

# MID-SOUTH KLUB TIMES

ISSUE 4 11 JUNE 2007

## REGIONAL NEWS

Greetings from the Mid-South Regional Director,

This year has really been an exciting one for our region. We have had not only growth in membership, but the addition of many quality members and dogs that have enabled us to move forward as a group and accomplish many things that before have not been possible. Alex Taylor has been doing a fantastic job with the newsletter and I can't thank her enough for her willingness to get this accomplished. This chore alone is such a great tool to keep us all informed and develop a much more active and involved region. My husband, Phil, has taken over the web site for our region and is doing a great job with that. Be sure and check it out and visit often. Any club news is updated as it occurs.

Our Spring tests were a great success and I can not thank those involved enough for their help and support in putting things together. Patrick Taylor is a miracle worker as a Test Secretary! Our region could not thrive without you. Also a special thanks to the judges who have been so willing to come and give up their time and often their own personal finances to get these tests run for us.

On the horizon are a couple of really exciting things for our region. First of all, we have been selected to host the 2008 NAKP test. This is a tremendous honor as well as an opportunity. It will take a lot of hard work and planning and all in the region that are willing to help, please give me a call and we will definitely put you to work. In addition, we would like to have

a lot of participation from dogs and handlers in our region. If you have any questions about qualifying your dog or running in the NAKP, just contact me and we will get you started. Another exciting development has been the addition of Mexico to our region. We are lending a hand at getting them to be self-supporting as their own "region" but until that time, they are under our wing. Their first test will be in October and there is a lot of work to be done to try and prepare them and their dogs. They are starting "from scratch" down there so they will need some guidance. There are at least 6 members with dogs there already and a few more that are very interested. We would like not only to welcome them to the DKV and the Mid-South Region, but help them as much as possible to expand their membership in Mexico. We are working on getting judges down there as well as sending personnel down to go through rules, training and handling so that they can better prepare for October. Anyone willing to help out with getting our new Mexican friends established can contact me as well.

Our training days have been a resounding success. We have scheduled monthly training days throughout October at this point. I welcome participation from everyone! Our region and membership is rather spread out and it is not practical for members too far from Oklahoma to participate actively. We have groups of members in other states that I want to make sure are not isolated or left out.

continued on page 2

## TRAINING DATES:

July 22, 2007

August 19, 2007

September 16, 2007

November 18, 2007

## TEST DATES:

Solm/AZP/VGP and Blood-tracking test dates: November 29—December 4



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## REGIONAL NEWS—continued from page 1

I would like to hear from those of you who are interested, then perhaps we can set up training days for you in your more immediate areas. And please, for those of you who are actively training, breeding or hunting already, let us hear from you and what you are up to as well. My wish is to keep all of the regional membership “in the loop”. My job is to assist any of you in getting your dog trained and tested in any way that we can. Even if you are just looking for a pup or a dog, we have resources for that as well. Any concerns or ideas that you might have for our regional “out reach” would be welcome.

Another development has been the addition of help, resources and judges from the JGV-USA which is well populated in our region. They have been extremely generous to our club and we are developing a better working relationship with their membership. This will be a tremendous opportunity for our region in so many ways. Not only in judging resources, but also in a huge amount of collective experience with training and handling. I hope to have many of

them attending training days and would like to reciprocate with any assistance that we can lend them as well. The opportunity to work with these members will effectively double the number of available tests in our region. So, if in the near future you see a guy with a really fuzzy dog at a training day, shake his hand!

These are just a few things that are happening in our region. If there is any way that I can better serve you as a member please feel free to give me a call or email. We are having a really good time and enjoying our dogs and that is what it is really all about!

Kurzhaar Voran,  
Gayla Salvati, DVM



**The children enjoyed playing with the Crawfish as much as the rest of us enjoyed eating them during the April Derby Crawfish boil.**

## TRAINING SCHEDULE GUIDELINES

By Phil and Gayla Salvati

There are no “rules” or “recipes” for training. You must be flexible and adjust to your dog. You should take this schedule as a guideline and remember to be flexible. It is important to remember that teaching some commands like “sit” are rather low pressure for your dog and your dog may simply pick up the whole idea of “sit” before you even think of teaching the command formally. But more importantly teaching other tasks to your dog, like fetching on command; staying steady to wing, shot and fall; and halt during shooting with the handler out of sight; can be significantly high pressure on a dog. Therefore, you have to stay aware of how your dog is handling this pressure and that he is mentally mature enough to do it. You have to know how to keep things fun and when enough it enough.

