

Georgia Derby

by Mike Grimes



The Georgia Derby turned out to be successful although we had only four entries. Two of the handlers were first time handlers, one had handled a few times and one was a very seasoned handler. They were Aaron Shelly with Ludwig, Justin Rectenwald with Apollo, George Desharnais with Berretta, Kim Lewis with Warus.

Congratulations to all four entries, we had three Prize 1 and one Prize 3.

The day began with the Judges' Meeting and afterward moved to the Field. As sometimes happens in Georgia in March, the winds picked up and the temperatures dropped (to the liking of the dogs but the rest of us shivered). The Field was approximately nine acres and geographically set up that allowed all the spectators to view the entire test area very well. As the test progressed, more spectators showed up as well as the Landowner who was thrilled to be providing her property.

In attendance were approximately twenty-five people, most of whom were either new in the DK world or totally unfamiliar with it. This presented an opportunity we were not expecting.

The success of this Test did not rest solely on the outcomes of the four dogs and their handlers but also gave the trio of judges (with a combined judging experience of nearing 80 years) a platform on which to explain the German Testing System and introduce these magnificent animals called DKs to people that may not otherwise get to experience. Each of the judges spoke to both small groups and individuals. Each showed humility and patience as true ambassadors of the JHGV, the DKV and the DKGNA.



Several people remarked at how professional the day's events were and at how much they had learned. A few committed to joining the DKGNA and have since done so. Numerous people told me how much they enjoyed the opportunity to ask

questions of the judges and converse at a technical level they may never have had the opportunity to do so. Among other items discussed was the importance of getting ready for the Fall tests. Force Fetch was among the main points driven home. Overall, the test score of the Judges was a Prize 1.

Thank-you Francois Aldrich, Glen Bridges and Dave Peasley for an outstanding Day!

We owe all of our Judges a special thank you for volunteering as they do and sacrificing their time helping ensure this wonderful breed of dog continues to improve. This comes with educating people in the right way that builds enthusiasm and a desire to own the best hunting dog and companion known.