

Helpful Hints and Accessories for Retriever Training

by Jackie Mertens

For quickly and effectively drying your dog after water work. Get "The Absorber" and use it in place of a towel. It is an artificial Chamois that stays wet all the time, does not mildew, and won't rot. If kept in it's original tube it stays moist at all times. It absorbs more and better than a towel, does not have to be dried out, and is easily stored in a small place. We purchased ours at KMart.

Stake out chains - get the stakeouts that you screw or push into the ground so you can stake out your dog while you or your training partners are training another dog. The staked out dog gets a chance to stretch his legs or dry out completely after wiping him off.

Use the neoprene vests or wet suit for dogs for cold water work in the fall and winter months or sitting all day in a duck blind. They are very effective at keeping in body heat. There are various mail order sporting supplies that sell them.

Use white streamers on your long birds in a dark background where throws are impossible to see or when training late in the day such as afterwork. We were able to purchase white rolls of engineers tape, but 1 inch white ribbon will do or torn up streamers from old sheets. about 15 inches long. We tie them to a leg.

Use a Winger to get a flyer effect on your bird. They shoot out the bird or bumper further than any human arm can possibly throw one. The dogs seem to love them as much as a flyer.

Use the Strong Arm at stations where you have a poor thrower (maybe your wife or older kids). It gives a great high & consistent throw each time.

Use the large canvas bean bags from LL Bean to easily carry bumpers and birds. When they are soiled they can be thrown in the washing machine with bleach and come out fine.

Use a camouflage umbrella for Retired Guns or cover up with a piece of lightweight camouflage material. Either is easier to use than carrying out a cumbersome holding blind to retire behind.

Test your handling skills by planting some land blinds before your training partner arrives and handle him/her to the blinds. He/she can later critique you - both of you should learn from this.

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