

# Retrievers of the Past...

By Joule Charney

*Presently in its 70th year*

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 Highest-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 series began with two dogs in 2009 and has grown to four covers. The designated months are May, July, September and October. This issue contains our 18th *Retrievers of the Past* feature.

*They made their  
mark on history –  
Now we remark  
about them ...*



Lanse with Mariah at a Canadian National. Photo by Hodges.

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

Dog's Name	Lifetime Points	Owner	Birth Date
1 NAFC-FC-CNFC River Oaks Corky (LM) Featured in a three part series: Oct, Nov, Dec 2010	505.5	Mike Flannery	3/26/66
2 FC-AFC Trumarc's Zip Code (LM) Featured in July 2011	444	Judy Aycock	3/30/78
3 FC-AFC Creek Robber (LM)	421.5	Ken Jackson	9/2/98
4 NAFC-FC Kannonball Kate (LF) Featured in a two part series: July & Sep 2010	410.5	Peter Lane	2/8/72
5 FC-AFC Dust Devil's Shoot The Moon (LM)	375	S. D. Bechtel Jr.	5/13/93
6 NAFC-FC Dee's Dandy Dude (LM)	362.5	Mike Paterno	2/16/67
7 NFC-NAFC Super Chief (LM)	354.5	August Belmont	6/27/62
8 FC-AFC Glengarven's Mik (LM) Featured in September 2012	353	Roger Vasselais	8/23/59
9 CNAFC-CFC-FC-AFC Aces High III (LM) Featured in July 2009	349.5	Bob & Marge Beck	12/12/85
10 FC-AFC Hiwood Piper (LM)	347.5	Mrs. Roy McFall	8/7/70
11 FC-NAFC Ray's Rascal (LM)	342.5	Ray & Dorothea Goodrich	10/2/67
12 FC-AFC The Marathon Man (LM)	329.5	Charles & Yvonne Hays	10/31/82
13 FC-AFC Candlewood's M.D. Houston (LM)	314	Newt Cropper	12/4/84
14 NFC-AFC Euroclydon (LF) Featured in May 2013	289	Don Strait	6/18/73
15 NAFC-FC Carbon Copy Of Horn Creek (LM)	286	Frank & Christine Kashevarof	9/14/97
16 NFC-AFC-CFC Risky Business Ruby (LF)	278	Mr. & Mrs. Clint Swingle	4/12/76
17 NAFC-FC Topbrass Cotton (GM) Featured in May 2010	274	Jeff & Bev Finley & J. Mertens	7/6/78
18 NFC-AFC Dolobran's Smoke Tail (LM) Featured in May 2012	269	Richard Hecker	9/18/51
19 FC-AFC-CFC-CAFC Westwind Jemima Super Cake (LM)	269	Eva Proby	5/1/77
20 NAFC-FC Adams Acres Cherokee Rose (LF)	264.5	John & Martha Russell	11/4/93
21 FC-AFC Volwood's Mollie (LF) Featured in July 2012	261	Jack & Florence Vollstedt	3/7/96
22 FC-AFC Tigathoe's Mainliner Mariah (LF) Featured in a two part series: May & June 2014	254	Alanson Brown III	8/23/65
23 FC-AFC Code Blue (LM)	248.5	JJ Heneghan	8/7/90
24 FC-AFC Rocky Road Of Zenith (LM)	245.5	Andrew Pruitt	2/9/66
25 FC-AFC Stone's Throw Marion's Choice (LM)	245.5	Mr. & Mrs. David Stone	5/21/82
26 FC-AFC Dairy Hill's Night Cap (LM) Featured in May 2011	244.5	A. A. Jones	8/27/55
27 FC-AFC Machipongo's W.A. Nappy (LM)	243	Richard Roberts Jr. & D. Metcalf	4/7/76
28 FC-AFC Hawkeye's Dandy (LF)	237	Jeff Talley	7/9/87
29 FC-AFC E-Lynn's Super Strike Lucky (LM)	234	Carl Ruffalo	12/16/73
30 NAFC-FC Candlewood's Super Tanker (LM)	233	Joyce Williams	7/26/84

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

### Homage to the Legends *(Reprinted from May 2011)*

One bird at a time – That is what we say to remind ourselves when it looks like there's a tough time ahead. Whichever game we play, field trials or hunt tests, and no matter whether we are rank newbies or in the top rankings, our dogs still can get only 'one bird at a time.' Whether we are amateurs or pros, calm, cool and collected, or nervously quaking in our boots, it is up to our partners, our dogs, to go where we've sent them, and come back with that precious commodity – the bird.

