



“The Versa-Tell”

Steve Waters: VCDKK Photo Contest Winner

Special points of interest:

- Photo Contest Winner
- President Report
- Treasurers Report
- Pet Poisoning Article From ASPCA Website Submitted By: Gabe Lasala

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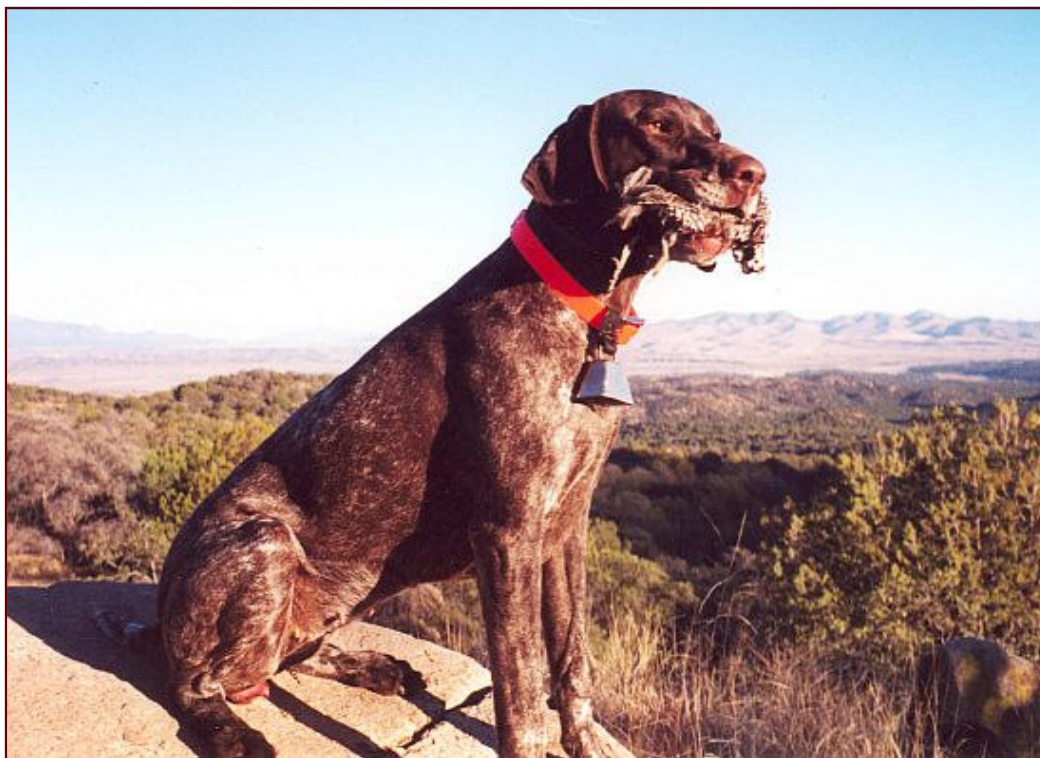
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This is Hella vom Salzburg high atop Dager Peak in Arizona during a successful Gamble’s quail hunt. Submitted by: Steve Waters, Iowa (See Steve’s note on page 21)

From the President

Our Club is growing with a significant increase in American and Canadian members. This is very encouraging and speaks well of the efforts contributed by the Officers, Directors and members of our Club.

We remain true to the principle’s regards the breed program which was the catalyst for the formation of the VCDKK in the first place. We’ve also created an environment of tolerance and respect for others. A positive and enjoyable atmosphere is always the key to success.

I have been President for well over two years elected by Directors through succession on an emergency basis. I have seen dedicated and concentrated effort provide direction and I feel a very successful and positive transition from what we

From the President

(Continued from page 1)

what we were to what we are now. We've learned a lot together and I am pleased I could contribute to that. But it's always about the members and what they want and I've always tried to be responsive to that.

I also believe there should be renewal in that new ideas and energy comes from change of leadership. In the main I've served to accomplish what now has been achieved. We've transitioned successfully and there is no longer a leadership vacuum. An orderly transition of the Presidency to new leadership is in my opinion in the best interest of the club.

Our bylaws require elections and I believe that should occur. The question is when and the ability to finance that activity. At present our finances are fragile and needed to finance critical club activities.

It is not my intention nor will I resign. I will after proper consultation and planning step aside to allow new leadership which I believe every organization needs for renewal. It has been and is a pleasure to contribute to the growth and success of our Club.

Thank you for the privilege

Ken Elliott
President
VCDKK



Top: Ajax vom Niemen
Bottom: Ken Elliotts girl:
"Penny vom Niemen".
Wow! What an excellent photo!

"We remain true to the principal's regards the breed program which was the catalyst for the formation of the VCDKK in the first place."

From the Vice President/Director of Testing

Greetings VCDKK Members,

It was good to see everyone who attended the Annual Meeting in Casco, Michigan last month. It was a very enjoyable and educational weekend that included a Derby test, an informal membership meeting, and a Tracking seminar.

The tracking seminar presented by our VDD-GNA friends, Marty Ryan and Bill English, was excellent, and I would encourage everyone to attend one of their seminars if you have the opportunity.

I want to personally thank Gabe and Teresa LaSala for graciously hosting the event. The food, drinks, camaraderie, and hospitality were absolutely fantastic. I came away from the weekend in Michigan with a very positive feeling about the future of the VCDKK.

Although a small club we certainly have a very dedicated group of members. Our strength is in our members and members being active in the club. I encourage each and every one of you to become active in the club, and participate in club activities whenever you can.

Congratulations to our newly appointed Secretary, Mario Polsinelli, and to our new Merchandise Coordinator, Hans Henoch. Thank you for accepting these positions.

