highest point total of all time is Corky's 505.5. The second highest total is Cody's 444. To facilitate a better historical perspective of when these massive accomplishments were attained, and to be able to contrast the top four dogs, on the following page is a chart depicting them chronologically by birthdate.

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The chart below shows, Corky, Cody and Kate had a stranglehold on the top three rankings for a very long time. Corky was born more than three decades before Auggie. He accumulated 421.5 points, the same number as Auggie's lifetime total, in 1974.

Cody was born more than a decade after Corky. Kate's lifetime point total of 410.5 points, earned in 1983, was exceeded by Cody in 1988. Cody's career ended in 1989 with 444 points, the number Auggie would have needed to exceed to move into the #2 rank.

It will require at least 375.5 points to overtake the #5 position on the All-Time Points chart, which presently is held by FC-AFC Dust Devil's Shoot the Moon, born in 1993, who has 375 points. He was owned by S.D. Bechtel, Jr.

In the Beginning...

Recently, I interviewed Auggie's owner, Ken Jackson, at Clear Creek Sports Club in Corning, CA where he was training in between field trials. He presently is running two Auggie sons.

Remarkably, Auggie was only Ole's second retriever. He bought his first Lab, 'Bubba,' from a Canadian while he was working in Alaska. With a plan to use him for duck hunting, Bubba was sent to professional retriever trainer Brooke Van De Brake. "He started showing some promise. So, I took him to a couple of Hunting Tests (Junior level) and ran him as a test dog in the Derby. And, I was hooked!"

"When Bubba was two, I decided to get another dog. Brooke asked if I would consider a dog out of Code Blue. I didn't think I had much of a chance of getting one." Code Blue was an FC-AFC and in the Retriever Hall of Fame. "Brooke was a good friend of Ray Bly who owned the bitch (FC-AFC Debbie Does Ducks), and that was the only reason I got one. I wanted a male. Ray picked all the owners and the pups. So, it was just dumb luck that I got Auggie." Incidentally, Trumarc's Zip Code is a grandparent of Code Blue.

Ole picked his callname before his registered name. "I just liked the name 'Auggie.' 'Creek Robber' was suggested by Ole's training partner Frank Kashevarof, owner of '05 NFC-AFC Club Mead's Road Warrior (Chopper) and '06 NAFC-FC Carbon Copy of Horn Creek (Carbon,

Chopper's sire). It refers to people who "scoop up salmon" illegally, Ole explained, quickly adding, "I'm not one! Auggie's AKC name doesn't have anything to do with anything, other than I thought it was cool." Ole's nickname originated with his father teasingly calling him 'Ole Skijumper from Norway.'

Ole ran Auggie in most or all of his Derby events. He trained every opportunity he had. "If I wasn't working fishing in Alaska, I was training. Jimmy and Jackie (Gonia, professional retriever trainers) took the dog when he was about six months old." Ole's home was in Duvall, WA at the time, about eighty miles from the Gonia's kennel. "I trained five days a week with Jimmy and he ran Auggie. I ran him in the Amateur when I was home in the Fall, Winter and Spring."



Jim Gonia with "Auggie" at the 2002 Nat'l Open. Photo by Ken Andrews.

RANK	DOG'S NAME	YEAR OF BIRTH	DERBY PTS	ALL-AGE YEARS	AVG OPEN PTS/YR	AVG AMAT. PTS/YR	AVG ALL-AGE POINTS	TOTAL OPEN POINTS	TOTAL AMAT. POINTS	LIFETIME POINTS
1	Corky	1966	51	1968-1977	31	20	51	306.5	199.0	505.5
2	Kate	1972	10	1975-1983	22	26	46	173.0	237.5	410.5
3	Cody	1978	13	1979-1989	23	18	40	250.5	193.5	444.0
4	Auggie	1998	26	2001-2009	24	22	47	220.5	201.0	421.5

With a record as stellar as Auggie's ultimately was, you might think everything came easy to the young lad. If that's what you're thinking, you'd be very mistaken. "He was average, nothing special pretty much all of his Derby career." When Auggie turned two in September 2000, he had only 26 points.

Then came the hard part. Remembering all three birds of a Triple was not as easy as 1-2-3 for the youngster. "Jimmy thought he couldn't remember the retired birds. He'd never get both of them. So, Jimmy said, 'let's teach him instead of testing him.' We threw singles all winter long. Then two retired. And, put Auggie back in the truck. Then, we brought him out and put it all together with the go-bird. It was Jimmy's idea." I think it just really built up Auggie's confidence. He'd walk up to a test and think 'I can do this.'"

