

The 30th Anniversary HWA Airedale Field Nationals

It Came Together Well

The 30th Anniversary HWA Airedale Field Nationals was a long time coming – 30 years, in fact. Hunting Working Airedales [HWA] began in 1985 as a committee of our breed's AKC parent club, the Airedale Terrier Club of America [ATCA]. In 2007 HWA incorporated as an independent organization. It was gratifying to join again with the ATCA this anniversary year to have an ATCA Fur Test as part of the HWA Nationals. Though the Fur Test rules and procedures were the same as always, the symbolic significance of the two Airedale clubs working together for the good of the breed brought to mind a refrain we'd hear repeated over the weekend: "It came together well."

We started the weekend of our 30th HWA Nationals, which took place September 11-13 near Chillicothe, Ohio, with Thursday's Hospitality evening at our headquarters hotel, the Quality Inn in Chillicothe. This year's Hospitality was sponsored by Pamela Tanner and Mike Logsdon, to the appreciation of all those who enjoyed a good meal along with this time and friendly space to meet up with old friends and make some new ones.

Friday, Day 1 of the Nationals

Our Nationals' field events started on Friday, September 11, as we headed out to Holly Hills Game Preserve, where our club has found a home for the past few years. The **ATCA Fur Test** had an entry of two Senior Test entries and nine Junior Test entries. Our judges were Lawrence Alexander and Chris Halvorson, with Kim Burrier acting as the ATCA Liaison for the Fur Tests.

This year there were three qualifiers in the Junior Fur Test. The high-scoring Airedale running was Lucy, owned and handled by 14 year-old Isaac White. Isaac and his mother Katherine had started Lucy in a couple of prior HWA events. They were set to attend last year's Nationals when Isaac's sudden cancer diagnosis forced them to switch plans and spend the past year with Isaac undergoing hospital treatments that would have daunted the strongest among us. Last year the HWA Board dedicated the 29th Nationals to Isaac. This year we were thrilled that Isaac was able to join in the 30th Nationals with a clear health report and an Airedale ready to go.

Lucy ran her Junior Fur Test at full speed, as Isaac and judge Lawrence Alexander walked behind. As Lucy reached the tree with its caged raccoon, she ran past it, doubled back to it, attacked a low branch she used as a raccoon



Lucy sounds off and shows off her raccoon at the completion of her Junior Fur Test.

substitute, then barked to announce her find. Then she ran back to check that Isaac was coming, and returned to the tree to bark and wait for him to catch up. Her attitude of “We can do this!” was doubly meaningful to those who knew the circumstances.

While the Fur Tests entrants were running their courses, the **Beginners’ Retriever Workshop** brought together a good group of Airedales and owners ready to learn from professional bird-dog trainer Bridget Bodine. Bridget was well-prepared to help those with no prior experience, as well as work with those experiencing problems or snags in their training.



Keeper, owned and handled by Kim Burrier, works the raccoon cage during the Barkathon.

Friday morning’s activities wrapped up with the **Barkathon**. In this fun event, any Airedale can take an individual turn barking and jumping at a cage raccoon suspended in a tree. Other owners with leashed Airedales surround the tree to encourage the working dog with group barking. The Airedale that barks the most barks in one minute wins a small prize, as well as the honor of being known as the biggest barker. This year’s winner was Filson, owned and handled by Kate Ostrowski. Filson barked 84

barks in 60 seconds. Only true Airedale people will appreciate this feat.

Friday’s first afternoon event was the **Hunting Instinct Test**’s first group of pups and dogs with no field training. Sherri Glass, an Airedale breeder with decades of experience assessing pups, was our the test evaluator. Spectators gathered on the lawn to enjoy watching the pups go through the test exercises, which included finding and reacting to a live, caged raccoon and live birds; tracking and finding a dead bird; retrieving bumpers; testing prey drive by chasing a toy; hearing gun fire; and trying out some swimming.

