

SPORTING GROUP

Pointer Studbook.

In 1871, Prince Albrecht zu Solms-Braunfels bred a tri-marked dog referred to as “Feldmann 1”; however, the dog’s heavy, short-legged body held little appeal to the other breeders. He also owned three tri-marked pointers developed in the German state of Wurttemberg, but they lacked sufficient numbers to warrant a separate studbook. Leading dog experts at the time were concerned it was some type of hound, Blue Gascony, or Gordon Setter cross. They were tall dogs with large heads, heavy flews, and loose skin.

Craig Koshyk, author of *Pointing Dogs, Volume One: The Continentals* wrote that the last Wurttemberger litter was whelped in 1910 near Nanz, Germany, and two pups were “exported to America.” He further states that the breed disappeared just after WWI, while other writings indicate it managed to survive until just before WWII.

A 1915 catalog of breeds published by W.E. Mason for the *Panama-Pacific International Exposition, Dogs of All Nations* in San Francisco has a picture and description of the “Pointer of Wurtemberg” (sic).

The author is aware of tri-marked Shorthairs referred to as Wurttembergers. Is it a result of recessives genes, cross-breeding, a separate breed, or analogy to the 1871 Wurttemberg

pointer?

Tri-marked Shorthairs may show up, but referring to them as a Wurttemberger without knowledge of how the tri-color allele (“a t” “a t”) came into the dog’s genetics is questionable. In 2017 in Orlando a GSP was DQ’ed for tri-markings. Genetics can be mischievous or threatening, especially the recessives or modifiers.

—Patte Titus,
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Curly-Coated Retrievers

Jenny Dickinson is again our guest columnist, and what an enjoyable column it is.

THE NOVICE GAME

In our last column, I talked about some starting points for setting out on an obedience career with your Curly-Coated Retriever. Now I want to offer some ideas specific to AKC Novice obedience. First, read your Regulations multiple times, as changes were made in May, 2018. There are significant changes to the stays.

What first attracted me to obedience years ago was the fact that every participant can earn a qualifying score. Unlike conformation,



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where if you do not win, you come away empty-handed, obedience allows each team to fulfill its goals. Think about whether you want to go for high scores or simply title a dog. Your goals may change as you go along, but know that every goal is legitimate. Train accordingly. Foundation skills are critical to your success.

Practice short pieces of attention in a variety of places. If you have not done this already, take your dog to every dog event that you can. Teach him to lie down and “chill out” at ring-side as you watch classes. Take a crate and teach him to relax and sleep in the crating area. This is an important part of being able

COURTESY SYDNEY BEAM

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to shut out the chaos and do his work in the ring. You cannot take a green dog into the commotion of some dog events and expect him to tune out the smells and noise.

In terms of training collars, do not make assumption about your Curly's hardness or softness of temperament. Start with a flat buckle collar. You may need a prong, but it may be too much. A standard prong causes my current Curly to shut down. When I am polishing heeling, I use the Triple Crown collar with him. Make sure you use the right tack, or you will create more problems than you solve.

Heeling is the heart of obedience. It is also a very complicated behavior. In my part of the country (southern New England), several training centers offer power heeling classes or drop-in group classes where heeling is challenged with drills and maneuvers that help the handler identify and then strengthen weak spots. Seek these out!

I have never entered a dog in a trial before the age of 2, although dogs are allowed to enter after they reach 6 months of age. To me, there are too many skills to practice, and too much growing up to do. We say in Curlies that you do not have the complete package until the age of 4, and I feel that this is true. I personally am in no hurry, because I am in the sport primarily for the pleasure of training together. However, if you choose to compete

with a young dog, try to get to as many matches and run-throughs as you can before you enter. Putting the entire Novice routine together is a different experience for your dog than it is for you, because you get to say what is next, and he does not have a program! For this reason, pay attention to transitions between exercises, and be deliberate about them. Tell your partner what you are doing next as you move to the starting point. Surely you have seen Utility competitors say, "Wanna do gloves? Let's do gloves!" for example. One of my teachers taught me to give the dog as much information as you possibly can.

I was recently at a training party where one friend was giving another friend a run-through and she told the handler to "support your dog as you go through that turn again." That is the mindset you want to have in your training.

For *heaven's sake*, when you come out of the ring, celebrate, cheer, praise, feed your dog, no matter what a mess he made out of the routine. You *must* learn to put your frustration aside if you are going to be in this sport. Your dog is only learning from what is happening at the moment. You cannot revisit and teach him about a mistake he has made. *That* is why you do not want to enter until your dog is able to go through an entire routine successfully. Mistakes still happen, and we all have glorious tales of spectacular flunks, but there is no rea-

son to shoot yourself in the foot if you can avoid it! You are setting yourself up for a major problem if you tell him he has disappointed you. He will associate that with the context. He won't have learned anything useful. Self-indulgence will come back to bite you. If the dog screwed up, it is probably your fault.

There is nothing like obedience to build your love, understanding, and appreciation for your dog, and your bond as a partnership. Even if you never compete, I hope you grow together to love the sport as I have with my dogs! —J.D.

Thanks, so much, Jenny, for another very informative column.

—Ann Shinkle,
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Golden Retrievers LARYNGEAL PARALYSIS

She was 10 years old, a pretty blond who kept pace with her Golden Retriever housemates. In otherwise good health, she began to wheeze heavily when exercising, frequently hacked, and loudly "cleared her throat." She was soon diagnosed with laryngeal paralysis, a condition in which the muscles of the larynx become paralyzed.

As Golden owners, we are so preoccupied with the more common diseases plaguing our

breed that laryngeal paralysis has flown mostly under the radar. And while this condition is more common in Labrador Retrievers and Newfoundlands, other large breeds such as Golden Retrievers as well as some mixed-breeds are among the breeds occasionally affected. Unfortunately, many owners are unaware that their wheezing, panting senior Golden is suffering from more than just old age.

So what has happened to those affected dogs? Their larynx has become paralyzed and is unable to function as it should, thus restricting the dog's ability to breathe deeply. Left untreated, the disease can cause life-threatening breathing obstruction, leading eventually to death by suffocation. "Larpar," as the disease is often referred to in "vet-speak," was first diagnosed in the 1970s. Research in 2005 by Bryden Stanley, B.V.M.S., M.Vet.Sc., DACVS, associate professor of surgery at Michigan State University College of Veterinary Medicine, revealed that paralysis of the larynx is part of a generalized neurological disease that affects other parts of a dog's nervous system. The hind-limb muscles generally are most affected, causing weakness in the back legs and a limited ability to run and jump. Now known as geriatric onset laryngeal paralysis polynuropathy (GOLPP), the name indicates that most affected dogs are seniors, over 10 years old, and that multiple nerves are