"I don't remember if we trained on triples during his Derby years; but, I would suspect we did as much of the big tests as we could. He already had won a Qual. He just had difficulty remembering all the birds."

"The first All-Age stake Auggie won was an Amateur. Jimmy was at the Open. I called and told him Auggie won and he said, 'That dog?' He couldn't believe it. I was shocked, too. He finished the trial and did a good job; but, I didn't think he was going to win." This was late February or early March 2001. Auggie won his first Open in June of that year. Auggie was only two years old. "I didn't need to return to singles after Auggie got it. I didn't need to."

How did Ole get the confidence he needed as a handler of his first serious field trial prospect? "I didn't need any. Auggie was that good." But, Ole added, "You didn't argue with him on which bird he wanted. You just pointed him in the direction and he got 'em." Ole ran Auggie in the Open as well as in the Amateur if in town and not judging. "I would double stake him." Otherwise, Jimmy ran him in the Open. According to Ole, "Jimmy made the dog. And, luck."

Eventually, Bubba was retired due to epileptic seizures. Fortunately, Ole later learned of a medication that solved the problem.

The Auggie Personality ...

"He was a real sweet dog. Auggie always would come up and nudge for a pet(ting)." He had a few issues, including whining in the holding blinds. Ole solved this by rubbing his ears continually. Then, when they got to the line, "he was bouncy with his front feet; but, his butt would stay on the ground. Some of his offspring are the same way.



Ken "Ole" Jackson and "Auggie", 2003. Photo taken by Howard Niemi.

He only broke once in a trial," which was in his later years.

"Auggie was not a speed demon, not wild and crazy, by any means. He wasn't slow and he wasn't fast. He was somewhere in between."

"Auggie understood work, correction. He'd come right back and say, 'Where do you want me to go?' He never got frustrated." Still, Ole does not categorize Auggie as a team player. "He was headstrong over certain birds. It didn't happen very often; but, it did happen. If you got to the water, you had a good chance. He was a great water dog."

"The hardest part of running Auggie was if there were a flier on the right. Occasionally, he would lock in on it after the first bird. He could still put on a reasonable hunt, even if he didn't see it." Ole and Jimmy only ran Auggie on their left sides.

Auggie's record-setting career...

Ole says he got an "inkling" about Auggie's potential in 2002. "2003 was the year he got 94 and a half points," which was his highest combined annual point total. "He was both High Point Open and High Point Amateur Dog that year. At the National Amateur in Idaho in June 2003, I think it was Charlie Hines who walked up to me and said, 'You have 67 points already?'"

Auggie was High Point Open Dog three times – in 2003, 2004 and 2007 with 44.5, 56 and 39.5 Open points, respectively. He was #2 Amateur dog in 2003, then High Point Amateur Dog twice, in 2003 with 50 and in 2006 with 46 Amateur points. Auggie was awarded five Purina High Point Awards, and both the Purina Amateur and Open Awards in 2003. He

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was a 5x Double Header winner, twice in 2003, once in 2004 and twice in 2006.

Auggie qualified for seven National Opens and was a Finalist in 2002 and 2003. "When Auggie qualified for the National Open," I told Jimmy, 'that's your venue.' I never watched Auggie in a National Open. Jimmy told me he would be distracted." Auggie qualified for an even greater number of National Amateurs, a whopping nine of them, and was a Finalist in 2006.

Auggie had no injuries except he blew out both of his cruciates. The first one went in the spring of 2005; however, Ole suspects he had a partial tear on the second one. When the second one went in that September, "Auggie came out of the second surgery better than he was before it. That year, he still had 17 Open points and 11.5 Amateur points." Ole did all of Auggie's therapy, which consisted of walking three to four times a day. One attempt to get Auggie to use an underwater treadmill was a complete no-go. Auggie resumed training around Christmas and won a Double Header at San Jose in late January or early February 2006.

"We didn't compete as much in 2007 and 2008 because my wife Linda was dying of cancer. She died in 2009," the same year Ole retired Auggie.

Auggie died of kidney failure. "One of the vets figured it out. His breath smelled terrible. There was no cure. I gave it as long as I could. He was comfortable. I put him down when he quit eating."

Ole had Auggie cremated. His remains are in a wooden box, occupying a place of prominence in one of Ole's living rooms, "right next to the original picture that Tom Quinn painted." His first Lab, Bubba, is there also. "I have two of them sitting there."

