

# Retrievers of the Past...

By Joule Charney

## *NFC-AFC Five Star General Patton*

ALL STORIES ABOUT A RETRIEVER who wins a National are about someone's dream coming true. Or some ones.<sup>3</sup> The Win, undoubtedly, reflects not only on the owner, but also on any trainer, pro or amateur, who helped, the breeder, and their families and friends. Often, there are others who had key but behind-the-scenes roles in the accomplishment, such as veterinarians, dogfood companies, and the suppliers of the training properties, equipment and birds.

Credit, perhaps, also should go to the dogs who didn't make it, for they provided valuable learning experiences. These dogs are an integral part of almost every story about a National Open or Amateur winner. When they are not, when an owner wins with their first and only field trial retriever, the story takes on a fairytale quality....

Such is the story of 2003 NFC-AFC Five Star General Patton. He was the first and only field trial dog of Deb Bredeson, a wife and mother



Patton and Deb Bredeson.

# Top 30 HIGH-SCORING DOGS OF ALL TIME BY POINTS

Dog's Rank/AKC Name/Callname	Lifetime Points	National Wins	Birth Date	Owner	ROTP Mo/Yr
1. 1972+1975 NAFC-FC-CNFC River Oaks Corky (Corky)	505.4	3x	3/26/66	Mike Flannery	Oct-Nov-Dec 2010
2. 1984 NAFC-FC Trumarc's Zip Code (Cody)	444	1x	3/30/78	Judy Aycock	Jul-11
3. FC-AFC Creek Robber (Auggie)	421.5	1x	9/2/98	Ken Jackson	May-15
4. 1978 NAFC-FC Kannonball Kate (Kate)	410.5	1x	2/8/72	Peter Lane	Jul-Sep 2010
5. FC-AFC Dust Devil's Shoot The Moon (Shooter)	375		5/13/93	S. D. Bechtel, Jr. (Steve)	Jul-16
6. 1971+1973 NAFC-FC Dee's Dandy Dude (Dude)	362.5	2x	2/16/67	Mike Paterno	
7. 1968 NFC, 1967+1968 NAFC Super Chief (Soupy)	354.5	3x	6/27/62	August Belmont	
8. FC-AFC Glengarven's Mik (Mik)	353		8/23/59	Roger Vasselais	Sep-12
9. 1989 CNAFC-CFC-FC-AFC Aces High III (Willie)	346.5	1x	12/12/85	Bob/Marge Beck	Jul-09
10. FC-AFC Hiwood Piper (Piper)	347.5		8/7/70	Mrs. Roy McFall	Sep-16
11. 1974 NAFC-FC Ray's Rascal (Rascal)	342.5	1x	10/2/67	Ray/Dorothea Goodrich	Jul-15
12. 1989 CNFC, 1990 CNAFC, FC-AFC The Marathon Man (Marty)	329.5	1x	10/31/82	Charles/Yvonne Hays	
13. FC-AFC Candlewood's M.D. Houston (Houston)	314		12/4/84	Newt Cropper (After Mary Howley)	
14. 1977 NFC-AFC Euroclydon (Rocky)	289	1x	6/18/73	Don Strait	May-13
15. 2006 NAFC-FC Carbon Copy of Horn Creek (Carbon)	286	1x	9/14/97	Frank/Christine Kashevarof	
16. 1980 NFC-AFC-CFC Risky Business Ruby (Ruby)	278	1x	4/12/76	Mr./Mrs. Clint Swingle (Kippy)	
17. 1985 NAFC-FC Topbrass Cotton (Cotton)	274	1x	7/6/78	Jeff/Bev Finley & J. Mertens	May-10
18. 1960 NFC-AFC Dolobran's Smoke Tail (Smoke)	269	1x	9/18/51	Richard Hecker	May-12
19. 1987 NAFC-FC-CFC-CAFC Westwind Jemima Super Cake (Jemima)	269	1x	5/1/77	Eva Proby	
20. 2003 NAFC-FC Adams Acres Cherokee Rose (Rose)	264.5	1x	11/4/93	John/Martha Russell	
21. Volwood's Mollie (Mollie)	261		3/7/96	Jack/Florence Vollstedt	Jul-12
22. FC-AFC Tigathoe's Mainliner Mariah (Mariah)	254		8/23/65	Alanson Brown (Lanse)	May-Jun 2014
23. FC-AFC Code Blue (Cody)	248.5		8/7/90	JJ Heneghan	
24. FC-AFC Rocky Road of Zenith	245.5		2/9/66	Andrew Pruitt	
25. FC-AFC Stone's Throw Marion's Choice (Choice)	245.5		5/21/82	Mr./Mrs. David Stone	
26. FC-AFC Dairy Hill's Night Cap (Cappy)	244.5		8/27/55	A. A. Jones	May-11
27. FC-AFC Machipongo's W.A. Nappy	243		4/7/76	Richard Roberts Jr. & D. Metcalf	
28. Hawkeye's Dandy (Dandy)	237		7/9/87	Jeff Talley	
29. E-Lynn's Super Strike Lucky (Lucky)	234		12/16/73	Carl Ruffalo	Oct-15
30. 1992 NFC, 1990 NAFC-FC Candlewood's Super Tanker (Tank)	233	1x	7/26/84	Joyce Williams	

\* NOTE: All of the Top 30 Dogs are in the HOF; 16 dogs have been featured in Retrievers of the Past.

Please note that any dog that is featured alone on the cover is required to be a deceased Field Champion or Amateur Field Champion.

