

1992

1957 and 1959 National Field Champion
Spirit Lake Duke



DOB: June 21, 1953

(**Sire:** Prairie Creek Farm ex **Dam:** Random Lake Black Ghost)
Owned by: Edith and George Murnane

When a Retriever qualifies for the National Championship at age 3-1/2 years and becomes a Finalist against the best in the country, you cannot help but sit up and take notice – this was at Weldon Springs, Missouri in November, 1956. When he won in 1957 (at Bombay Hook, Maryland) was again a Finalist in 1958 and became a two-time Winner by taking top honors in 1959, there is no denying the quality and greatness of a dog.

FC - 1957 and 1959 National Champion - Spirit Lake Duke, black Labrador male, (Smudge of Prairie Creek Farm ex Random Lake Black Ghost, 6-21-53,) proved himself worthy of all the praise that may be heaped upon him. Only two other Retrievers have repeated a win in the National Championship – Shed of Arden and King Buck. Whether or not Duke ever runs again, he joins the ranks of Retriever immortals – a great dog.

“Duke” ran a splendid trial. While it is undoubtedly true, he did not beat every dog in every test, his consistency and overall performance averaged him above the field, and it is overall average that wins trials.

Joe Schomer did a fine job of handling. He and Duke were a tough team to beat and Duke proved to be a wonderful competitor for his owners Edith and George Murnane. Duke had also qualified for 1961-'63 National Championships. He completed six series in 1961 and was not shown to have competed in '62 and '63.

*Contributed to The Retriever News.com by Richard Halstead, Lino Lakes, Minnesota.
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and the statistics are from Retriever Field Trial Statistics 1941-1993, by Sue Reynolds.)*