

Foot Prints

November/December 1998

The Newsletter of the Moraine Tracking Club, Ltd.

Volume 3, Issue 6

6 NEW TD's at MORAINE's FIRST TEST!

(Nov. 8, 1998)

Moraine Tracking Club's first licensed event was a great success! Super organization by test secretary and chairman Judy Shortino and Cathy Thrasher allowed Saturday's plotting to stay right on schedule. Ursula Hoefft provided us with breakfast and a ready lunch when we left the fields.

After a gorgeous day of plotting, the sun dissappeared and the snow came in time for Sunday's test. Just enough snow to dust the tracks white and soak everyone's pants, shoes and socks as it melted.

Tracklaying went off without a hitch except on track 3, where some overnight flag fairies decided to move a drop flag to a new location. Tracklayer Deb Zorn kept her cool and laid it as plotted, and all was well.

We received 22 entries for our 8 dog test. I guess that means our club is really needed! Two withdrawals allowed the 1st two alternates to move up into the test and fortunately, we were able to reduce the ranks of

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left to right: Diane Muzzey and Brady, Barb Larsen and Reba, Helen Gibbons and Gracie, Penny Kurz and Peterbuilt

8 members entered, 4 drawn, 4 passed!

We were thrilled that 4 of our own members were drawn for our first TD test, and even more tickled that all of them passed. While Penny Kurz and Diane Muzzey are "old hands" at this sport, having had previous dogs pass tests, the greatest thrill was for Helen Gibbons and Barb Larsen. These two collected their first ever TD titles. Both of these handlers originally started with a different dog that for one reason and another never passed a test. Both are dedicated trainers, having worked literally years to achieve their goals. Both dogs have a story to tell, also.

Helen's dog Gracie was rescued from an animal research lab. Helen fostered the dog, waiting

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TD Test, cont.

those waiting to get into tests by 6!

Practical, flag topped pencils with track numbers were used for the draw. From that moment on, Cathy and Judy managed to keep everything running very smoothly, with dogs arriving at their tracks on time.

Drawing Track 1 was member Barb Larsen with her Bloodhound, Reba. Reba started with a bang and continued to pull hard the entire way. The fastest team of the day, Reba really wanted that glove! Tracklayer Dorothy Schmidt changed her tracklaying luck with this pass. (Now we all know your feet really do stink!)

Track 2 was not so lucky. A Bernese Mountain Dog was distracted by something (deer?) that seemed to have crossed the track shortly after the second flag. Though handled nicely back to the track, the first turn was not acknowledged by the dog and the team heard the whistle.

Track 3, another pass, this one for club member Diane Muzzey and Brady, a Belgian Malinois. This young dog paused to check out several interesting spots along the way, but kept business in mind and finished nicely. Handler Diane never even noticed the misplaced flag reported by tracklayer Deb Zorn.

Track 4 was another unfortunate run. Despite a very nice start, the first turn was this Clumber Spaniel's undoing. We were sorry that Beth Walker did not have a passing dog on her track, but made up for it with a special cake for her and Jack to celebrate her VST title!

Track 5 brought another club member pass for Helen Gibbons and her Foxhound, Gracie. This terrific team just flew through the track laid by Mary Haley. Afterwards, Helen was asked about the track. "Turns, What turns?" was her reply. Gracie left no time to think, Helen just hung on until the team reached the glove.

Track 6 was another Bernese,

this one more fortunate. The dog had judges Terri Everwine and Ralph Sneve worried when it overshot the first turn, but the handler did a beautiful job of letting the dog work back. The rest of the track was picture perfect, with the dog seeming to gain confidence with every step. Pam German, who had laid two tracks both drawn by the Berners, was pleased that at least one of them passed.

Track 7 was the longest and farthest away of the 8. Wouldn't you know it that a handler with a bum knee would draw that one? Well, it didn't stop Deb Nezgoda and her Irish Water Spaniel, Splash. Deb had no choice but to follow once this dog took off. Tracklayer Roni Szeliga commented that the dog flew through the 496 yards in less time that it had taken her to lay it!

Track 8 was a Miniature Poodle handled by member Penny Kurz for owner Cathy Sadoski. Tracklayer Vickie Marhefke was more nervous than Penny as she watched the team work its way down the track. Aptly named "Peterbuilt", he simply trucked his way through the cover to the glove.

Having been treated to a delicious hot breakfast of various flavors of potato pies, Sunday's hospitality chair Lois Breslow treated us to grilled hot dogs and Polish sausage with all the trimmings for lunch.

Our awards of framed certificates depicting each track were well received by our entrants and envied by everyone else!

What a wonderful way to start out at our first licensed event! Our 75% pass rate exceeds the local average for TD passes. We are grateful to all those who volunteered their time and effort to make this test such a rousing success.

Thanks again to all who helped out. Without the terrific effort of our members we would not be making history with our club's first test. Our success in this event gives us plenty to live up to and look forward to!

Happy Tracking to all!



Positively Tracking

The attitude of a tracking dog is affected by the attitude of its handler. Most of us are pretty relaxed when we train, some of us are able to carry that attitude with us to a test. This article is for the rest of you, the ones whose nerves seem to increase a thousand fold at a test.

You can control your nerves. In a test you must learn to do so. Every time you get nervous, so does your dog. This does not help your performance. You must remember that tracking is not a matter of life and death. If the dog does not pass, it is not the end of the world. As my friend and co judge Orrin said, "You are not out there tracking naked. Now *that* would be a scary thing."

