

2004

Sig Vilagi

In the early 1960's, Sig imported a female yellow Lab from Canada named Aerco's Bit O' Honey, and with the help of the James Lamb Free Book on Retrievers, he started training for field trials and was hooked. After some success in derby stakes, Aerco's Bit O' Honey graduated to all-age work, and was qualified for an Amateur National Stake. Later on, though, she was diagnosed with heartworms, was treated with the arsenic injection, but lost her stamina and was retired as a house pet.

Mr. Vilagi later acquired from Robert Rovelstad a male black Lab pup, that was sired by River Oaks Corky. The dog was named Les Coup De Grace, and turned out to be a great competitor with a total of 85 all-age points. He also earned FC, AFC, and CFC titles, qualifying for 4 Amateur Nationals, 2 Nationals, and was a finalist at one. The dog also qualified for 2 Canadian Nationals and a finalist in one.

Another great highflying female pup was acquired from Charlie and Jan Bunn, and was named Hillock's Spice. She had a great derby youth, qualifying for 3 Amateur Nationals, was a finalist in the Canadian Nationals in 1992, and was a Double Header winner the same year. She totaled out with 38 all-age points.

At present, Mr. Vilagi has two young prospects that have a lot of promise: Hillock's Liberty Freedom, a female black Lab, with 18 Derby points in 2003, and Calumets Speed Demon, a 12-month old male yellow Lab. Mr. Vilagi has worked at several National Trials and served on several committees, and as past President and Field Trial Chairman of the Madison Retriever Club, has judged over 100 All-age stakes, with the honor of also judging the 1976 National Amateur Trial.

Mr. Vilagi says that 1998 was a sad year for him, in which he lost his wife, Mary, to cancer in May of that year. He says what keeps him going is getting out with his Labs on a daily basis, because they are such great company for him. He also states how fortunate he is for having good friends for training partners and he's thankful for the people that he's met over the years, and how he's made friends with them in the dog game. He wants to thank everyone who voted for him to be in the Retriever Hall of Fame. As he states, "Quite an Honor".