We go to the Line, dogs by our side. Bird by bird, we complete a series. A trial or a test. We are consumed by Lines – lines to the birds. And we hope that they lead us to the ultimate destination: A placement, a title, a trip to one of the Nationals.

When we look back, our years are filled with triumphs, and tears. Tears of joy. Tears of loss, as our partners leave our side and do not return, except to inhabit the holes in our hearts that their presence left behind.

We remember each of our own, in our own special ways. And, then there are those dogs who lines led to the highest echelon of achieve-

ment – a National Win, a record number of points, a Master National completion. We have recognized them with trophies, special awards, inclusion in the Hall of Fame, and usually, generations of progeny.

This series takes us back in time and allows us to revisit the dogs whose triumphs ensconced them in the history books of our sport – dear to a select few of us personally, dear to all of us historically.

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

.....

**M**ANY OF THE BEST THINGS IN LIFE don't start out as planned. Back in the summer of 1965, there was a hunter who had his heart set on buying a male Labrador puppy. This pup was to become one of the Top 30 highest scoring retrievers of all time, and she was a little girl.

"Mariah was a bitch and only pup left in her litter. I had applied and asked for a male. So, for two months, not until November, did I finally decide to relinquish and we went up," recalls Alanson 'Lanse' Brown. "My wife and I got a little black puppy for \$200 from Torch Flinn."

"The pup was unsocialized," notes Dana Istre, Lanse's first wife. "Mariah had been left alone for three months, with only a guy coming



Ed Carey with the dogs in 1968.

# FC-AFC TIGATHOE'S MAINLINER MARIAH

OPEN	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	TOTAL:
<b>Starts</b>	17	26	22	17	14	20	16	12	144
<b>First</b>	0	0	1	0	1	2	3	0	7
<b>Second</b>	0	3	1	1	4	0	1	1	11
<b>Third</b>	1	1	0	1	0	3	1	0	7
<b>Fourth</b>	1	1	1	1	1	2	0	1	8
<b>Places</b>	2	5	3	3	6	7	5	2	33
<b>Jams</b>	0	3	6	3	2	2	2	1	19
<b># Finished</b>	2	8	9	6	8	9	7	3	52
<b>% Finished</b>	12%	31%	41%	35%	57%	45%	44%	25%	36%
<b>Open Points</b>	1.5	10.5	8.5	4.5	17.5	14.0	19.0	3.5	79.0
<b>Cumulative Pts</b>	1.5	12.0	20.5	25.0	42.5	56.5	75.5	79.0	79.0
AMATEUR	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	TOTAL:
<b>Starts</b>	26	26	23	17	15	19	14	8	148
<b>First</b>	0	3	5	2	4	2	3	1	20
<b>Second</b>	0	5	1	0	4	3	2	0	15
<b>Third</b>	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	0	13
<b>Fourth</b>	0	6	4	2	1	1	0	0	14
<b>Places</b>	1	15	12	7	12	8	6	1	62
<b>Jams</b>	6	3	4	4	1	6	3	0	27
<b># Finished</b>	7	18	16	11	13	14	9	1	89
<b>% Finished</b>	27%	69%	70%	65%	87%	74%	64%	13%	60%
<b>Amateur Points</b>	1.0	34.0	42.0	14.0	35.5	21.5	22.0	5.0	175.0
<b>Cumulative Pts</b>	1.0	35.0	77.0	91.0	126.5	148.0	170.0	175.0	175.0
ALL AGE	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974	1975	TOTAL:
<b>All Age By Year</b>	2.5	44.5	50.5	18.5	53.0	35.5	41.0	8.5	254.0
<b>Cumulative Total</b>	2.5	47.0	97.5	116.0	169.0	204.5	245.5	254.0	254.0

Owner: Lanse Brown  
 Birthdate: 8/23/65  
 13 Derby Points

Avg. Open Points per year: 10  
 Avg. Amateur pts per year: 22  
 Avg. All-Age pts per year: 32

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

in to hose out kennels and feed her. She was grateful to be adopted!"

Mariah was out of FC-AFC Mainliner Mike II and Black Brook Bartered Bride. "She was named for the hearses in the gangster era of Chicago that were called 'black mariahs' that went around, and they picked up the dead bodies," according to Lanse. "'Tigathoe' was Torch Flinn's kennel. 'Mainliner' came from John McAssey's kennel name."