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from Hartland, Wisconsin, who had a one-year old son at the time Patton came into her home, and who managed, despite the challenges, to carry, deliver and raise two more boys during his career.

"I didn't even know what a field trial was," says Deb, about the time Patton came into her life. Her husband, Michael, was a friend of Jim Van Engen, a professional retriever training and owner of Right Start Kennel, who specializes in young dog training. Jim who told him he could get a pup out of the litter born in April 1997. "My husband had hunting Lab when we got married. He ran some hunt tests and hunted. I wanted to get a pup; but, he wanted to name it. He was studying history at the time. Patton's name was the deal with my husband."

"We went to Jim's and saw the litter. The breeder, Canadian John Darling, had picked Patton as the puppy he was going to keep. I didn't know anything about dogs. I wanted him. I don't know why I picked him." But, then again, she sort of did. "The pups were running in and out of the water. They all were interested in a live pigeon, except for Patton," she remembers. "He wasn't interested. He walked away and took a nap. I chose him. He found a cool place to lie down. I thought that was neat!"

Neat or not, the answer was 'no.' She could not have that pup. "The breeder insisted on keeping that particular puppy and wouldn't change his mind. "Then I wasn't going to get one." The couple left Jim's, without a pup.

"Then, one day, my husband came home with him in the front seat of his truck." He never said how he pried the puppy away from the breeder. "My husband was building Jim's house. They saw each other every day. "For all I knew," says Deb, "it wasn't the same puppy. He could have put a different color collar on him."

"That was a life-changing day. That's when I got hooked into the dog world and never came back. My oldest son was turning one at the time, and we said Patton was a birthday present for Jack"

"I didn't know a Labrador from a Golden Retriever." Deb was *that* green! "Our old dog Drake had been trained by Jim; but, he was just a family dog/pet. He didn't even hunt. I would see Jim and he would give me a little lesson with Patton. He would say, 'teach him this and come back next week' Sit. Come." This continued until Patton was five months old. "Obedience and fun things. I taught him everything; but, Jim reinforced it. Jim was always impressed with how quickly and easily he learned. 'He seems pretty sharp, if you want to put him in training, I'll take him.'"

Mike Lardy and Patton.



# NFC-AFC FIVE STAR GENERAL PATTON

OPEN	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL:
<b>Starts</b>							141
<b>First</b>	0	2	3	2	1	0	8
<b>Second</b>	1	3	4	1	1	1	11
<b>Third</b>	3	0	0	2	1	1	7
<b>Fourth</b>	1	0	1	1	0	2	5
<b>Places</b>	5	4	8	6	3	4	31
<b>Open Points</b>	6.5	19.0	27.5	15.5	9.0	5.0	82.5
<b>Cumulative Points</b>	6.5	25.5	53.0	68.5	77.5	82.5	82.5
AMATEUR	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL:
<b>Starts</b>							67
<b>First</b>	0	2	1	1	0	0	4
<b>Second</b>	0	0	1	0	0	1	2
<b>Third</b>	0	1	1	0	0	0	3
<b>Fourth</b>	3	1	0	0	1	0	4
<b>Places</b>	3	4	3	1	1	1	13
<b>Amateur Points</b>	1.5	11.5	9.0	5.0	0.5	3.0	30.5
<b>Cumulative Points</b>	1.5	13.0	22.0	27.0	27.5	30.5	30.5
ALL AGE/COMBINED	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	TOTAL
<b>Starts</b>							208
<b>Firsts (including National Win)</b>							12
<b>Places</b>							44
<b>Points By Year</b>	8.0	31.0	36.5	20.5	9.5	8.0	113.0
<b>Cumulative Points</b>	8.0	34.0	70.5	91.0	105.5	113.0	113.0
<b>Lifetime Points</b>							113.0

## Average Points Per Year

Owner: Deb Bredeson

Birthdate: 04/12/97

14 Derby Points

Chart by Joule Charney

Sources: 1997-2002 and 2003-2008 Performance Books and Retriever News Archives/Achievements

Open: 13.75

Amateur: 5.08

All-Age: 18.83

## Early On ...

So, Patton went into training with Jim. "I trained with him a couple of times a week." And this is where a real-life Fairy Godmother enters the story. "I met Mary there," as in Mary Howley, renowned breeder and owner of Candlewood Kennel in Wisconsin. "We ran Patton in a handful of derbies. His first field trial was up in Minnesota when he was about fifteen months old. I got 2nd place in the Derby and Mary got 3rd place. Mary had Rita (FC-AFC Candlewoods Rita Reynolds), who was a youngster at the same time as Patton. It was my and Patton's first trial ever. I thought it was pretty fun. From then on, we ran derbies together. She's the first person I met in the field trial game. She was by my side at every trial."

"I had never been to a trial before, and didn't quite understand what people complained about. Patton made it all seem so easy! Patton and I went on to run many more trials, both of us learning along the way."

"Patton was great as a youngster. He got on the Derby List despite my mistakes! We ran the Triple Derby Q down in New Orleans. I double staked him in all three trials. We came home with five ribbons. He was QAA around 20 months."

Deb had been receiving offers to sell Patton outright or to enter into a co-ownership arrangement. She decided to accept Elly Muth

as co-owner. "For Transition, getting him ready for All-Age, we sent Patton to Andy Attar. Patton struggled in the beginning of his training. He developed a really bad habit of popping when he had to hunt. If he didn't pin his mark, he would pop. He'd get right there, so close to the bird, and he'd pop." It was very frustrating to see, and we decided that Patton needed a change.