The VCDKK sponsored two Derby tests this spring with seven young DK's being tested.

The first test was located in Casco, Michigan and was coordinated by Mario Polsinelli. The second test was located in Howell, Utah and was coordinated by Karre Leishman.

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate all of you who ran your young DK's in a Derby test this spring.

Testing your dog not only provided valuable information for the breeder of your dog, but more importantly preparing your dog for the Derby was the first step in the development of a great versatile hunting dog. I encourage you to take the next step and prepare your dogs for this falls Solms test.

Remember, the future of the DK is dependent on our commitment to train, test, hunt and breed our dogs. You will find the results of this springs Derby's on the website under the "Test Results Page".

Feel free to contact me if you have any questions about testing, or the test regulations. A current test schedule is available on our website.

Deutsch Kurzhaar Voran!

Dan Arndt

"Although a small club we certainly have a very dedicated group of members"



"Remember, the future of the DK is dependent on our commitment to train, test, hunt and breed our

Got Photos?

We are looking for some great new photos to spruce up the VCDKK website. If you have great photos of your DK in action please e-mail them to Gary Fleming:

vectortfl@comcast.net

From the Treasurer

Dear Members,

Hope everyone is having a great year. I have a new pup, Hannibal Vom Sparta and he's a handful. I'm also in the process of training my older dog for VGP this fall, hopefully things will go well.

This May we held the 2nd Annual meeting for our club in Pasco, Michigan. It was an excellent meeting and everything went well.

On Saturday at the Annual meeting we held a Derby in which three dogs ran. Sunday a blood tracking seminar was held by Marty Ryan and Bill English. Proceeds from the seminar went to Bill, Marty, and food cost for the weekend.

I would like to thank those people who helped make the weekend a success; my wife Teresa, my Mother, Lori Polsinelli, Mario Polsinelli, and little Gabe. If there's anyone I forgot be sure you were much appreciated as well.

The following is a brief synopsis of our current financial position. A detailed spread sheet showing our expenditures and current financial status can be seen on the following page.

Testing:

This year the VCDKK held two spring tests; one in Casco, Michigan and one in Howell, Utah .

We had seven paid entries and the club took in \$525.00. Our test expenses came out to \$355.56 for a profit for tests of \$169.44. I have to let you know the profit was due to generous donations from various people including:

Dan Arndt—airplane ticket to Utah, Karre Leishman— game birds for test, Ken Hardman— mileage, Big Gabe and Mario Polsinelli— judges meals and poppers, Marty Ryan, Bill English and Dave Peasley all contributed mileage.

I would like to thank everyone for their generosity.

Membership:

We presently have 36 voting members and four non voting members. 31 are paid regular 1 paid associate, and one paid life member. All other members were given membership from various donations, and late renewals from last year. By the time this is printed we will likely have more members.

Merchandise:

We currently have shirts and hats available, pricing and photos will be listed on website shortly. Zucht Buchs (Breed Books) are not available at this time for 2008. Unfortunately they were lost in the mailing system from Germany. There are still a few 2006 and 2007 available. The price is \$ 22.00 plus shipping. Email big Gabe at gabriellasala1@earthlink.net if you're interested.

From the Treasurer**(continued from page 4)****Test Directors:**

We need test expense reports sent back as soon as possible after the test. In addition, for those of you planning to coordinate a test, it is a must you get with Dan Arndt and myself so we can come up with a financial plan that best suites your needs.

Canadian Membership:

All Canadian members entry fees and membership due's must be paid in American funds it is best if you get a money order. Last year the club had a deficit of \$154.00 because of improper payment due to uncalculated exchange rates.

Conclusion:

We are moving along at a steady pace, all are bills are paid and up to date. One thing that I can't stress more, is that we could use more involvement from the members. If you have any ideas or interest please contact one of the board members and we can get you involved.

I have attached a copy of 2009 financial report from January 2009 till June 2009. If u have any questions please be free to call or email me. Have a great summer and good luck with your fall training.

Thanks,

Gabriel Lasala, Treasurer



“One thing that I can't stress more, is that we could use more involvement from the members. If you have any ideas or interest please contact one of the board members and we can get you involved. “

From the Treasurer**(continued from page 5)****Financial Report - V.C.D.K.K. - 2009****Membership Dues**

Regular Members	- 31 X \$ 75.00	= \$ 2,325.00	
Associate Members	- 1 X \$ 25.00	= \$ 25.00	
Paid Life Members	- 1 X \$ 400.00	= \$ 400.00	(+ \$ 300.00 web donation)
Blatter	- 5 X \$ 15.00	= \$ 75.00	
		Total = \$ 2,825.00	\$ 2,825.00

V.C.D.K.K. Bills

J.G.H.V, D.K.V. dues, & 1 st . Blatter	= \$ (1,040.00)	
Hats & Tshirts	= \$ (849.17)	
	Total = \$ (1,889.17)	\$ (1,889.17)

Hats, Tshirts & Zucht Books Sold

Camo Hat	- 6 X \$ 22.00	= \$ 132.00	
Green Hat	- 4 X \$ 15.00	= \$ 60.00	
XL Shirts	- 3 X \$ 15.00	= \$ 45.00	
XXL Shirts	- 1 X \$ 17.00	= \$ 17.00	
Zucht Books	- 1 X \$ 20.00	= \$ 20.00	
		Total = \$ 274.00	\$ 274.00

Test Entries Spring Derby

Paid Entries	- 7 X \$ 75.00	= \$ 525.00	
		Total = \$ 525.00	\$ 525.00

Test Expenses

Casco, Michigan	= \$ (182.00)	
Howell, Utah	= \$ 0.00	
	Total = \$ (182.00)	\$ (182.00)

Judges Expenses

Casco, Michigan	= \$ 0.00	
Howell, Utah	= \$ (173.58)	
	Total = \$ (173.58)	\$ (173.58)

Cash on Hand	\$ 1,379.25
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From the Breed Warden/Great Lakes Director

Dear Kurzhaar Friends:

Hope everyone enjoyed the spring testing season. As a group we traveled to many testing venues and enjoyed the company of versatile dog enthusiasts. The spring started for me in Marysville Ohio for Yola's VJP. Our host was Dan Crusey of VDD GNA. Dan is a Ohio DNR officer. The grounds were excellent and we enjoyed wonderful hospitality.