Unexpected or comical antics are typical for Airedale puppies. There was, for instance, the pup who was delighted to find a dead chukar hidden for him in the tall grass. For his next exercise, he was



Major, a puppy owned and handled by Christine Thomas, tests well for prey drive in the Hunting Instinct Test.

supposed to go to another part of the lawn and chase and retrieve a bumper. Several throws later with a choice of three bumpers, and the pup showed no interest in retrieving. Instead he ran off back to the tall grass where he'd found that chukar. He found that chukar again and carried it to back to his owner, clearly saying, "THIS is more like it."



The latter half of a warm Friday afternoon was the perfect incentive for Bridget Bodine to resume her **Beginners' Retriever Workshop** at the pond for some water retrieving practice.

By 4:30 pm we gathered back at the Holly Hills clubhouse for an informal setting for our **HWA Annual Meeting**. Credit for making all the day's events run smoothly and on time goes to Event Co-Chairs Patricia Nemeth and Kate Ostrowski and their team of volunteers. Dean and Marsha Hatfield, owners of Holly Hills Game Preserve, are the unsung supporters of our event. Their approach of "whatever you need," goes from supplying raccoons and birds, to fancy cakes and meals, as well as hands-on help and hospitality in whatever has to be done. As we left our Annual meeting for an evening to recharge our batteries for tomorrow, the day's consensus was, "It came together well."

Saturday, Day 2 of the Nationals

Weather always is a factor in outdoor events, and we lucked out with the cold front that blew through southern Ohio in time for Saturday morning's **Upland Hunt Test**. The breezy and cooler morning stayed rain-free and perfect for upland tests. This year we had six Junior Test entries, some of whom would be running a test for the first time, as well as one Senior Test entry and two Master test entries. Our judges were AKC Upland judges John Dudash and Sam Stazzone.



Milo, owned and handled by Lawrence Alexander, received The Choice Award for being the dog the gunners chose as the one they'd most like to over over.

The Junior dogs ran first, with some promising work from dogs and trainers just starting out. Though we had only one Junior qualify in the land portion of the test, they all will be strong contenders in next year's tests. Milo, owned and handled by Lawrence Alexander, gave a great demonstration of the bird finding, flushing and retrieving expected of Junior dogs. In fact, Milo's performance made him the winner of The Gunners' Choice Award. This year's Gunners' Choice Award was sponsored by Ellen and George Gordon, and was awarded to Milo for being

the dog the Upland gunners chose as the one they would most like to hunt over. By the end of the morning, Filson, owned and handled by Kate Ostrowski, also passed the Senior Test land series, and Kira, owned and handled by Michael Sites, had passed the difficult Master Test land requirements. All three dogs would advance to the water series of the Upland Test on Sunday morning.

After lunch the **Retriever Test land series** with AKC judges Ed Zawodny and Leslie Phillips took place in an open field just beyond the backyard, giving spectators an excellent and accessible spot for watching all the action. The running order called for the two Master Test contenders to go first, followed by the Senior entry, and then five Junior entries. The Senior dog and two Junior dogs would get qualifying scores in the Retriever Test land series, though all the dogs and handlers put in a good effort.

A notable team in the Junior Retriever Test



Laser, owned and handled by Linda Sorak, did very well in the Junior Retriever Test.

was Laser with owner/handler Linda Sorak. Laser is a 5-year old dog with multiple obedience and agility titles, as well as a Junior Hunter Fur [JHFur] title, but no prior training for a retriever test. Linda had Laser entered in the Beginners' Retriever Workshop on Friday, during which Laser's practice sessions had observers telling Linda she should have entered Laser in the Retriever Test. As HWA rules allow for "walk-up" on-site entries under certain conditions, Linda put in a late entry that got her into the test on Saturday. We were glad she did, since Laser passed the Retriever Test land series with exceptional style.