Auggie was inducted into the Retriever Hall of Fame in 2012.

Putting Auggie into Perspective...

Auggie's place on the *High-Scoring List Of All Time* was garnered by bumping the incredible Kannonball Kate down one notch. In our *Retrievers of the Past* feature on Kate [Retriever News, July 2010], I wrote the following about her place in history: "Kannonball Kate's reign as All-Time High Point Bitch is a record in itself. Only the future can tell us which will be the greater of her accomplishments – her record number of points or how long her record goes unbroken. No matter which way it is regarded, Kate's point status is such a monumental achievement that her National win seems to pale in comparison to it. In historical terms, she essentially outperformed herself."

It is a very similar situation for Auggie, although he did not win a National. "I'd rather have these points than a National," says Ole. "And, I'll bet you nine out of ten people would,



“
If I have a good dog
to run, I usually go,
What else would I do,
sit around home?”

Owner Ole Jackson

Ole has had various dogs since Auggie, some of whom have been offspring of Auggie's; but, "no keepers." He method that Jim Gonias came up with to help Auggie get over his multiple mark memory issue is presently in use with one of the two Auggie offspring that Ole is running, 'Just Gnarly.' "I'm using it right now. Jim started it and I'm continuing it." Gnarly just turned four. "He should be doing the big tests by now," says Ole. "We've gotta fix that if he's going to go on. I think Gnarly will come around." He is qualified for the National Amateur; but, Ole says he is not going to enter.

Ole also is running 'Slick When Wet III.' Both are out of the Dam, FC-AFC Pattons Blazen Abby, MH. "Slick, who turned two in February, shows promise." All of Ole's dogs throughout the years have been male. He says he has nothing against females, although he prefers to avoid having to deal with their cycles.

Ole has not kept track of the number of field trial titled offspring Creek Robber has produced; however, it appears from various databases that there are more than two dozen.

Ole is a retired commercial fisherman from Alaska. He and his self-described "my field trial companion and girlfriend," Sonya Harrigfeld, have homes in Wilton, near Sacramento, CA, and Lebanon, OR. The two met when Sonya was running a dog in a Derby in 2011. "That's great, I think, if two people can be interested in the same thing, and do it, and still stay friends," Ole told me. Sonya trains primarily with Billy Sargenti; but, also with John and Amie Henninger, professional trainers out of Jefferson, Oregon, with whom Ole trains.

Sonya initially garnered Ole's attention when she was invited to train with his amateur group. "She had no business doing these All-Age blinds that we were doing," but, that didn't stop her from trying, he observed. "She's the way I used to be. It's all dogs, dogs, dogs. I'm over the hump. I don't have as much drive." Sonya's Lab Kaylee (AFC Watermark's Miss Kali Hart) is a 2014 National Open Finalist. "I think she's a great dog," Ole adds.

"A good portion of my times goes into field trial work," says Ole, who recently turned 70. "It's a good sport. I enjoy the people. If I have a good dog to run, I usually go. What else would I do," Ole quips, "sit around home?"

too. A National is one week. A dog wins the National every year. It's always, usually, a different dog. Only four dogs have over 400 points in the history of the sport!"

"I ran the same circuit with Auggie for his entire career: Montana, Idaho, northern California, Oregon and Washington. And, he competed against NAFC Carbon and NFC Chopper toward the end of his career. I heard that they were trying to beat Auggie's 94.5 High Point total with Ammo, and they did; but, they went all over the country."

Ole said he didn't have expectations of beating anyone's numbers when he was running Auggie. "It's hard to set goals with dogs because you're probably not going to complete many of them."

While in no way diminishing Auggie's success, he sounds very humble about it. "My philosophy is 'Why talk about your dog if you can read about it in the News?' Auggie was pretty easy to run because he knew what to do. I think he was just a special dog from the start. He would have blossomed with any trainer. I would hope so."

"I'll never have another Auggie. I don't think you'll ever see another dog with this many points. They might be as good. The dogs are just too good, too keen. It would take the Open and the Amateur. Someone might do it; but, it would be awfully tough."

"If you're going around looking for Auggies, you're going to be very disappointed." ■

Tenacular Dogs – Joule Charney

Joule resides in Paradise, California. Joule has been a contributing writer for Retriever News for seven years. The *Retrievers of the Past...* feature series is published four times a year: May, July, September and October. Visit Joule Charney online at www.tenacular.com.



Ken "Ole" Jackson and "Auggie", 2003. Photo by Marilyn Dahlheim.