Dana has a somewhat different recollection of how Mariah was named, acknowledging "I think it's hard dealing with two people's recollections of the same dog." She says 'Mariah' was chosen because the couple wanted her to run like the wind and because the song "They Call the Wind 'Mariah,'" which harkens back to the 1951 Broadway musical 'Paint your Wagon,' still was popular at the time. Including Tigathoe and Mainliner in her AKC name were requirements; so, Mariah was the only part of her name they got to choose.

Lanse had hunted ducks growing up. His family owned an island for relatives to go and hunt ducks, explains Dana. The birds were plentiful. "It was a cool lifestyle. Old-fashioned." The hunts were guided; "you sat there with your Thermos of coffee" as the family dogs, all Labs, did the retrieving. They ate the ducks for dinner. "It was very nice, down-to-earth, lovely. It was fun to go there, especially at Christmas time."

Later on, the couple tried hunting without dogs, in heavy cover.

"It's crazy when you think about it now - hunting on Long Island," Dana quips. Unfortunately, and fortuitously, so many of their birds drifted away that they decided they wanted a hunting dog of their own.

Lanse was an investment banker on Wall Street, and commuted by train with Augie Belmont, who owned Super Chief (1968 NFC, 1967-68 NAFC), among other retrievers. Lanse asked for his advice on finding a young dog who was immediately available and Augie referred the Browns to Torch.

Dana worked various temporary, part-time jobs, until becoming a housewife when their first son arrived in 1967. In addition to working in the fashion business and accounting for a garment district company, she edited cookbooks for a publishing company, most notably *The First Lady's Cookbook* by Jackie Kennedy, whom she met once.

"We would go to work at quarter of six in the morning and get home at 7 o'clock. So, we weren't home much," Lanse admits. "Mariah spent most of her youth at the estate out at Long Island. Dana and I had lots of fun throwing balls and sticks. Also, one of the things we used to do quite a bit with Mariah, and I've done with other puppies, is a lot of parlor tricks. We would hide things in the house. They'd smell 'em, and play with them. And then we'd go run around and hide 'em, and they'd have to go and find 'em. When they'd find 'em, they brought 'em back,



Sunrise outdoors

# That Mariah's quite a bitch

All Lanse Brown wanted out of his dog was that she retrieve ducks. Instead he ended up with the greatest bitch labrador of all time.

Brown's Tigathoe's Mainliner Mariah—just Mariah for short—has attained the status of the high point bitch of all-time, racking up more field trial points than any other.

But nine years ago, such an honor was the furthest thing from Brown's mind.

He was living on Long Island, juggling stocks and bonds on Wall Street, and his wife, Dana, was also working at the time.

Brown picked up Mariah for \$250 and also paid the price of a book called "Training Your Retriever" to teach his duck dog.

He almost let the prize slip through his fingers because he almost backed down on the deal because he didn't feel right about keeping the dog in a kennel while he and his wife worked.

But the dog eventually won out. A boat and his Long Island home were traded for a farm in New Jersey and the story of the dog which became both Field Champion and Amateur Field Champion began.

"I started training the dog but you've got to put in a lot of time," Brown said. "With my work Dana began training also and before I

knew it she became a better trainer and handler than I was."

Mariah was a natural, Brown said, "talk about serendipity and running on the right track."

Her field trial points began to mount and her performances became finer and finer.

Then disaster struck in 1971. Mariah's cruciate ligament broke in one leg and then in the other.

Baling wire was inserted to make it possible for the dog to walk again but Brown said he was told "She'd never run again much less work in a field trial."

That was 120 points ago and the bitch still is working and winning.

Just two weeks ago at Pocatello, Idaho, when Dana was handling Mariah, the dog won both the open and amateur—doubleheader sweep comparable to someone batting .800 in major league baseball.

And, that from a dog that's nine years old—an advanced age for any dog.

But, four years ago at the Open National Field Trial in St. Louis, Sister, another of Brown's dogs won champion honors.

This year the Open is in St. Louis again and Brown is hoping for a repeat performance

with Mariah.

Brown, who owns the Coca Cola plant in Kalispell, said he isn't sure when he'll retire Mariah from field trials.

"A lot of people wish I'd retire her now. But I'll retire her when she's hurting and it's not any more fun for her."

• • •

Mariah's retirement and subsequent interment was nearly a certainty Friday and it was me who almost caused it.