We packed up the dogs and headed to Muskegon, MI. for the NADKC Annual Meeting Zuchtschau. The hospitality again was excellent and we shared many conversations regarding the dogs with the knowledgeable members.

While there we experienced great success with 2 dogs from our group receiving V1. Congratulations to Pat Reilly/Maria Lemmermoehle(Breeder) and Acer(Don vom Holtvogt) for receiving V1 male at the Breed Show! Congratulations to Heath Grewell/Dan Arndt (Breeder) and Anna vom Nordstern for receiving V1 female at the breed show! Congratulations also to Mario Polsinelli on receiving his first V with Cathy vom Holtvogt!

Last but not least, we finally got to stay home for our VCDKK Annual Meeting/Derby/Tracking Seminar in Casco, MI. Big thank you to Big Gabe LaSala and Mario Polsinelli for sharing the responsibility of that event; couldn't do any of this with out you guys!

We spent all of our time in and around the home of Nino LaSala. Thank You!! The food, comradery and grounds are always the best. His home is always open to VCDKK members.

The derby went with out a hitch with all dogs receiving



Special Guest at VCDKK Annual Mtg: L-R, Mario Polsinelli, Little Gabe LaSala, Sian and her Short haired Teckel, Dan Arndt, Big Gabe with Cita.

prizes. Many thanks to our judges Dave Peasley, Marty Ryan, Bill English and Apprentice Steve Waters.

We had a very special guest: "Sian and her Teckel."

To see those little dogs accomplish all the very same tasks as our DK's was a true testament to the German hunting, testing, and breeding system.

Sian: Thanks for coming out and we hope to see you and your Teckels again soon.



Derby 2009

Judges: L-R, Marty Ryan, Steve Waters, Dave Peasley and Bill English.

Breed Wardens Report (continued from page 7)

A Big Thanks to Marty Ryan and Bill English for holding the tracking seminar as always, they share their great knowledge with us!



Left: Pat Reilly (VCDKK Member) with Ace (Don vom Holtvogt) V1 adult class male. Congrats Pat!

Breed Wardens Report: We recently added tattoo administrators to the website. If you're interested in learning how to tattoo please feel free to contact me. We have all the necessary forms for breeding qualifications; also for litter and kennel registration.

I'm just a telephone call away for any questions. If you're interested in a breed book background checks for possible breeding, my door is always open. Still learning but willing to do my best!

Summer is upon us and training for the fall test weighs heavy on many minds. Consider this an open invitation to train here in MI. We are always training and trying to improve our dogs; all members and friends are welcome.

We will be holding a VGP Seminar, given by Fred Turjan of VDD GNA this July 25-26 2009 in and around Casco, MI. Please feel free to come. We will be accepting donations to cover expenses and help the club.

We continue to trade knowledge with the VDDGNA and luckily continue to have their support.

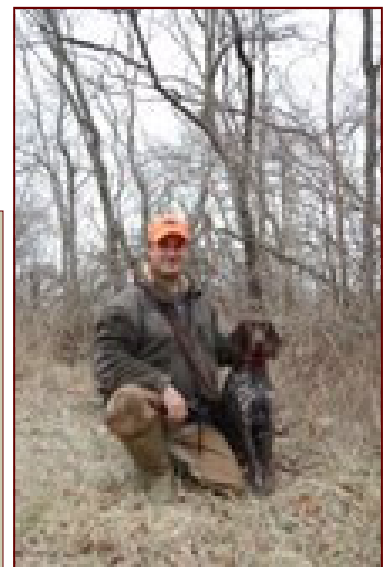
Thanks to all VDD members that share their vast knowledge and help us grow as handlers!

Thank You to all the members who have persevered

and remained in the VCDKK. We are improving and continue to survive. Our commitment to have an ethical and moral group of DK enthusiasts continues to prosper.

A great club has honorable members even if small in quantity. Thanks to the members, the dogs, our breed, is of the utmost importance, and this group strives to have the best interest of the DK and versatile breeds at Heart.

DK Voran,
Little Gabriel LaSala



Right: Little Gabe and Yola vom Bieberstein at VJP in Marysville, OH.



Above: Cathy vom Holtvogt and Cita vom Holtvogt pointing a bird after the VCDKK Derby in Casco, MI.

From the Southeast Director/News Letter Editor

Greetings fellow Hunters,

It's hot down my way this time of year and we've had several days in the 100 degree range. It's an important time to remind ourselves that dogs don't take to hot weather, and need to be well hydrated, and never over worked in the warm summer months.

When attending a seminar on dog performance presented at the GNA annual meeting a couple of years ago, I learned that adding extra fat to a dog's diet helps the dog stay hydrated. Unlike muscle cells, fat cells hold more water. Additional fat in a dogs diet will help it build fat cells.

With respect to our club, this year has been very productive. We've made significant progress with respect to building the necessary team and established a foundation for future growth. I would like to personally thank those that have stepped up to help out.