"I went and picked him up and I had long talk with Mother Mary. She said, 'Go and introduce yourself to Mike Lardy and tell him that you want him to train this dog.'" Mike is the owner and head trainer at Handjem Retrievers in Wisconsin.

I was really torn. "I had not met Mike. I sat in his driveway, cried a bit, while getting up the courage to talk to him. I knew his reputation and so much was on the line. Patton was going to Mike or he was going to retire at the ripe old age of three. I knew Patton had the potential to be really great; but, I selfishly wanted him home. My life would be easier," she knew, "if he just came home and would just be a house dog. 'Either you train him or he's coming home and he's not going to retrieve another bird again. He will be a house dog.'" Deb told Mike.

"Mike said he had seen Patton. He told me, 'Take him home for two weeks. Clear his head. Come back. Wipe the slate clean. Get all the bad memories out of his head.'"

When he went into training with Mike, "He said, 'Patton is so

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super intelligent, and he wants to do the right thing, he just needs to be shown what to do.” It just took teaching, and patience. Mike was very slow in bringing back Patton’s confidence.

“Patton never hunted without me, except one time Mike asked to take Patton to Idaho with his brother and his dad. How do you say ‘no’ to Mike Lardy? Mike said he was unbelievable, a natural hunting dog.”

“Mike trained Patton a whole season. When he was around three or four years old, Mike said he was ‘good; but, we’re not going to run him in a trial until he can beat every dog on my truck.’ I went and trained there one or two days a week. I was impatient. I wanted to see him run. Mike said, ‘He’s young. He doesn’t have any experience.’”

Deb eventually adopted Mike’s philosophy. “At the time, Mike had a truckload of extremely talented dogs. What’s the point of entering him in a trial until he would *win*? We weren’t just going to run him. Mike gave him the experiences in training.”

### PATTON’S TRAINERS

6 months through 2 years  
Transition

Jim Van Engen, Right Start Kennel  
Andy Attar & Paul Sletten,  
Autumn Run Retrievers

Transition through 2009

Mike Lardy & Dave Smith  
Handjem Retrievers

### Catching On ...

“The season that we started running was 2002.” Patton was four and a half years old when he earned his first Open placement, in March. Deb’s first Amateur placement with him was in June.

“Mary knew from the start that Patton was a special dog. When there was talk about washing him out, she walked up to me and had her finger right in my face. She’s a short woman and I’m very tall. ‘You listen to me, this dog is going to win a National. Don’t you quit on him!’”

Deb’s Fairy Godmother gave what turned out to be prophetically wise advice. At age six, in only his second All-Age year, and his first National, Patton *won!* Mike Lardy was at the helm. “He pre-Nationaled with Connie Cleveland,” adds Deb. “Their motto for that National was ‘How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time.’ I was on vacation with my family. Mike called me after every series, about every bird, describing every blade of grass.”

“Understanding Patton and bringing out his best, that was Mike Lardy. Patton was Mike’s house dog. He kept him as his house dog after he won the National, when he wasn’t home with me. He was just that nice of a dog. He was so pleasant. He came home almost every weekend that he wasn’t competing. You would never know that he was a trial dog. You would never know that he was something special. But, when he saw me put my coat on to go out and train, he went from being a house dog to all business.”

“He was just the nicest dog that you could ever want in your house. Especially compared to other trial dogs. He was just a good partner all the way around.” He was friendly with the kids, and even pulled them on a sled, wearing a harness.

In rather odd contrast, there was an aloofness to Patton. “Patton is just so weird,” Deb used to think to herself. “People will come over, he’ll lay on my bed, poke his head out and go right back. He wasn’t social, with other dogs or people. When traveling, I always had to get two beds. He didn’t want to stay on the same bed as me. He loved everybody, but when he was done visiting, he’d just walk away.”

Mike was witnessed the same temperament in his home, and asked Deb if she were experiencing it also. “I told Mike that was normal.”

In the field, Patton took stoic to a new level. One day, after hunting at their local club with their vet, “I saw blood all over the floor. He’d been shot in the leg. Patton would go through a brick wall to get a bird.”

When trialing, Patton took bursting from the Line to an extreme. “One Wisconsin trial, he cliff-dove off a 15-20 foot ledge. I just screamed, ‘Oh, my God!’ He’s going to hit a rock or a stick. How do I send him for the second bird? I don’t want him to do this again. I sent him really, *really* easy. He did the same thing. He just explodes off the Line. I turned to the judges, and said, ‘I think I’ve got to scratch.’ He did everything full speed. You took one breath and held it. Good or bad, at least it was over really fast!

### Career Highlights ...

Patton’s career spanned six years, 2002 through 2007, during which he earned 82.5 Open and 30.5 Amateur points, for a total of 113. Out of 31 Open placements, he had eight 1sts, which is 26%. He placed in 22% of the Opens in which he started. Patton had 13 Amateur placements, of which four were 1sts, or 31%. He placed in 19% of the Amateurs in which he started.

Patton qualified for eight Nationals, and was a Finalist in five, over four consecutive years. He won the National Open in 2003, in Oakdale, California.

### PATTON’S NATIONAL FINISHES

YEAR	CHAMPIONSHIP
2003	Open – Winner
2004	Open
2005	Open
2005	Amateur
2006	Open

Patton won a Double Header in 2004. “Mary said, ‘I’ve been doing this longer than you’ve been alive and I’ve never won a Double Header!’”