It happened as Brown and I were walking down a road on the Retriever Club grounds to set up a picture to run with this piece.

Brown was directing Mariah to a place I figured would make a good rustic shot—grass, reeds, and a few cattails—when as the dog was about to sit a rapid "BZZZZZ" was heard.

Immediately I shouted "Rattlesnake!" as I saw the coiled reptile in the grass.

Brown ordered the dog out quickly and the field champion escaped unscathed.

And as you can see—the picture was eventually taken on the less than rustic dirt road.

—Mark Henckel

and then they got a cookie, Milk Bone. This is part of bringing a puppy up. Also, three, four hundred dollars worth of recharging cords for our phones, or our GPSs, or Ipads. But, that's the fun of the sport, and that's a part of the beauty of the sport."

"Somebody told us then about a field trial and that maybe we both ought to go and see the Belmonts, Augie and Louise, who were to become, and will be forever, my mentors. We were hunting and drove over with Mariah, who was around one year old. At that time, Super Chief was there."

Mariah's foray into the field trial world was inauspicious. "Augie threw a pigeon for the dog. Mariah didn't seem to pay much attention. Augie said he didn't think she'd make it," recalls Lanse.

"Mariah wasn't very interested at all," Dana agrees. "Augie said, 'I'm so sorry. She just doesn't seem to have the stuff.'"

Undaunted, the couple decided to figure things out for themselves. "I bought James Lamb Free's book *Training Your Retriever* and

started on page 1," says Dana. Mariah was the first Lab she ever trained; but, she was not new to dog training. "I always trained every

“Many of the best things in life don't start out as planned.”

house dog that we owned, as a kid." Some were shown. "I used to train anything I could, cats, dogs, and birds, actually. I always had that feeling that I always knew what they were thinking." Although there had been an as-

sortment of breeds, none were hunting dogs. When their time came to puppy-up, Lanse and Dana didn't consider any breed other than a Lab, because their experience hunting had been solely with Labs. "It was the natural choice," says Dana.

"We took James Lamb Free's book and a couple of others. We started to read and do what they said to do," Lanse continues. As it came on, it was probably, oh, maybe four or five or six weeks, and this dog was just doing everything. As a matter of fact, somebody said, 'You better get another dog. You're gonna wear that one out.' So we did, we repeated and repeated. Which is something I still do in my training today."

In 1966, Lanse took Mariah to a trial in Connecticut because it was near his hometown. "We did everything the books told us to do. My G-d, when it was all over, we had a green ribbon!" Mariah earned her first Judges Award of Merit at thirteen months.

"That was probably the best ribbon I ever



Gazette photo by Mark Henckel

Lanse Brown and Mariah— after the snake scare

got,” says Dana. “It was so exciting to get that green ribbon!”

With this initial accomplishment, “I vowed I wouldn’t go to any more trials,” Lanse recalls. That plan didn’t last long. Not yet terminally infected by the field trial bug, Lanse fought with himself. “We’re not going to go to trials. I am *not* going to leave Long Island. Oh sh-t. Ok. Ok. I will not leave New York State. Well, you know, Buffalo’s only about nine hours and that’s half a case of beer, just one way. Anyhow, so there it was. There was a trial in Westchester in November 1966 and then we went to Westchester again in April of ’67. Mariah was getting pretty damn good. So, I ran another trial. And, it just goes on. So, you know, you get hooked, and that’s it.”

Nearly *fifty* years later, Lanse continues to run field trials, despite major health challenges. His name appears in the Performance Books perhaps more than any other amateur handler. He has become an icon in our sport, inarguably is a colorful character, and sometimes, he is rumored to be someone

he is not. “It’s like these people all say I’m Buster Brown,” Lanse himself cites as just one case in point. “They all know. Buster Brown. One hundred and thirteen years old. Buster Brown. Four foot, seven. Buster Brown. Yup, that’s me. They like to talk.”

There is quite a lot of fact behind the erroneous Buster Brown fixation with Lanse. “Buster Brown was a real person. The Buster Brown, ‘with the Dutch Boy hairdo,’ was an ancestor of Lanse’s,” Dana explains. Lanse’s maternal grandfather was part of a large shoe family. When Lanse’s mother Betsy married into the Brown family, “it was like the merger of two big shoe families.” Betsy later divorced and married into the Barney family, of Smith-Barney fame.