My role this year has been to get our website in order and try and keep it updated. We've made some progress, but still need to make some additions. Our plan is to add separate pages for our breeders and our judges so that they can access the information they need in a more user friendly manner.

In addition, this is the 2nd publication of the "Versa-Tell" this year, and I would like to thank everyone that contributed. In the future, it would be great to here from some of our newer members about their testing and training experiences. Every one is welcome to contribute to the Versa-Tell.

A special congratulations to Steve Waters for winning the "Photo Contest" this issue. I received several great photos for the contest but Steve's photo of Hella was outstanding.

I've held several training days in the Florida Pan-

handle this year and even though we only have two members down this way, those training days were fun and successful.

The DD folks in my area have attended as well, so we usually have at least 5 or 6 handlers and dogs. At this point the weather forces us to focus primarily on water work.

On a personal level, I've been spending a significant amount of time writing a step by step training book with illustrations. Eventually it will be accessible to members via my kennel website, but since it's not complete yet, that section of my web site is password protected.

I plan to make that section available to all of our members when the book is completed. I think it will be helpful to all versatile dog handlers and I've set it up so that it follows each test and test subject in the same way each is presented in the DKV and JGHV rule books.

Getting back to club business, it's important for all of us to remember that our club will prosper only if we take the time to participate even when it's not convenient. Though we always want to cooperate with other groups, we can not afford to ride the coat tails of other organizations. Our goal should be to gain the respect that we deserve by building a club we can all be proud of.

For that reason, as we move forward it's important that each of us makes an effort to host more training days, coordinate more VCDKK tests, and steer our hunting friends toward puppies produced in our system.

Together I believe we can make this club a success!

Waidmannsheil,

Gary Fleming

From the Secretary/Director at Large

Greetings to all fellow VCDKK members,

I hope all of you have been enjoying your DK's as much as I have!

A friend told me, as you make progress with your dog, each test becomes more addicting. I have to say he is absolutely correct.

I had the honor of coordinating my first spring Derby test this past May. It was a real learning experience! I would like to thank everyone who participated that weekend. I would especially like to thank the following Judges: Senior Judge Dave Peasley, Marty Ryan, and Bill English.

A special thanks to our host (big) Gabe and Teresa Lasala and his parents for opening their home to us and preparing all the wonderful food.

A few months back I, respectfully, accepted the position of Secretary for our club. I will do my best to perform all the duties this job entails.

Our club has seen many changes in the past few years. I am confident with our current administrative group we have established a solid foundation for the continued well-being of our Club.

This is the time of year that many of us are preparing for a fall test. I wish everyone the best of luck.

Thank you,

Mario Polsinelli, Secretary



Mario Polsinelli and Cathy vom Holtvoght

Kathy received a V1 at the Annual Meeting

From the Western Region Director

Hello to you all from the West.

Our small group of dedicated hunters and dog trainers is growing.

We had a successful spring derby in May.

Thanks to Dan Ardnt for his willingness and time to come out here and judge for us. We had four dogs run and all of them did very well; three prize one's, and one prize two.

Congratulations to all dogs and handlers.

We have no fall testing plans at this time, so please contact me if you are interested in a test.

As a club we are determined to test dogs, so even if our numbers out west are small, we will do our best to host a test for you or help you find a local test to be a part of.

Even though we don't have a scheduled test, we will be holding training days. Please contact me and we will schedule training days around your needs.

Thanks for your support,

What to do if your Dog is poisoned**Submitted by: Gabe Lasala (ASPCA Web Article)**

Don't panic! Rapid response is important, but panicking can interfere with the process of helping your pet.

Take 30 to 60 seconds to safely collect and have at hand any material involved. This may be of great benefit to your vet and/or APCC toxicologists, as they determine what poison or poisons are involved. In the event that you need to take your pet to a local veterinarian, be sure to take the product's container with you. Also, collect in a sealable plastic bag any material your pet may have vomited or chewed.

If you witness your pet consuming material that you suspect might be toxic, do not hesitate to seek emergency assistance, even if you do not notice any adverse effects. Sometimes, even if poisoned, an animal may appear normal for several hours or for days after the incident.

Call the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center

The telephone number is (888) 426-4435. There is a \$60 consultation fee for this service.

Be ready with the following information:

- The species, breed, age, sex, weight and number of animals involved;

What to do if your Dog is poisoned**(Continued from page 11)**

- The animal's symptoms;
- Information regarding the exposure, including the agent (if known), the amount of the agent involved and the time elapsed since the time of exposure;

Have the product container/packaging available for reference.

Please note: If your animal is having seizures, losing consciousness, is unconscious or is having difficulty breathing, telephone ahead and bring your pet immediately to your local veterinarian or emergency veterinary clinic. If necessary, he or she may call the APCC.

Be Prepared:

Keep the telephone number of the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center—(888) 426-4435—as well as that of your local veterinarian, in a prominent location.

Invest in an emergency first-aid kit for your pet. The kit should contain:

- A fresh bottle of hydrogen peroxide, 3 percent USP (to induce vomiting);
- A turkey baster, bulb syringe, or large medicine syringe (to administer peroxide);
- Saline eye solution;
- Artificial tear gel (to lubricate eyes after flushing);
- Mild grease-cutting dishwashing liquid (for bathing an animal after skin contamination);
- Forceps (to remove stingers);
- A muzzle (to protect against fear- or excitement-induced biting);
- A can of your pet's favorite wet food;
- A pet carrier;
- Always consult a veterinarian or the APCC for directions on how and when to use any emergency first-aid item.