Saturday's schedule also included a second group of pups and young dogs doing the **Hunting Instinct Test** in the morning, and a late afternoon session of Bridget Bodine's **Senior/Master Skills and Drills Retriever Workshop**. The advanced workshop was helpful to Airedalers who need to acquire the training and handling techniques used by trainers who prep their Labs and Flat Coats for retriever tests. We could have used more hours to practice those skills, but all too soon it was time to get ready for the evening's event.

Saturday night's **30th Anniversary Banquet and Auction** was an enjoyable evening that flowed with good food and conversations, with the added plus of many tempting auction items and raffle baskets. In honor

of HWA's 30th Anniversary, each attendee received a commemorative 30th Anniversary bronze keychain, a keepsake celebrating HWA's existence from 1985-2015.

This year's Limited Raffle of five "art pieces," including a Swarovski[®] crystal Airedale figurine, a Dannyquest statue, two paintings, and a decorative harness breastplate, with a total value at hundreds of dollars. Pulling the winning raffle ticket during the banquet gave us all a few hopeful moments. Denise St. John, a member of the Steel Valley Airedale Terrier Club, was the lucky winner.



30th Anniversary Keychain

Sunday, Day 3 of the Nationals

The third and final day of the Nationals came with sun sparkling on the water of the pond where the **water series of our Upland and Retriever Tests** would be held. The running order would start with the three dogs who had qualified in the Upland land series, followed by the three dogs who qualified in the Retriever land series. After the call backs were judged, the Retriever judges invited those who hadn't qualified to bring their dogs to the water for some practice, a gesture that was much appreciated.

The **Upland Test water series** included Milo, the Junior entry owned/handled by Lawrence Alexander; Filson, the Senior entry owned/handled by Kate Ostrowski; and Kira, the Master Test entry owned/handled by Michael Sites.

These last water retrieves always have considerable pressure on them since they must be completed successfully for a new title to be earned. This year Filson and Kira



Kira, owned and handled by Michael Sites, earned her Master Hunter Flushing [MHF] by successfully completing her Master Upland Test.

successfully completed their water retrieves. For Filson and his owner Kate, this meant he'd earned the Senior Hunter Flushing title [SHF] title, with the Senior Retriever water test still to go. For Kira and her owner Michael, this meant she'd earned the Master Hunter Flushing [MHF] title, which put her in the company of very few Airedales who have reached this difficult level of achievement.

As the Upland judges gave up their position to the Retriever judges, and the test situations were adjusted, the **Retriever Test water series** brought one Senior dog – Filson – and two Junior dogs – Emmitt, owned/handled by Kim Burrier,

and Laser, owned/handled by Linda Sorak – to the line. All the dogs successfully completed their Retriever Test water requirements, meaning that Filson would add a Senior Hunter Retriever [SHR] title to his name, while Emmitt and Laser would add a Junior Hunter Retriever [JHR] titles to theirs.

Following the Retriever water tests, some of the dogs who wished they'd qualified were given a chance to try some water retrieves. The practice and coaching by the judges helped turn their mindsets to what they needed to do in next year's tests.



Filson, owned and handled by Kate Ostrowski, earned *two* Senior titles: Senior Hunter Flushing [SHF] and Senior Hunter Retriever [SHR].

Sunday mid-morning brought a chance for dogs who weren't entered in the bird tests to do a fun event called the **Pocket Quail contest**. Each pup or untrained dog had a chance to hunt through a course with hidden chukar wings. The dog that found the most wings in one pass of the course was declared the winner. This gives new dogs and pups a

chance to use their noses on birds, and give owners a chance to see their dogs work a field. All just for fun, but fun with a purpose.

In another field, the **Bridget Bodine's Senior/Master Retriever workshop** reconvened with a focus on problem solving some training questions raised by the participants. The more complicated the work, the more problems arise, so the expert advice was useful.