Mike relayed a comment to Deb made by a fellow professional trainer, “‘You’re nothin’ but a bucket that he drops his birds in.’ I felt like the bucket. At least Mike helped him. Patton was just Patton. He was born to win.”

### Origins ...

Patton was out of 1995, 2000 NAFC, 1998, 1999 CNAFC Ebonstar Lean Mac and HRCH Dust Devil’s Desert Duk MH.

Deb’s husband Michael was reading a book about the General Patton, who was not a five-star general, when he bought the puppy who he would name ‘Five Stars General Patton,’ as part of his deal with his wife. So, why did he include ‘Five Stars’ in the pup’s name? “He just felt that General Patton deserved five stars for his service,” per Deb.

Full siblings include FC-AFC Fordlands Bored Out Ford, FC-AFC Tequila Sunrise IX and FC-AFC RSK’s Smooth Sailing.

### Owner Deb Bredeson, Her Kids and Patton’s Progeny ...

“Jim knew that this was a once-in-a-lifetime dog. He had said, ‘This is a really special dog.’ We had to make the decision- either I sold him outright and let somebody else enjoy the ride, or I had to go all in, and let Patton have the career that he was destined to have, with me holding him back probably. That was a very hard decision –

normal life, or very chaotic life, and see how far his life could go. It was not easy; but, it was loads of fun." Deb says that she and her husband never considered stopping at the one child they had when Patton came into her life. "We knew we could make it work."

How did Deb handle very young children, pregnancies and a field trial dog? "I just brought them along to training, as much as I could. My husband was great. He works at home. He took care of the kids on days when I couldn't take them training. People in the field trial world got used to the fact there were kids around. Many people were great, staying by the car if the kids were taking naps while I went to line. Everything was a challenge. Nine months pregnant with my last one, running the Wisconsin Amateur, in the fall. Patton and I took 4th. I had my youngest son Max a couple of days later."

"There were times when people had to help me. If we were running from a mound, I had to have people help me up and down. Max was nine or ten months old when I qualified for my first National Amateur out West. Dave Smith's daughter Jessica came along. She and I and Max flew out there. I rented her a condo and she took care of Max when I ran the National. She brought him out to training every day and came out to the trial. My youngest still dependent on mom (for his sustenance)."

Mike Lardy could think of only one amateur handler who may have had a one-dog-wonder National field trial champion, Joyce Williams, owner of Tank (1990, 1992 NFC Candlewood's Super Tanker). Actually, there is a close comparison. Joyce owned one field trial dog before Tank. "He won a Q and had several derby points." But, he did not become an FC nor an AFC. "When we had Tank, our daughter was growing up, and we needed to do things with her," says Joyce. "I got back in when our daughter was grown," and she and her husband moved to Wisconsin. "It's time to get a puppy!" she decided, adding, "I can't think of anybody else, besides Deb, gaining National status with their first dog."

"I'm pretty darn competitive. It kills me not to win," Deb admits. She participated in high school track and basketball; but, that was the extent of her competitive sporting experience, prior to Patton.

When she didn't win, her kids were supportive, even though she clearly was not happy with herself. "Once, when Patton got a 4th, they said, 'Well, that's great mom!' I said, 'No, it's not.' If we didn't get a 1st, I hope I learned something from it; because, I was there to win. And, that's how I raised my

kids. It's just how I'm wired. I think I apologized to Ben," her middle son, saying, "I might have done you guys a disservice, implying it was a waste if they didn't win." Ben responded that he didn't have a problem with his mother's winning ways, adding, "You made me the very best I can be."

"My theme is 'pick what you want and go get it.'" Their upbringing is evident with Deb's boys. The older two attend University of Michigan and are UM athletes. Deb goes to Ann Arbor almost every weekend to watch their games. Jack, is 20, a sophomore and baseball pitcher. Ben, 19, is a freshman and a left guard on the football team. Max, 14, is in 8th grade and plays football, baseball and basketball. "My husband is also a competitive person," she adds, but, he's not as competitive as I am."

When Patton was older, he hung out in the kitchen where she had a dog bed, says Deb. Patton died in 2009, three days before Christmas. "He left me laying in my arms, on his bed, in 'his' car, 'The Pdog.' It was his favorite place to be."

"Losing Patton last week has been the most difficult time of my life," Deb wrote to the field trial community. "I thought that I was prepared to let him go, but I was so wrong. The hole in my heart and in my life is so deep, I am afraid it will never heal. But thanks to so many dear friends, some of who I have never had the pleasure of meeting, I know that I and my family will get a little better in time."

"Patton has been the joy of my life for almost thirteen years, for as long as I have been a mother to my boys. He came into my heart, and brought me so much excitement, and so many dear friends. I have been so blessed..... I will be at his side again someday."

Actually, "He is right here sitting next to me right now," said Deb during her interview for this article. "He is on my kitchen windowsill, with my favorite picture of him on the can."

"After Patton died, Mary called and said, 'We're going on a road trip. We're going to get you a different dog.' About seven hours later, we picked out a little miniature rat terrier, who I love; but, good God, he's a pain. He's a little brat of a thing. Why do we go from having these well trained, easy to own dogs? Mary has a house full of French bulldogs," Deb quips.

Nowadays, "I breed Patton litters," explains Deb. "I used to let other people breed to Patton. He was a pretty busy stud dog. I stopped selling the frozen semen."

After almost two decades of their pro-

found friendship, "Mary and I talk every day," says Deb. "Mary is my best friend in the world. My kids all call her 'Grandma Mary.' I call her 'Mother Mary.'" Deb and Mary have similar philosophies about pups, dogs, and breeding. They live about one-and-a-half hours apart.