A Steadiness to Wing and Shot Training Method**by: Gary Fleming**

Before getting into the training methods for steadiness to wing, shot and fall, it's important that the handler has an understanding of why they should follow each step and what dog behaviors and instincts need to be squelched when training for steadiness. Consider what instincts the dog possesses that must be enhanced too. With those two contrasting needs in mind, consider the following three concepts:

Three Important Concepts:

1. We clearly want to enhance the dog's instinct to point feathered game with an emphasis on prolonging the duration of the point.
2. We must overcome the dog's prey drive and instinct to jump in and pounce on game.
3. Finally, we must control the dog's prey driven instinct to chase.

Why must you train to prolong and enhance the dog's instinct to point? The obvious answer is that you want the dog to remain in place until you've time to move in and flush game for the shot. If you're not in control of the flush, then your chances of a successful shot are greatly diminished. The dog should remain in place, regardless of any reasonable amount of time it takes you to get to the dogs location, and flush the bird yourself.

In order to create the desired affect, the dog mustn't think that it can catch birds. It must believe that if it moves after sufficiently scenting the game bird, the bird will flush and be gone immediately. Just as importantly, the dog must learn that to move after sufficiently scenting the bird is disobedient.

Why must you train to overcome the dog's instinct to jump in and pounce on the game? If the dog jumps in, the game will flush before you can get in shooting range, or even worse; the dog will catch the game. Neither of those events is the desirable scenario. The dog must learn that it is disobedient to jump in.

Why must you train the dog to stay put at the location of the flush whether a gun is fired or not? So if you miss the bird, the dog stays put when the bird you missed flies away. The dog shouldn't chase or move on until you command it. Any other scenario will mean that you'll spend valuable hunting time trying to follow or collect your dog and reroute it.

Also, the dog must stay put when you shoot a bird and the bird falls to the ground. The dog shouldn't leave the flush location until you give a hunt on command or the command to fetch. Many dogs have been injured or killed because they caught up to a bird at the same time a load of shot did.

The Right Birds:

Yes, I know this is an article about training for steadiness to wing, shot and fall, but it would be negligent on my part if I failed to provide a lecture herein on the foulest of foul; AKA the pen raised quail.

A Steadiness to Wing and Shot Training Method

There are numerous reasons not to incorporate pen raised game birds during steadiness training. Though eventually you'll have to introduce some, they should only be used in the very final stages of training, and only after you have complete confidence that the dog will be obedient.

I can't stress enough my distain for using pen raised quail while training. Pen raised birds usually tire easily after a flush. After one flight they're worn out and rarely take flight again. Their flight is usually short and they almost always land within the dog's field of view. In fact some barely even get off the ground or won't leave it at all. All of that means they are easily caught by an over zealous, untrained dog.

Even though some birds are raised in flight conditioning pens, many are raised in over populated confinements which results in birds that aren't healthy or aren't well feathered. During spring and summer months birds may be molting and some quail suppliers are trying to sell off last years breeding stock to unweary buyers. Most breeding stock birds have not ever been caged in anything larger than a 10" x 16" breeding cage much less a flight conditioning pen.

With poor flying quail, a dog can easily see where the bird lands. Seeing the landing, the dog believes it may be able to get to the bird and catch it. That's doubly true if the dog has caught birds before.

It won't take many experiences chasing and catching birds before you have reinforced in your dog exactly the opposite of the desired behavior. If you put your dog in a situation where it has the opportunity to catch birds; you have defeated your own intentions.

If you're not in strategic control of every training session, the dog will quickly learn that when it jumps in it can catch a bird before it flushes. Thus the dog's drive to chase will be fueled and enhanced by short flying, easily caught, pen raised birds. The more that the dog catches, the more it will continue to catch, and the more engrained that behavior will become.

If you've already used pen raised birds to train with, it's likely that your dog has caught some. By now you may know that it doesn't matter if you release pen raised birds into the field, plant them individually or launch them in a launcher; the birds perform poorly. It's likely that you're aware that, check cord or no check cord, you're not always in control of the situation.

That's why I recommend that you begin with pigeons and use them exclusively until the dog's steadiness training is almost completed. Healthy pigeons are much stronger flyers than pen raised game birds and generally fly out of site when released. Unlike pen raised quail often do, pigeons don't usually take off straight up over the launcher like quail may. They are easily placed and flushed manually and when launched in a bird launcher they don't hover and usually take flight in the same direction they are facing in the launcher.

If you want to avoid some of the problems associated with pen raised birds, pigeons are a must. I strongly suggest that you buy yourself some homing pigeons, trap some barn pigeons, steal some pigeons or make friends with someone that steals them or even raises them. I would use them exclusively during steadiness training until you're positive the dog won't jump in on birds and or chase them.

A Steadiness to Wing and Shot Training Method

If you must, you can put a few pigeons in a small cage with a few quail overnight. That way the pigeons will get some quail scent on them. You could also put your pigeons in a game bag along with a quail or two before heading to the training site.

The Training:

Steadiness to Shot and Fall:

Assumptions: The dog is completely force broken.

The dog is comfortable with close gunfire.

- A. You'll absolutely need a helper for this first step and if you have electronic bird launchers or a dummy launcher those will be helpful, but not absolutely necessary. You can accomplish the same thing with your helper and no electronics.

You'll also need a gun. A blank gun or small gauge shot gun. Those two are the most economical with respect to ammo. The dog should be on a check cord and wearing a pinch collar.

- B. If you have access to some type of launcher, have your assistant operate it from a hidden position. If you're doing it all manually by having your helper hide and throw dummies, be sure your helper is doing that from a location where the dog can't see them. You are trying to simulate a real hunting situation. A ditch, gully or even a big bush are all good hiding spots.
- C. Stand with the dog about 20-30 yards from the point where the dummies will be launched/tossed so the dog will easily spot the airborne dummy in flight and falling. Bumpers with flags are good for this since they more closely simulate live birds thus more excitement for the dog.