Our **Awards Ceremony** concluded our event on Sunday afternoon. Ribbons and applause went to all our test qualifiers. Kira and Michael Sites earned the Brown Bess Memorial Award for the highest score in the Upland Test. Filson and Kate Ostrowski earned the Road Dog Award for earning three AKC "legs" toward AKC hunt test titles since last year's Nationals. Every pup and new dog got a certificate that said in part "May this first participation in field endeavors lead to continuing adventures and achievements."

New titles, ribbons, and awards are important records of the achievement of individual dogs and owners, all validating the hunting abilities of our breed. Other intangibles are also worth mentioning.

"I just can't believe how *HAPPY* my dogs were this weekend," one attendee remarked. Realizing that our Airedales love field work and training is what keeps many of us coming back.

The camaraderie and friendships so strong that it almost makes us family also makes for a special weekend. Though we didn't have a ribbon or award for it, seeing young Isaac White and his mom Katherine White return to the Nationals this year after his life-threatening illness surely would have won them the Biggest Winner Award, if such an award had existed. For our HWA family, it was a state of mind. As we said our good-byes and "See you next years," the consensus seemed to be *It Came Together Well*.



Isaac White with his mom Katherine White

Save the Dates

for our 2016 events, both to be held at
Holly Hills Game Preserve:

Fun in the Field

April 9-10th, 2016

31st HWA Airedale Field Nationals

Sept. 9-11, 2016

2015 HWA Test Qualifiers

ATCA Fur Test

Junior Test

Nevinaire's Miss Lucy Rufhausen, JHFur, owned by Isaac White, Wayneburg, KY, and bred by Pam Nevin

Amber-Aire's Right On Time, JHFur, owned by Kate and Joe Ostrowski, Dallas, PA, and bred by Carol Stull

Imprimis Triumph Maximus Emperor, JHFur, owned by Patricia Gintilas and Kevin von Kluck, Lemont, IL, and bred by Lisa Berglin

Upland Test

Master Test

Aircraft Kira Stella Sites, SH [AKC], CGC, SHV, MHF, MHFur, owned by Michael and Elise Sites, Eureka, MO, and bred by Dale and Kim Burrier and Corally Burmaster

Senior Test

Hilltop's Filson of Little River, JH [AKC], JHV, SHF, SHR, owned by Kate and Joe Ostrowski, Dallas, PA, and bred by Lawrence Alexander

Retriever Test

Senior Test

Hilltop's Filson of Little River, JH [AKC], JHV, SHF, SHR, owned by Kate and Joe Ostrowski, Dallas, PA, and bred by Lawrence Alexander

Junior Test

UOCH, UROC, Eclipse Light My Fire, GO, GN, ER, JHFur, JHR, OAP, OJP, ARCHEX, owned by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL, bred by Christie Williams

Ch. Aircraft Catapult Launch, CD, BN, GN, RAE, JHF, JHR, owned and bred by Kim and Dale Burrier, Newton Falls, OH

Hunting Instinct Test Qualifiers

Dollar von Erikson, TD, owned by Linda Sorak, Normal, IL, and bred by Harriet Rosenthal

Stillwaters Overflows Roselyn, owned and bred by Sherri Glass, Clyde, OH

Imprimus Triumph Maxiumus Emperor, JHFur, owned by Patricia Gintilas and Kevin von Kluck, Lemont, IL, and bred by Lisa Berglin

Hilltop's Sunshine Over Butternut, owned by Kate and Joe Ostrowski, Dallas, PA, and bred by Lawrence Alexander

Coldstream Aircraft Just The Wright Stuff, RATI, owned by Kim and Dale Burrier, Newton Falls, OH, and bred by Corally Burmaster

Coldstream Major Mischief Second to None, owned by Christine Thomas, Plover, WI, and bred by Corally Burmaster

Coldstream Make My Day, owned by Chris Halvorson and Angela Dobbins, Lockport, NY, and bred by Corally Burmaster