"Deb is a real go getting, very smart, very likable person," says Mary. "Her story is kind of a fairy tale. She did the kids and the dog, and trained a couple of days a week with Mike Lardy." Mary is no longer running dogs, but, she says she still loves watching trials and judging minor stakes.

*(I have to give the credit to Mary Howley for putting the 'fairy tale' theme for this article into my head. I'll bet she will be quite surprised to learn that I cast her in the role of Fairy Godmother in this story!)*

"Mary and I do one to two litters a year. We pick the best female that we have, do a surgical breeding. Mary owns the female, then I raise the puppies. We do it as a partnership," explains Deb. "They go at seven weeks. Out of one litter of five pups that turned two last fall, two were on the Derby List, and one was a hunt test and obedience dog. Mary and I don't strive to sell into the field trial market. We sell mostly to hunting families. Our primary market is family homes with strong hunting backgrounds who are looking for a lifetime companion." She wants the buyers of Patton puppies to make "an emotional investment," not a "choice off of paper."

Patton's field trial progeny include a number of FCs and AFCs. Deb cites three in particular: FC-AFC Tealcreek Patton's Saber (Saber), owned and bred by Chris and Portia Hatch, FC-AFC Pattons Blazen Abby MH (Abby), owned by Dan Hurst and bred by Patty LaFave, and FC-AFC Candlewood Goldendaze Louie (Louie), owned by Chuck and Mary Jane Schweikert and bred by Mary Howley and Sue Reynolds. "They were all great dogs out of Patton." Saber's 205.5 combined All-Age points place him in the #15 spot on the 'Lifetime All-Age Points Ranking - 1999 Through 2016' chart. He was High Point Amateur Dog in 2013.

Two pups out of a litter born in 2016 were sold for Search & Rescue. "Patton would have been such an amazing search & rescue dog. He was so talented. A well-bred dog can do anything. His puppies have kind of a light switch. On and off. Patton puppies, especially males, mature very slowly."

A Patton granddaughter, Certainty's Love Storie of Kansas, holds the North America Diving Dogs (NADD)/AKC Distance Distance Jumping record of 30'7", achieved in

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2015. “Storie” was mentioned in our magazine’s feature ‘Take A Flying Leap... Dock-Jumping for AKC Titles’ in the April 2017 issue. She is one of only two Dock Elite Excellent title holders. The Elite Open Class Divi-

sion requires jumps, measured from the end of the dock to the base of the tail when the dog enters the water, of 24’ and above. The Excellent designation requires fifty Elite jumps, in addition to the five Elite jumps required to earn the title. Storie holds the record for Elite jumps, with a total of sixty-five. She as a slew of titles in other dog sports, as well.

Deb now has one Patton pup, Candlewoods Five Star Patsy. Now age 3, “she is an absolute clone of Patton. I called Patton P-dog, P or Patsy.”

Other than breeding, Deb is not currently active in the retriever world. She says that she thinks that she will get back into the field trial game after her youngest, Max, finishes college, in about eight years.

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## Jim Van Engen, Right Start Kennel

Jim chose three pups out of John Darling’s litter. “We were going to get three of them out of this breeding, no matter what.” But, then the unexpected happened, and it made a major, lasting impression on the seasoned professional young dog trainer.

“I’ve been doing this now over forty years. When we picked out this puppy, we watched the whole litter. We took all eight, ten, whatever number there were, to the pond. Someone took a wing-clipped pigeon, shook it, and threw it into the pond. Every one of those puppies chased it all over the pond! They were six, seven weeks old. The whole litter! EVERY one in the litter! I’ve never seen anything like it! Ever!”

“I’ve just never seen this,” says Jim, who still is incredulous over the incident. Maybe you get a couple that go in the water like that. This was swimming water. Everyone chased that pigeon out into the open water. All three went on to be FCs, Patton, Keela and Kate.”

Fortunately, “We were able to talk John Darling out of his pick. Deb had another dog with us, who wasn’t very good. She would come up and train between set-ups until Patton was six months old. Dummies, birds, all kinds of marks.” At six months, Patton went to Jim’s kennel full-time, except that he went home with her on the weekends.

“I had Patton until he was about twenty-six months old. He looked good up to sixteen months; but, once he hit seventeen or eighteen months, he really put it together. Once he hit that age, things really clicked. When you’ve had as many as I’ve had, 1200 puppies, you can tell. He just knew where everything was, ran hard but wasn’t crazy, could turn it off and on, do Derby and Qualifying in the same weekend, Double-header, back-to-back qualifying Wins.”

“Deb went to a Triple Derby Q. She got some placements and Jams. But, she didn’t know him that well, and how to run him. He remembers Deb telling him, ‘I want to learn how to run him. He’s my dog.’”

With limited time to teach her, the primary lesson was, “Where you pointed him, that’s where he was going. He ran three or four Qualifyings, and won, for sure, two of them.”

“Patton was just a true star. Very easy to train. Very loving. Willing to work. It was the same with his two sisters that I trained. Either we’d win; or, we’d not get something.”

“Patton was a great blind running dog. He had great style, land and water, marks and blinds. He was a quick learner. He figures these things out. He can turn. He just catches on. He was willing, and, forgiving. He understood his corrections. ‘I’ll do what you need me to do. Just leave me alone.’”