So - Relax! You are out there to do something that you and your dog have done many, perhaps hundreds of times before. Your dog has completed perfect tracks before, this test is just one more.

Picture it - the perfect track. Run it in your mind as you approach the start flag. Each turn on the money, the steady pull, the glove at the end.

No negative thoughts. Don't let your mind wander to the time your dog blew a corner, or missed an article. This is the perfect track.

Hug your dog. Our dogs give us their best every day. On the day of a test, return the compliment, give them your best attitude. They will still love you, pass or fail, and that is what's important.

(Thanks to W. Orrin Eldred for allowing me to quote several of his thoughts)

MINUTES OF NOVEMBER MEETING

The meeting was called to order at 12:10 by Vice President Beth Walker.

In Attendance: Beth Walker, Terri Everwine, Ralph Sneve, Debbie Zorn, Pam German, Judy Shortino, Cathy Thrasher, Roni Szeliga, Jim Eadie, and Vickie Marhefke.

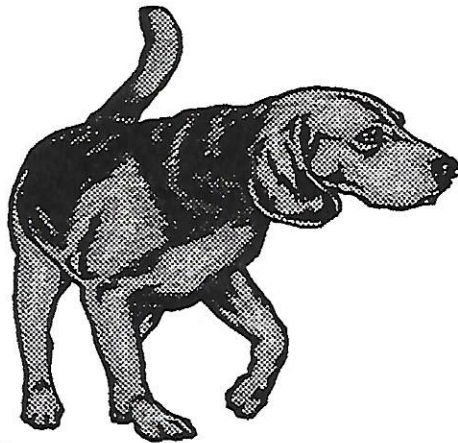
President, Lois Breslow - absent.
Vice President, Beth - No report
Treasurer Jinny Addington - absent. Treasurer's report sent via Secretary Terri: _____

_____ Dues notices will be out shortly, dues are due by Jan 1.

Secretary Terri reported having filed application with AKC for our spring TD test.

Discussion followed regarding the test. Beth Walker volunteered to Chair the test and will contact the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources to obtain a permit for Eagle. Ralph Sneve will provide copies of the emergency procedures report required for all tests beginning in 1999. Beth will obtain local emergency contacts for our test site. Pam German was asked to judge and agreed. Terri will obtain another judge.

It was noted that in conjunction with the emergency procedures that the premium list must contain statements that a first aid kit is available and that cell phones will be available for making any emergency calls. Terri will see to it that this information is



added to the files for the test secretary.

Director: Barb Larsen - absent
Director: Cindy Simonsen - absent
Director: Diane Muzzey - absent
Old business - none

New Business - VST match date June 6. After discussion it was decided that this will be a 6 dog match, Terri Everwine will act as Secretary, Judy Shortino as Chairman and Beth Walker and Ralph Sneve as judges pending confirmation of dates with their calendars. Paperwork cannot be filed with AKC until within 90 days of the event.

Other new business: Nominations for election at the January annual meeting. Nominations were heard for the offices of Secretary, Treasurer and two directors for the expiring terms of Cindy Simonsen and Barb Larsen.

Roni nominated Terri to retain the position of secretary, seconded by Judy. Terri accepted the nomination.

Jinny was nominated to a second term as treasurer by Beth and seconded by Roni. Jinny accepted the nomination over the phone.

Barb Larsen was nominated to a second term by Vickie and seconded by Debbie. Barb accepted the nomination on Sunday.

Roni nominated Cindy Simonsen to a second term as Director. Seconded by Vickie Marhefke. We were unable to contact Cindy that day.

In the event Cindy cannot accept the nomination, Deb Zorn was nominated by Terri and seconded by Roni to replace Cindy on the ballot as director.

There being no further nominations, nominations were closed.

The next meeting of the club will be at the Highland House for brunch at 11:00 am Sunday January 24.

Congratulations were offered to Beth Walker on obtaining her VST and CT titles with Jack, her Belgian Tervuren.

Vickie reminded everyone that she is looking for tracking stories to add to our web site.

Ralph moved and Jim seconded that we adjourn the meeting at 1:05 pm. All in favor.

Respectfully submitted:
Terri Everwine,
Secretary

Member Passes

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for the new home that never quite materialized, then started tracking with her. After 5 VST lessons, she happened to meet judge Wally O'Brien at Wichman one day and he certified the dog. Gracie was so intent on the track that at her first test she just ran over the glove. Her second attempt was marred by a deer crossing the track, with Gracie in hot puruit. We think she was really waiting for Moraine's test, though, as a more picture perfect track is hard to come by!

Barb's dog Reba started her tracking career on VST as a pup. She was doing extremely well when at about 8 months of age Barb noticed problems with her rear movement. A trip to the vet for a consultation turned into immediate surgery on one hip and a month later the other hip. After a long slow recovery Reba and Barb came back to show us all what they are made of, passing her TD test in the fastest time of the day.

It's interesting to note that all four of our member owned dogs were started on VST tracks, bringing our club total to 5 out of 6 new TD titles from VST training. We'll have to wait and see where their noses take them next as all of our newly titled dogs are great trackers and should be seen soon in the TDX or VST venues. Congratulations to all!

MEETING NOTICE:

The next General Meeting of the Club will be held Sunday January 24 at 11:00am, at the Highland House Restaurant at the corner of Rt 22 and 41 in Highland Park, IL.

Agenda: Plan spring tests, Discuss other 1999 plans. Elections!

Come join us for brunch!

ALL MEMBERS WELCOME!