It is also important to recognize that although we have tried to break down many of these tasks into a logical order and a logical training sequence, many of these tasks go hand in hand and are taught as a sequence that combines the trained retrieve, “come”, “heel”, and “sit”. In fact, most of the tasks required of the VGP and Solms dog are a sequence of “commands”. Teaching a new more complex task requires combining and building upon other more simple tasks, and commands that the dog already understands. Therefore, before you can effectively send a dog on a long feather drag e.g., the dog must already be under control when off leash (obedience), immediately pick up the bird when he finds it (trained retrieve), and return with it to heel, sit down, and hold the bird until asked to give (obedience). Be aware of these “sequences” and what they consist of. Don’t skip on the basics with your dog. Give him a good solid foundation to build on and those more complex tasks ahead will fall into place much more easily for both the trainer and the dog.

So much of the VGP and Solms are retrieving, retrieving, retrieving. A correct polished retrieve is so important that you will very likely not get a dog through the higher level tests without it. A formally trained retrieve is a critical step in the development of a versatile hunting dog, and this can not be stated strongly enough. Most of our dogs are natural retrievers, some even fall into the “fanatic” category. However, this does not lessen the importance of a trained retrieve for your dog. Most dogs are also born knowing how to sit down, but we still teach the dog to “sit” on command because we need him to do it when and how we wish him to do it. It is the same for the retrieve. As stated before, the “force fetch” can be a high pressure training time for a dog. He must be mentally able to handle it, but it is also important for the trained retrieve to be taught as early as possible when formal VGP/Solms training begins. In general, immediately after the Derby is a good time to begin retrieve training. Because of variations in age, some dogs may be mentally ready for retrieve training before the Derby, however, be careful of putting that kind of pressure on a young dog before his first test. Dogs will all “wilt” a little under this pressure and it takes time to build their confidence back up. For a while, training isn’t fun for the dog until he figures out what you are asking of him. You don’t want to try and take a pup through a Derby test while he is still in the “wilting” stage and not as confident in you and himself as he should be. So, in most cases, after the Derby is a good time to force fetch.

Force fetching is also unique in that it is a task that is best taught while no other training is being done. In other words, once you start, train nothing else until you are done. Set time aside when you can dedicate yourself from start to finish. Two (or three) short sessions a day and keep after it until the dog is reliably and happily retrieving anything you send him for, coming to heel, sitting, and holding until asked. Once you start, finish it. If you don’t have time to get it done right, send the dog to a trainer to have it done. In most cases, a month is more than enough time to get it done. If the dog needs a mental break from force fetching, take him for a run or a swim and have “happy time”. But don’t pile on more aggravation and pressure by more training on something else. Think of it this way, force fetch training for your dog is the same as you doing your taxes...once you sit down to do them you don’t like distractions, you want to be focused and get them over as soon as possible. When you do need a mental break, the last thing you want to do is spend that time paying bills or helping your kids with their calculus homework.

While “mixing it up” may not be a good idea during the force fetch training, it is actually a good idea for the rest of your training schedule. Don’t get bored with training and don’t bore your dog while being trained. Mix it up, have fun, don’t pound any one command to death.

Continued on page 4

## TRAINING SCHEDULE GUIDELINES—continued from page 3

You might also have noticed that no where on the schedule or in the training list is blood tracking mentioned. This is not because blood tracking isn't important. In fact, along with retrieving, blood tracking is a critical skill for the VGP. Fail the blood track, fail the VGP. However, blood tracking is difficult to "schedule" and fit into a training day. In reality, blood tracking is much more of a big deal mental block to the handler, than a problem for a dog to learn. At the very least, blood tracks are a true 50-50 team effort between the dog and the handler. Running a blood track is usually outside of the comfort zone of most first-time hunting dog trainers and we all tend to get a little freaked out about whether or not our dogs can handle it. The truth is that most dogs can handle even a two day old blood track with little trouble and it is the handler who needs the "training". A good portion of training the blood track is learning the logistics of how to do it, properly setting the dog up so that he can learn and be successful, and then teaching the handler to actually let the dog learn and not be a hindrance to him! Because blood tracking is so "specialized" in its own category and because of variations between dogs and handlers, it will be handled separately in terms of our training days and scheduling so that training for it can be tailored specifically for each dog/handler team. It is still a critical portion of the VGP so don't forget or neglect it. And, if you are one of those that is really outside of your comfort zone when it comes to blood tracks, by all means, ask for help!