“When Patton went to Mike Lardy, I said, ‘You’re gonna win a National with that dog!’ He learned the news that Patton had won the 2003 National when “Mike was nice enough to call me just as Patton was announced the Winner, as they were ready to lift him up on the table. To be able to call it, and he does it, sometimes you’ve got to be careful what you say. When you go to Nationals, probably 20% have a chance. The others are hopeful.”

BACKGROUND: “I’ve started 141 started field champions. I hope there’s a lot more coming. I started in 1991, full-time. I do nothing but young dogs, to twenty-four to twenty-six months, then typically they’re gone. Hopefully, I’m giving them the right start. It really feels good when you’ve raised a puppy, and, years later, they win a National. Bill Benson’s Roxie (2015 NAFC-FC Hardscrabble Roxie McBunn), remembered the location of the toy box. Six years

later!” Other National Champions who Jim has had a role in starting, in addition to Patton and Roxie, are (*in alphabetical order by callname*): Babe (1996, 1999 NAFC Candlewoods Bit O Bunny), Chicka (2004 NAFC Chickamauga Choo Choo), Grady (2011 NAFC-AFC Cody Cut A Lean Grade), Ram (2001, 2002 NAFC Candlewoods Ramblin Man, his own dog that he sold), Rascal (1996 NFC Storm’s Riptide Star), Tank (1990, 1992 NFC Candlewood’s Super Tanker), and Traveler (2012 NAFC-FC Paddle Creek’s Pack Your Grip).

Jim currently is training 16 dogs and has a waiting list. “People just know to book early. Clients are always welcome and encouraged to attend training sessions.” His brother Brian has been helping him for about 25 years. Wife Chris is a visiting nurse mom. Their two children are in high school. Right Start Kennel’s summer location is in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin. Its winter base is in Cairo, Georgia.

More info: [www.RightStartKenel.com](http://www.RightStartKenel.com).

## Mike Lardy, Handjem Retrievers

“Patton was doing well when he came to Handjem; but, he had a fatal flaw – occasionally popping on marks in the fall area. It took some creativity and recognition that he popped because he was a sensitive dog. It is unusual for a dog with his nature to pop. He was super high going, high desire. We tried to fix the problem with lot of finesse; but, ultimately, we had to address the issue with light pressure that Patton came to understand, which was a testament to his intelligence. Patton was so smart he knew what we were trying to do. That really was the key to him. He was such a smart dog!”

“We’ve all got high-powered dogs; but, a lot of them are a little hyper. Patton wasn’t hyper at all. He could sit out

“Patton is and will always be the joy of my Life,” says Deb. “He came to our family as a puppy, and grew up alongside my boys. The dog who was supposed to be a present for Jack’s first birthday turned out to be the greatest gift that I will ever receive. Patton brought me so much joy, took me to so many wonderful places, and gave me every

bit of himself every time I asked him to. He made me so proud of him, time after time. He always knew when we were competing, and when his best performance was needed. When it was our turn to go to the Line, he was always my partner.”

“He was my first dog. I won the lottery when I got him.” ■

### Tenacular Dogs – Joule Charney

Joule resides in Paradise, California. She has been a contributing writer for Retriever News for nine years and authors the *Retrievers of the Past* feature series, which is published four times a year: May, July, September and October. Visit Joule online at <https://www.facebook.com/joule.charney>.

## ...the Trainers’ Reflections

by the bird feeder in a stalking position while snow accumulated on his back. He remained motionless so long, until the squirrels became acclimated to his presence out there. To me, that’s an incredible story for a dog! He turned white in the yard. He was motionless by that feeder for so long. That is something about that dog that has nothing to do with field trials. It’s about his intelligence and his nature. Delayed gratification. Being a statue. That blows my mind that a dog would do that! That’s something that a cat would do!”

Patton was “kind, gentle, a wonderful companion, and he didn’t get in fights with other dogs. That doesn’t fit the stereotype. He was high-powered when he worked, always very thoughtful.” Does Mike recall the aloofness that Debra described? “He wasn’t the kind of dog who’d keep sticking his nose in your hand. He didn’t follow you around the house. He wasn’t needy. He was self-confident. Hard going. Intelligent. Sensitive.”

“When you talk about any of the great dogs, there was an on-off switch. Probably what our game selects for more than anything was intelligence.”

Mike was not aware that Debra had considered washing Patton out. When Mike agreed to accept him for training, “I probably had seen him in trials. I knew he was basically a good dog. He had a good foundation. He had this one thing that he did wrong. We put him through a program. It wasn’t a high-pressure program. We put him through a deal to control it. He did everything else right.”

“The National that Patton won was characterized by its very difficult and challenging set of marks.” Although it is more than a decade later, and Mike was on vacation in Utah during this interview, he was able to retrieve 2003 detailed notes from his computer. “It was the 7th, 9th &

10th series that really forced the dogs to be smart, and be patient, and hunt. Patton was running against some really great dogs in those late series. He showed trainability, staying in the water. He did all of that and went on to finish.”

Mike characterized Patton as “athletic, cooperative, and a good family dog. The kids could crawl all over him. He had such a good temperament!”

“I have a clientele who wants to be successful with their dogs. We stress helping handlers with their dogs. We work hard at it. It was a great relationship in developing Patton with Debra. We watched our families grow up together. We remain in contact and follow each other’s kids. The relationships with the people last longer than the dogs, unfortunately.”

Regarding Debra’s comment that she thinks she will return to the field trial game after her youngest child is out of college, Mike says, “That wouldn’t surprise me at all. She’s a great mom and really dedicated to her kids. You can’t really compete in this game and be dedicated to your dogs enough to be competitive (on an ongoing basis).”