Make sure you give the dog enough slack on the cord to give it a good jerk but not enough so that it can build up enough speed that the pinch collar will cause injury to the dog.

- D. Have your assistant launch a dummy and at the peak height of its flight, fire the gun. You should be focusing all of your attention on the dog. If the dog bolts or steps forward give it a good jerk on the check cord and give the dog a firm "Whoa", then pick the dog up literally and put it back exactly where it was before it moved. If the dog stays in place praise it and begin the drill again.

Repeat the drill 10-20 times each training session until the dog catches on. You're striving for **CONSISTANT PERFECTION**. That means the dog stays put when the dummy is launched, the shot is fired and the dummy hits the ground. When the dog does it perfectly you should occasionally reward the dog by giving it praise at first. Eventually you can reward the dog by letting it fetch and retrieve the dummy but **ONLY** after the dog performs **PERFECTLY**. After letting the dog fetch the dummy several times in a row for correct performances the dog will most likely begin to anticipate the fetch command and take off before it's given.

A Steadiness to Wing and Shot Training Method

You can use that bad behavior to your training advantage by correcting and scolding the dog heavily for it, then alternating the reward with no reward at all. Mix it up a little by just giving a pat on the back or a “good dog” instead of letting the dog fetch. Try not to get into a steady rhythm allowing the time intervals between each step of training to be identical. In other words change the amount of time between the fall of the bird and giving the fetch command. Dogs are quick to pick up on the timing between your commands and will begin to anticipate the command. In some instances that would be good such as anticipating a “whoa” command while pointing. That’s not the case for this step.

You could also incorporate a dummy launcher into this step by having your assistant shoot flagged bumpers from a hidden position behind you or off to one side. Flagged bumpers look more life like than regular bumpers.

- E. If the dog has continued success you can slowly wean it off the pinch collar. If the dog reverts back to bad behavior go back to the pinch collar. When you’re comfortable that your dog is performing perfectly and understands that it must not to leave until the fetch command is given, then you can start using frozen or dead game instead of bumpers
- F. After your dog is performing all of the above, including excellence after switching to frozen game, you can begin to introduce live game. You can introduce quail now, but I don’t recommend poor flying pen raised quail because they usually drop short and you’ll only end up peppering the training area with birds that are easy to catch. If you have access to some very good flying birds then by all means use them now. If not, try and obtain some barn pigeons that you don’t mind shooting.

You don’t want to let the dog catch live birds on the ground unless you’ve given it a command to fetch. Other than that, you must avoid it at all costs. If you let the dog catch birds you are defeating your intentions since it will serve to fuel and enhance its instinct to jump in, pounce and chase.

At this point you can begin to occasionally shoot a released bird and if the dog performs perfectly and consistently, give it the fetch command. If not go back a step or two. Don’t shoot every bird you release or the dog may begin anticipating the fall and jump the gun.

Continue to be mindful that the dog doesn’t get the idea that it will be sent to fetch every time a bird flies or it may anticipate that and bolt when it sees the bird fly or after the shot is fired. Just as described in previous steps, don’t send the dog to fetch on every fall. Over time you can move the dog increasingly closer to the toss/launch location.

Steady to Wing/Flush:

Assumptions: You have access to homing pigeons. The dog has not accidentally caught birds???

A Steadiness to Wing and Shot Training Method

- A. You'll absolutely need a helper for this step. You'll also need the check cord and pinch collar. Initially this step can and should be conducted in your back yard where there are no distractions then moved to the field.

The idea here is for your dog to stop and stay still when it hears the sound of flapping wings, i.e., the flush so the quieter the training location the better. You want the dog to hear the bird go to flight. You'll not be giving any commands so zip it! The dog will simply hear the birds wings flap and watch it fly away. The flush will eventually become the dogs signal to stop.

The beauty of using pigeons for this is that they usually make a loud flutter when they take off and they also usually fly out of sight. The dog won't get the idea that the bird went down close enough to chase and catch. Out of sight out of mind!

- B. Have your helper load 6-10 of your homing pigeons into a large bird bag. If you don't have a bird bag try to pull them from a cage or a box hidden in a location that the dog can't see so that it's not distracted by a cage full of fluttering birds during the training session.
- C. With your dog on a check cord and wearing a pinch collar, bring the dog into an open area of the yard.

Step back a few paces from your dog and with **NO** command or noise have your helper throw a pigeon toward your dog but out in front of it. When the dog lunges for the flying bird jerk it back with the check collar and put the dog back in exactly the spot it was before it lunged. Make sure that you plan strategically so that your dog won't catch a bird. Repeat this step until you're out of birds.

Be sure to take a few minutes or so between birds to give the dog a chance to think about what's going on and to calm down a little. You should stroke the dog a little to help calm it. It's a good idea to fly the birds at the dog from several different directions just to break up the rhythm a little. 5-10 birds a session is plenty.

Be **PREPARED** and **ANTICIPATE** so that you **DON'T** let your dog catch a bird. Remember you want the dog to stop at the sound of the flush so the sound of the flush in essence means "Whoa". Do not give a command at this point.

- D. When you're sure the dog is performing with **consistent perfection**, you should move to the field with this drill. Initially conducting the drill exactly as you were doing it in the yard. The dog should still be on a check cord and a pinch collar.

If the dog continues to performing with **consistent perfection**, you can begin to introduce planted pigeons or launched pigeons. No quail yet!