Eventually, Lanse and Dana moved their family and Lanse commuted to Wall Street by bus instead of train. After seeing an advertisement for a Coca-Cola bottling plant in Kalispell, Montana, Lanse shifted professional gears and the family moved there. Contrary to some popular rumors, Lanse was not a

Coca-Cola tycoon, says Dana, mentioning that he did quite well on Wall Street.

“A key point is that Mariah was raised and trained by amateurs. It should be very clearly apparent that Mariah was basically trained by Dana, and the credit she deserves for that role has never fully been acknowledged, I don’t think. Dana did all of the training of Mariah. The times I trained Mariah, relative to the times Dana did, was ten percent. Augie and I traveled on Friday nights together to different trials, by plane. Dana and Louise Belmont, with whom Dana trained every day, also were at the trials, wherever they were.”

Dana says that she and Louise became buddies. “We ran our husbands’ dogs on Friday when they were working. They would run on Saturday and Sunday.”

“I learned so much from Augie Belmont,” adds Lanse. “He was such a very, very sensible, prudent man. For example, one time, we were training before a National. We’d thrown a bird. We’d retired into the woods. And, there’s a big cow plop. There’s all these green flies eating this fresh, green cow plop. And, Augie said to me, ‘Lanse, it’s amazing. Those flies have a lifetime of one week. Seven days. Their entire life. It’s right there. When the life cycle goes that short, it’s really amazing. Come to think of it, if we’d eat that, we’d probably be dead in seven days, too.’”

“I would say that two of the advantages Mariah had were the individual attention from Louise Belmont, and Dana’s knack, feel, for training dogs. Dana had one skill that I have tried to develop that’s been conditioned. She knew how to handle the problem before the problem arose. And, this is instantaneous. So many people press a button, yell ‘no,’ the dog pops and they burn the dog. What the hell are you doing? You’re burning the dog to sit. Well, you’ve got to pre-plan. At least I do. Mentally.”

“Mariah was trained by the ‘library.’ So, when Mariah ended up finally, winning an Open, and beating Mi-Cris Sailor (1971 NFC) and Soupy (Super Chief) and a couple of other National Champions, there’s a picture of my ex-wife Dana in tears, with me and Mariah accompanying the article in the *Washington Post*. That was one of the highlights because I had had six 2nd Places in the Open in eight trials behind Super Chief.”

“Now, you know, I don’t mind competition,” Lanse continues. “That’s what life is about. But, when it’s dominated.... My G-d, we finally got our nose up, and off we went.

“Suddenly after four years, I had an FC-AFC. Now, this dog had lived in the

Continued on page 64

Continued from page 29

house, once we got one of us living at home. Mariah slept in the bed. She was completely fed on Purina Chow. As Dana said, many times, she was a great dog, *despite us*.”

“Mariah had the advantage of very, very good training. At that time, the sport was being advanced by Rex Carr,” a historically pivotal professional trainer. “Somehow the Belmonts got us talked into going out to Rex’s. Dana took Mariah, because I was working. Rex eventually commented to me, ‘Lanse, you leave all the training to Dana? And, you do all the handling? You’re a better handler than she is, and she’s a better trainer than you.’”

“In his own ubiquitous way, Rex talked Dana into putting Mariah on the collar (electronic collar.) Mariah was never force-fetched. She was never a dog to be beaten or burned severely. I say that because Mariah didn’t have collar conditioning when she was a puppy. I’m not saying that was good, bad. I’m just saying that was a very interesting factor, and it’s something I’ve gone back and put into my training, as weak as it is, because of my damn health. I’ve got dogs now that are being trained in many of the ways that Mariah was. I think there’s a great deal to be said for that method of training.”

“Rex would take twenty-eight dogs to a National that had eighty. It was always me at the end of the pile. We were always the last ones in the caravan. In fact, Warren Grimsby (a retired pro trainer) said at one trial, ‘Hey, you’re really doing well! First day, you were twenty-second car in the line. Now, you’re second.’”

“I said, ‘Yeah, but I’m the only one back.’ I realized that, in Rex’s training group, as you get called back and you get dropped, you move up or back in the traffic line. I’d never quite thought of it that way before.”

“The mark of a great dog is one that qualifies every year for the National, according to Rex. That man has formulated all of my thinking. One time Rex said, ‘How many trials did you run, Lanse?’ I said thirty-one. ‘And you had what?’ I said, I ran thirty-one trials and I had fifty-two points. ‘If you had run twenty-one trials, you woulda had forty-five points.’ Too many trials break down training. What I am alluding to is that we never honored that. I mean, I’m so compulsive, that even now when I am entering trials and having to scratch because of the fatigue factor and collapsing, because I have no stamina, we didn’t think anything of running four trials in three weeks. Mariah held

up magnificently. I would say that probably if you feel that a dog has the potential, at thirteen points, pull it. And many people in this day and age do.”