“She had a very supportive husband. Mike would step up to the plate and take care of the kids for the whole weekend while she was away. They had a really great system to stay active and do what they love. They found the right balance.”

Mike credits all the professional trainers for Patton’s success. “Jim (Van Engen), Andy (Attar), Dave Smith, Ray Voight, everybody had a role in the story of Patton.”

BACKGROUND: Mike has been the owner and head trainer at Handjem since 1981. During Patton’s career, Dave Smith was his Assistant Trainer. “Ray Voight and Andrew Curtis are the main trainers with me at Handjem right now. Handjem is the home of the winners of twenty U.S. National

Retriever Championships, nine National Opens and eleven National Amateurs, and 117 Field Champions.”

At present, Mike rarely handles in trials. “Ray runs all the National Opens and he has for many years. My focus is on training and running the training operation, supporting Ray and Andy.

Mike was inducted into the Retriever Field Trial Hall of Fame in 2004. Handjem-trained dogs inducted into the Hall of Fame are (*in alphabetical order by call-name*): Abe (FC-AFC Webshire’s Honest Abe), Babe (1996, 1999 NAFC-FC Candlewood’s Bit O Bunny), Bunnie (1985 CNFC-FC-AFC Big River Bonne Amie), Chicka (2004 NAFC-FC Chicamauga Choo Choo), Gus (1992 NAFC-FC Gusto’s Last Control), Harley (FC-AFC Wilderness Harley To Go), Hattie (1998 NAFC-FC Hattie McBunn), Jessie (Dual Ch-AFC JJ’s Jessie), Lottie (1990, 1991, 1993 NFC-AFC Candlewood’s Tanks A Lot), Maxx (1995, 2000 NAFC, 1998, 1999 CNAFC Ebonstar Lean Mac), Ram (2001, 2002 NAFC Candlewood’s Ramblin Man), Tank (1992 NAFC Candlewood’s Super Taker), and Zinger (2002 NFC-AFC Cashman’s Fat Lady Zingin).

2003 NFC-AFC Five Star General Patton is the last dog that Mike handled to a National Win who is not inducted into the Hall of Fame. The others are 2000 NFC Maxx’s Surprise and 1996 NFC Storm’s Rip-tide Star.

There years in Mike handled dogs to National Wins are 1990, 1991, 1993, 1996, 2000, and 2003. Zinger, the 2002 NFC, was handled by one of her co-owners.

Mike and his wife Cindy’s kids are Lardy’s three children are older than Debra’s. The Lardys live about an hour-and-a half from the Bredesons. Handjem’s summer location is in Montello, Wisconsin. Its winter base is in Boston, Georgia.

More info: [www.TotalRetriever.com](http://www.TotalRetriever.com).



# Index “RETRIEVERS OF THE PAST” FEATURE SERIES

ROTP #	YEAR	Featured Dog	Call Name	Page #’s	Dog’s Top 30 Rank	National	H of F	Other Criteria
<b>2009</b>								
1.	July 2009	FC-AFC-CNAFC-CFC Aces High III	“Willie”	1, 4, 6-8	#9	1x	Yes	
2.	Oct. 2009	3x NFC-AFC Candlewoods Tanks A Lot (Author: Nona Kilgore Bauer)	“Lottie”	1, 4, 6-7	---	3x	Yes	
<b>2010</b>								
3.	May 2010	NAFC-FC Topbrass Cotton (Author: Jackie Mertens)	“Cotton”	1, 4, 12-13	#17	1x	Yes	
4.	July 2010	NAFC-FC Kannonball Kate	“Kate”	1, 4, 8-9, 60-61	#4	1x	Yes	
	Sept. 2010	Kate, Part II		1, 4, 28-30				
5.	Oct. 2010	2xNAFC-FC 3xCNFC River Oaks Corky	“Corky”	1, 4, 16-21	#1	5x	Yes	
	Nov. 2010	Corky, Part II		1, 4, 34-37				
	Dec. 2010	Corky, Part III		1, 4, 28-30				
<b>2011</b>								
6.	May 2011	Homage to the Legends (ROTP info) FC-AFC Dairy Hill’s Night Cap	“Cappy”	1, 4, 28-31	#26	---	Yes	
7.	July 2011	NAFC-FC Trumarc’s Zip Code	“Cody”	1, 4, 13, 81-82	#2	1x	Yes	
8.	Sept 2011	NFC Massie’s Sassy Boots	“Boots”	1, 4, 28-31, 80-81	---	1x	Yes	
9.	Oct 2011	NFC-AFC McGuffy	“Guffy”	1, 4, 14-18	---	1x	---	
<b>2012</b>								
10.	May 2012	NFC-AFC Dolobran’s Smoke Tail	“Smoke”	1, 4, 16-19	#18	1x	Yes	
11.	July 2012	FC-AFC Volwood’s Mollie	“Mollie”	1, 4, 12-16	#21	---	Yes	
12.	Sept 2012	FC-AFC Glengarven’s Mik	“Mik”	1, 4, 30-31	#8	---	Yes	
13.	Oct 2012	NFC Marvadel Black Gum	“Blackie”	1, 4, 22-24	---	1x	Yes	
<b>2013</b>								
14.	May 2013	NFC-AFC Euroclydon	“Rocky”	1, 4, 18-21	#14	1x	Yes	
15.	July 2013	NFC-NAFC-CFC Major VI	“Major”	1, 4, 20-21	---	2x	Yes	
16.	Sept 2013	FC Ace High Scamp of Windweep	“Rum”	1, 4, 34-37	---	---	Yes	
17.	Oct 2013	FC Duxbak Scooter	“Scooter”	1, 4, 22-23	---	---	Yes	