So good luck to all in your training. Always know that if you run into trouble or have questions that help is available. Not to mention, we will be covering all of these topics at our regional training days. We all want you and your dogs to be successful and have fun too. Training your own dog will be one of the most rewarding experiences you can have together. Please feel welcome at our training days and most importantly we will help you find training resources should you need them.

## LOGICAL PROGRESSIONS

### HALT:

- Introduction of command "halt"
- Halt with shot
- Halt with shot, handler out of sight
- Halt on whistle
- Halt during driven hunt



HALT

### STEADINESS:

- Introduction of command "whoa" (whoa post)
- Whoa in yard
- Whoa in field with shot
- Whoa with birds
- Steady to wing/shot/fall



WHOA POST

## LOGICAL PROGRESSIONS—continued from page 4

### WATER WORK:



WATER WORK

- Introduction of command “back” or “over”
- “Back” with short distance
- “Back” with long distance
- “Back” with ducks

### RETRIEVING:

- Force Fetch
- Short Drags
- Long Drags
- Introduction of Fox; Fox in box
- Fox Drag; BTR



SEARCH

### FIELD WORK:

- Search
- Whistle
- Steadiness

### OBEDIENCE:

- Heel, Sit, Halt, Whoa, Come
- Heel on leash
- Heel off leash

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"Whoever said you can't buy happiness forgot little puppies." - Gene Hill

**WHAT YOUR DOG SHOULD KNOW BEFORE STARTING VGP/SOLMS TRAINING:****Search:**

Foundation: Dog should be building drive, having fun, know why he is there, start cuing off handler, whistle introduced, no command you can't enforce.

Goal: Handle kindly to whistle or voice. Respond to handler with cooperation but bold enough to cover field and seek game on his own.

**Come:**

Foundation: Dog should know his name and be responding and coming at least to arm's length of handler.

Goal: Come instantly when called. Dog comes to heel and sits on one command "come".

**Heel:**

Foundation: Heeling on leash with little trouble.

Goal: Dog walks in position at any speed on loose lead with no pulling, or no lead, with automatic sit (no command) when handler stops.

**Sit:**

Foundation: Sits on command.

Goal: Dog sits when given one command, sits automatically (no command) when at heel and handler stops, sits automatically (no command) at heel when returning from retrieve/drag.

**Halt:**

Foundation: Halts when put in position.

Goal: Dog will halt on voice or whistle command immediately especially in presence of game. Will halt quietly even with shots and handler out of sight, with other dogs around or during driven hunt portion of test.

**Whoa:**

Foundation: Whoa post work introduced and hopefully completed.

Goal: Whoa on command instantly and be steady until sent for retrieve during field work. Stop to flush with no command. Stop to shot with no command (backing).

**Pointing:**

Foundation: Points game, even a flash point.

Goal: Seek and find game and establish staunch point. Hold steady until sent for retrieve. Relocated on own or on command.

WHAT YOUR DOG SHOULD KNOW BEFORE STARTING VGP/SOLMS TRAINING:

**Water:**

Foundation: Dog readily swims on his own and enjoys water.

Goal: Enter water on one command, go straight across and begin a thorough search. Have desire to find and retrieve duck. Immediately return to handler and come to heel, sit without command and hold duck until asked to "give".

**Retrieve:**

Foundation: Force fetch complete.

Goal: Dog should enthusiastically search for and pick up anything asked for by handler, return immediately to heel and sit with no command, and hold game until "give". Should not drop or chew game, bury or eat it. Should be a brisk return with enthusiasm (no peeing!)

**Gunfire:**

Foundation: Introduction of gunfire.

Goal: Should have no sensitivity to gunfire in field or water. Stop to shot. Remain on halt with shot.

July Training Day:

- Heeling exercises
- Halt with shot, handler out of sight
- Back, big water with ducks, into water on first command
- Drags, longer off check cord
- Fox in Box
- Will hunt close on command

August Training Day:

- Halt on whistle, stays with shot, handler out of sight
- Steadiness complete
- Drags with judge in woods
- Duck search, shot in water
- Retrieves to heel, holds, gives on command
- Heels on and off leash

September Training Day:

- Time to polish, correcting problems
- Mock tests w/blood tracks for VGP dogs

October Training Day:

- JGHV test in Lawton

November Training Day:

- Mock test for Solms/AZP dogs

December Test Day:

- November 29 through December 4



THE MID-SOUTH REGION APRIL 2007 DERBY AND ZUCHTSCHAU



Zuchtschau—Alter Hundin



Zuchtschau—Alter Ruden



Derby Dogs