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Since the dog has been thru steady to shot and fall training already; with a little help it should be able to connect the dots. When you're comfortable that the dog understands the process then you can take the pinch collar off and go to a regular collar.

- E. Now you should begin introducing the dog to multiple birds. You can do this by placing two or three birds under a kick cage or you can use how ever many your launcher/s or assistant can put in the air. The launching of several birds may unravel your dog a little but you'll just follow the same process you have until the dog stays put when the birds flush.
- F. When you're comfortable that the dog is performing as desired you can begin to go to the more traditional method of steadiness training in order to proof what you have completed to this point.

With the dog on a check cord let it work a field where you have planted birds or bird launchers. Be sure you know the location/s that the birds/launchers have been planted. Also make sure that you don't bring your dog up on the birds or the launcher from a direction where it will scent or cross your foot track. If you are using manual launchers that have a pull string, make sure the dog addresses the birds from a direction that will not allow it to scent the pull string and follow it to the launcher.

If your strategy for placing birds is weak, the dog will quickly learn to follow your foot track to the bird instead of searching for the bird on its own. In any case, you should leave the birds sit for a while in the field which will help dilute your foot track scent.

Depending on where you're training, you may be able to use a vehicle and set out launchers without stepping onto the ground. That seems to help!

After planting of the birds/launchers is complete, work the dog into the birds. When the dog points have your assistant hold the check cord then you walk in and flush the bird yourself and fire off a round.

You may need some correction here but if the previous steps have been correctly completed the dog should stay put when the bird flushes. If the dog isn't performing perfectly you can correct it. It's likely that it won't take many more training sessions and some minor correction to achieve the desired affect.

- G. When you're satisfied that the dog is performing with consistent perfection you can begin rewarding it again by occasionally shooting a bird and giving the fetch command. Remember DON'T shoot every bird that flies off into the sunset or your dog will anticipate a retrieve after every shot and may fly off into the sunset too.
- H. At this point can begin to mix in birds other than pigeons but I would do it gradually. Chukar, pheasants and quail are usually the most available. If you have access to wild birds that's even better. Make sure the dog has been introduced to each different species of bird during the force break-

A Steadiness to Wing and Shot Training Method**by: Gary Fleming**

ing process so that you're sure of a complete retrieve during your steadiness work

- I. When you're **ABSOLUTELY POSITIVE** that your dog is performing with **CONSISTANT PERFECTION** you can shorten the length of the check cord and eventually do away with it all together. Some folks leave a small piece hanging from the dog's collar so that the dog believes that it is under control.

The beauty of the training methods I've described above is they can be performed in reverse. That means if your dog is already steady to flush you can simply move to the steadiness to shot and fall drills.

The advantage of going in the order that I've presented here is that the dog has already learned not to chase which will likely make getting the dog steady to wing/flush a little easier.

At this point you may be asking yourself, "How can I incorporate an e-collar into the mix?"

First off, **NEVER** use an e-collar on a puppy or a dog that's near a bird or you can end up making your dog a blinker, ruining your dog's desire to find birds, point them, retrieve them etc.

I've predominantly given up on the Unidentified Flying Discipline (UFD) because like it or not, the dog quickly becomes collar smart and you'll become an E-collar Slave (ES).

The dog will have to wear the collar every time you go into the field; you'll have to make sure the equipment is charged. A collar smart dog eventually learns that you have no control over it when the collar is off. That dog will most definitely learn to take advantage of that. In addition, you'll probably become lazy and use the collar for discipline when a more hands on approach should be used. It's human nature! The dog should always be sure of who is applying correction so it understands who's running the show.

If you correctly follow the methods outlined above you shouldn't need to introduce an e-collar into your training regime. There is one exception when I use it during steadiness training. If your dog is already familiar with the e-collar you should forget I mentioned this since it's likely the dog is already collar wise.

If the dog isn't collar wise; during the steady to flush work in the field you could set up the following training scenario:

Release a pigeon in plain view of the dog but not so close that it can catch it.

If the dog begins to chase the bird intermittently press the transmitter button on and off multiple times giving the dog just enough stimulation each tap to make the chase uncomfortable for it. When the dog stops the chase instantly stop the stimulation. The discomfort will serve as reinforcement that chasing isn't good and can be uncomfortable.

If not used carefully an e-collar and many of the other electronic training devices can have a detrimental affect on a dog. One device that comes to my mind immediately is the bird launcher. Bird launchers are very useful but can do harm to a dog if you're careless.

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For example you should never use a bird launcher around a young puppy.

Bird launchers have a fairly powerful spring action and have injured young puppies. In addition bird launchers make enough noise when the bird is launched to scare a young puppy when it sees the bird spring to flight. You definitely don't want to make your pup afraid of flushing birds and/or turn it into a blinker and you certainly don't want it to be injured.

Even with older dogs it's not advisable to let them get closer than 3-4 feet from a launcher when launching a bird. If the dog has a well developed nose that shouldn't be a problem since it will likely scent the bird at a greater distance. It's also best to wait until they have already flushed birds and have developed a strong interest in them before putting a bird launcher in your bag of tricks.

Conclusion:

At the beginning I listed three concepts that need to be understood and focused on during the steadiness training process. They're listed below again for your consideration:

- We clearly want to enhance the dog's instinct to point feathered game with an emphasis on prolonging the duration of the point.
- We must overcome the dog's prey drive and instinct to jump in and pounce on game.
- Finally, we must control the dog's prey driven instinct to chase.

Hopefully you'll keep those three concepts in mind when training for steadiness to wing, shot and fall. I also hope you have found at least some of what's written here useful. I believe if you follow each step to completion you'll be pleased with the final result.