RETRIEVER NEWS is dedicated to providing comprehensive coverage of the retrievers and events of today and yesterday. Our cover features ‘Retrievers of the Past,’ debuted in 2009. ROTPs appear in each May, June, September and October issue. Only the most outstanding retrievers of our time become candidates for ROTPs. ‘The Past’ refers to the fact that the dogs we feature in ROTPs, sadly, have deceased; and, each must meet at least one of these criteria:

- ‘Top 30 High-Scoring Dogs Of All Time By Points’ chart inclusion
- National Retriever or National Amateur Retriever Championship Winner
- Retriever Hall of Fame Inductee
- Other top accomplishment, such as annual High Point Dog

Our source material includes Performance Books, which take us through 2008, and the magazine’s website, where there is a wealth of information, from past to present. You can find our website at [www.theretrievernews.com](http://www.theretrievernews.com).

*(Please remember the ‘the.’)* At the top of Home Page, there is a black bar. The second link from the right is ‘MORE.’ Hold your cursor over that word, and you will see the third and fourth options are ‘ARCHIVES/Achievements and RetrieverNewsEXPRESS.’ Each of these options takes you to a page of links.

Retriever News Express is where you will find links to information that is more up-to-date than what is contained in our eleven annual issues, which are available in print, and in digital form, through our

ROTP #	YEAR	Featured Dog	Call Name	Page #'s	Dog's Top 30 Rank	National	H of F	Other Criteria
<b>2014</b>								
18.	May 2014	Updated ROTP info Homage to the Legends (Reprint of May 2011) FC-AFC Tigathoe's Mainliner Mariah, Part I	"Mariah"	1, 4, 24-29, 64	#22	---	Yes	
	June 2014	Mariah, Part II		1, 4, 24-27				
19.	July 2014	2xNAFC-FC-AFC Lawhorn's Cadillac Mack	"Mack"	1, 4, 18-24	---	2x	Yes	
20.	Sept 2014	FC-AFC Watchim Sneak	"Sneak"	1, 4, 30-24	---	---	Yes	
21.	Oct 2014	FC-AFC Candlewood's Rita Reynolds	"Rita"	1, 4, 22-27	---	---	---	Titled bitch w/record number of progeny
<b>2015</b>								
22.	May 2015	FC-AFC Creek Robber	"Auggie"	1, 4, 20-25	#3	---	Yes	
23.	July 2015	NAFC-FC Ray's Rascal	"Rascal"	1, 4, 18-22	#11	1x	Yes	
24.	Sept 2015	FC-AFC Carmmoney Brigadier	"Brig"	1, 4, 34-36	---	---	Yes	
25.	Oct 2015	FC-AFC E-Lynn's Super Strike Lucky	"Lucky"	1, 4, 20-24	#29	---	Yes	
<b>2016</b>								
26.	May 2016	FC-AFC Angelique	"Angelique"	1, 4, 26-30	---	---	---	High Point Bitch
27.	July 2016	FC-AFC Dust Devil's Shoot the Moon	"Shooter"	1, 4, 18-23	#5	---	Yes	
28.	Sept 2016	FC-AFC-CFC-CAFC Hiwood Piper	"Piper"	1, 5, 36-39	#10	---	Yes	
29.	Oct 2016	FC-AFC Nakai Anny	"Nakai"	1, 4, 16-21	---	---	Yes	
<b>2015</b>								
30.	May 2017	NFC-AFC Five Star General Patton	"Patton"	1, 4, 18-25,28-29	---	1x	Yes	
31.	July 2016	TBD						
32.	Sept 2017	TBD						
33.	Oct 2017	TBD						
<b>33 dogs</b>				<b>TOTALS:</b>	<b>16 dogs</b>	<b>15 dogs</b>	<b>27 dogs</b>	<b>2 dogs</b>

The ROTP features are researched & authored by Joule Charney, Retriever News Contributing Writer with the exception of two ("Lottie" & "Cotton").

website. "We keep track of and update info on the site more frequently than our monthly magazine can," explains Managing Editor Tina Styan. "Ideally, this is supposed to be updated as qualifications occur and achievements are accomplished... (i.e., some dog attains its FC and it gets put up there.) and NOT wait for the magazine to be published. The name came from a combo of Retriever News and Entry Express."

Currently, the Retriever News Express page provides links to 2016 and 2017

data, including High Point Summaries, Double Header Winners, and Qualifiers for the National Open, National Amateur, Master National, and Master Amateur National, in addition to new FCs and AFCs.

The ARCHIVES/Achievements' page focus is on historical accomplishments, reflected in links to the Retriever Field Trial Hall of Fame dogs and people, the Master National Hall of Fame dogs, various High Point dogs, recipients of the Dottie Metcalf Memorial Trophy, Thomas Merritt Award, and Women's Challenge Trophy,

and winners of the National Retriever and National Amateur Retriever Championships, Double Headers, and 20 or more All-Age trials. It also includes links to the National Archives.

Additionally, you can find links to Lifetime National Open and Amateur Rankings, 1941-2015, National Open and Amateur Champion Lifetime Performance Comparisons, and Lifetime All-Age Points Rankings, 1999-2016. At the bottom of the page are links to Past Standings for 2011 through 2016. ■