### Working with Mariah

“I loved that dog! She was my first wonderful dog. Mariah was quite stylish and fast,” yet, she was “a rugged, large female,” in Dana’s view. “Heavy cover or the elements didn’t affect her much. She was probably between seventy and seventy-five pounds, and not all that chunky. She looked more like a male.”

“Mariah had a slight creeping problem, which was not a big deal in those days. Super Chief had a big creeping problem. It’s amazing what was acceptable in those days. It was a small world,” comments Dana.

“We worked on the creeping. She’d behave herself in training. We didn’t have electric collars until well into Mariah’s career, and I don’t recall ever using them on her. We did use them on the dogs that came after Mariah. It was primitive training, really. She was obedient in training and especially obedient on water blinds, because she had been blasted off every piece of land in sight.”

But, that Mariah’s water reliability only happened after Lanse and Dana had trouble keeping her off points, spits and islands, recalls Dana. “The winning dog didn’t touch any land doing water blinds.” So, they took her to professional trainer Ed Carey’s kennel for help. “Ed taught me how to keep the dog off land by shooting her with different sizes of shotgun shells. That was the awful, primitive part. We never blasted her. It took a lot of expertise,” Dana emphasizes. The shot sizes varied with how far away the dog was, and the dog could not be looking at you. When Mariah was taken to be OFAd, they could see that she was full of pellets, which was not an uncommon circumstance of the time.

Dana believes that using the e-collar, despite its initial flaws, would have been a lot more ‘humane.’ “The original collars were pretty crude, and they’d go off. They were one intensity, either on or off. They would get stuck, such as when a plane flew over. You would have the dog sit and then take the collar off.” Shortcomings aside, “We all just jumped on that bandwagon because it made so much sense.”

Life was not a bed of roses for Mariah nor for Ed while they were together. At home, Mariah slept in Lanse and Dana’s bed. When they left Mariah with Ed, it was with the stipulation that she live with him in his house. “No dogs got to stay in his house except his Jack Russell. Mariah took a dump in Ed’s liv-

ing room every day. He couldn’t prevent it or catch her.”

Mariah was the only dog of Lanse and Dana’s that slept on their bed. “She was not a lovey, dovey dog and was a bit on the aloof side; but, she was devoted to me and Lanse.” This translated into better performance, according to Dana, as Mariah was primarily trained by her, with Ed’s help, Louise’s advice and some input from Rex Carr, to whom Louise had introduced her. “She was not hard to train. I don’t know why she became the wonderful dog that she was. She was a wonderful all round dog. I think it was just personal attachment.”

An assistant to Lanse and Dana in the early ‘70s, Frank Baird, refers to that time as “the beginning of the training evolution that we enjoy today. Most of the innovation came from Rex Carr and Lanse and Dana were one of the couriers of that system and approach which was displayed by their dogs Mariah, Jill and Paint and many more as Lanse continued to keep coming up with really good dogs. I have been amazed how he’s been able to change through the years by advancing his handling skills.”

“I remember Mariah as a stately, beautiful, gentle dog outside competition; but, when the birds fell, she was a smart and cunning predator, and her record says that. Among her many qualities she could lay down a perfect channel blind, which was the test of that time, and usually the last series.”

Frank remembers the unique ritual after Mariah’s successful trials. “After the blue ribbon was given, Mariah and Lanse would do a little kissing, then go to the local Taste Freeze and share a double ice cream cone. Truly a beautiful relationship between man and animal.”

“Amateurs that trained dogs in those days had a big advantage,” Dana wholeheartedly believes. Pros often worked on one estate and had strings of sometimes fifteen dogs. The owners hardly ever practiced with their dogs at all. Amateur-trained dogs had the advantage. Amateurs also began to run in Opens. Beginning in the ‘60s, women handled dogs, too. The pros were all clubby. And, there would be Louise and me. We started to get ribbons and be successful. It was really fun.” ■

*This feature story of “Retrievers of the Past” will be continued in a future issue.*

### Tenacular Dogs – Joule Charney

Joule resides in Paradise, California. Joule has been a contributing writer for Retriever News for six 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](http://www.tenacular.com).