Hunting Applications:

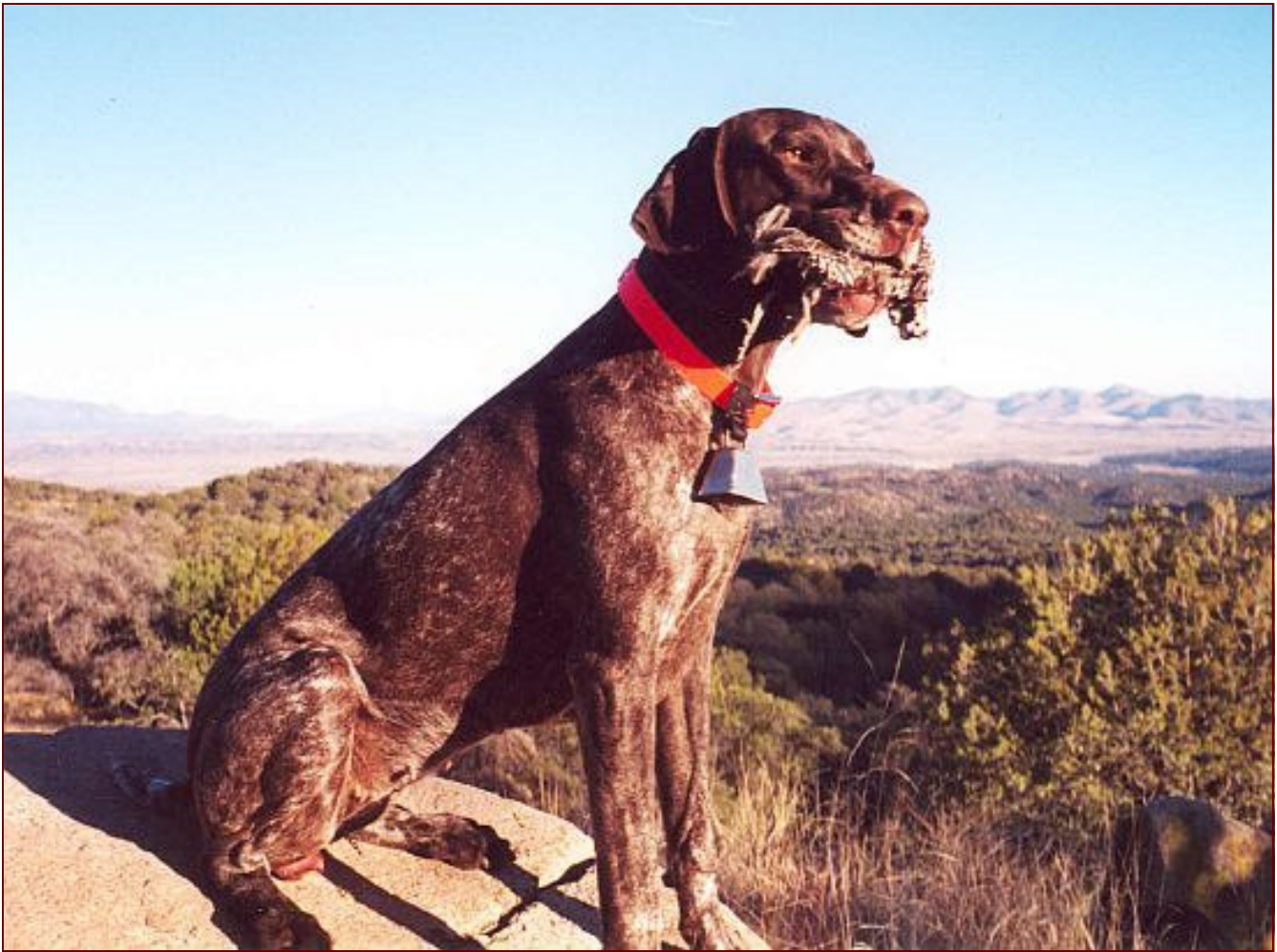
Steadiness to wing, shot and fall is critical since a dog that chases, and believes it can catch birds, is disruptive to the hunt at a minimum. If there are numerous birds that flush in the same direction the chasing may continue for some time.

The dog will likely have to be gathered up and restarted continually during the hunt and will probably bump birds during each chasing episode. It's also likely to continue to repeat what you've let it learn, i.e. "I can catch birds".

Most importantly, the dog's safety is in jeopardy if it chases birds. Over the years many dogs have been accidentally wounded or killed by gunners because the dog arrived at a bird in flight at the same time the hunter sent a load of bird shot in the that direction.

The methods described above are not something I personally invented. They are a compilation of methods I've learned from others that seem to work for me. I hope you will find them useful. Kurzhaar Voran!

Congratulations to Steve Waters – This Issues Photo Contest Winner



This is Hella vom Salzburg high atop Dager Peak in Arizona during a successful Gamble's quail hunt.

Hella has also hunted upland birds and waterfowl in the Mid-West, woodcock and ruffed grouse in the UP, as well as desert quail in Arizona and New Mexico. She has been able to adapt her skills to meet the challenges these different hunting scenarios create producing life-lasting memories. This picture symbolizes the success of an outstanding breeding by Ferdie Schlattmann and a great day in the field with Hella's owner and companion Steve Waters. This versatile dog is a Prize 1 Derby, AZP, and VGP (313points) girl with a V 2 conformation rating. Her only litter (vom Speidel's 'A' litter) earned a Derby Breeder's Award. Hella is now a grandma, but still enjoys days in the field and water with her daughter, Anni, and granddaughter, Belle. Kurzhaar Voran!, Steve Waters

Steve can select an item of his choice from VCDKK Merchandise.

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Good Luck!

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