



NEWSLETTER

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OUR GOAL: To Promote, Preserve, and Experience One of the Greatest Southern Traditions Known... Quail Hunting.

Spring Field Trial

Our 9th Annual Spring Field Trial will return to Frost Farms Saturday, March 1. We will use the same modified National Bird Dog Challenge format that we have used the last two years. We like this exciting format because it challenges both the dog and skill of the shooter. It also takes most of the subjectivity out of the hands of the judges. The judges verify the points, retrieves, misses and time used. It is also minimizes the luck of the draw.

The set up at Frost Farms is absolutely ideal for both the participant and spectator which is why we are having it there for the 3rd year in a row. The fields have good cover and the cabin with glass windows and porches facing both fields offers protection from the elements and a great views of all the action. If you have never competed before, jump in and get your feet wet. In past years, several dogs have placed or won on their first try. On the other hand when things don't go well, no one is ridiculed because we have all been there. I will guarantee you everybody will have a great time!

We will have three classes: puppy, derby and gun dog. Advance registration is encouraged but we will accept entries up until the braces are drawn. For further information, you could either come to our Feb. 11th meeting at Lloyd's Restaurant at 7pm or call Frank Harris evenings at 595-0203.

Directions to Frost Farm on Page 3

Quail Hunting in Texas

SHORT VERSION

Have I got a story for you! Recently I've just returned from a very special quail hunting trip in Texas. Physically I'm back but mentally I'm continue to relive the trip. "Relive the trip" may not be the right choice of words, it's a little conservative, so probably "daydream about the trip" is more appropriate. THE trip was to Albany, Texas as the guest of club member Harold Ridgeway and it was to hunt quail. I came home in awe of great dog work, quail coveys that held tight, the great state of Texas, and the humility of my host.

I preface this tale by saying that until this Texas trip, my bird hunting experience has been limited to Georgia and Alabama. I've had years of wonderful days afield in the southeast but I never experienced anything like this Texas adventure. We took fifteen dogs on the trip and all fifteen dogs, even the youngest, packed more wild coveys into their ground time than they would see in a season or two at home.

Another surprise I encountered was that over the years, talking to friends that had hunted Texas, I'd heard many times of covey rises that were way out in front of the dogs. Consequently, I expected shots to be long and the challenge to be great. What I actually encountered was coveys that held tight, VERY tight, and flushed close to the dogs in a fashion more like an explosion than a covey rise. That brings up



Harold Ridgeway & Tap Jack

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AQH Fall Field Trial

November 2, 2002

PLACEMENTS

PUPPY

1. Hooter - Tommy Smith
2. Dot - Aaron Parker
3. Major - Laylon Cox
4. Judy - Aaron Parker

DERBY DOG

1. GT - Tommy Smith
2. Jack - Aaron Parker
3. Dixie - Patrick Baldwin
4. Hooter - Tommy Smith
5. Jack - Andy Anderson
5. Bo - Aaron Parker

GUN DOG

1. Sioux - Bob Carr
2. Sport - Tommy Smith
3. Rose - Johnny Littleton
4. Dot - Aaron Parker
5. Jake - Jim Bradford

Quail Shoppers Corner

For Sale: Reflections by Ed Mack Fariior. A recollection of the "Golden Years" of quail hunting on the major field trial circuit, from 1913 through 1960. Hardback editions, \$30.00, postage paid. Paperback editions, \$17.50, postage paid. Call Ed Mack at 334-738-2223 or write him at

207 Chunn St.,
Union Springs, AL 36089.

A hardback & paperback will be available for viewing at Feb Meeting.

AQH Members, do you have equipment you would like to sell, or do you need to buy some more equipment? Place your add in the Quail Shoppers Corner for \$5.00 per newsletter.

PRESIDENTS CORNER

Hello Folks: This past November we had an excellent day for our field trial at M & H Farms north of Talladega. I hope all of you will join me in thanking our host and will consider them for a visit. M & H Farms offers released bird hunting and sporting clays. Also remember to congratulate the winners.

On the first Saturday in March , Frost Farms @ Calera , 665-7810, will host our next trial. At our April monthly meeting on the 2nd Tuesday at 7 PM we are welcoming Mr. Roy Bragg as our speaker . Mr. Bragg owns a quail plantation near Albany, GA. He is a principal in J. H. Berry Real Estate Firm in Birmingham.

The Alabama Quail Trail is up and running , for those of you with Internet capability the website is listed as Alabama Quail Trail .org . Hopefully this year will allow for the Quail Restoration page to be filled and become an active part of the trail. Anyone wanting to advertise on the quail trail website should contact Maria Sasser with Wildlife Federation in Montgomery, 334-832 WILD .

A fellow member & bird hunter, Mr. Mike Arban of Tyler has become diagnosed with a serious illness. I ask each of you to keep him in your thoughts and prayers. He also has several English pointers pups available. If you are in the market you may want to contact his son- n-law Philip Wiedmeyer, 205-541-5040.

On another sad note , I learned that Stan Stewart's sister has passed away after a battle with cancer. I am certain that you will recognize that Stan is our quail expert with DCNR. Please join me in expressing sympathy for Stan.

Please take care of your membership dues. All boards members work by contributing their time and without reimbursement for travel. We do this to keep cost under control. Therefore it is extremely important that dues are paid so the board does not have to take time on administrative matters.

John Walker offered to show me the public hunting facility, WMA, near Decatur . The area is known as Swan Creek and consist of 8,870 acres. This farm included some very appealing habitat , but didn't produce birds. I am speculating that either over hunting by man or predators is taking its toll on the birds. Please be aware that public hunting on Wildlife Management Areas now requires an additional \$16 permit. Please share your hunting experiences with us in our newsletter.

Remember that habitat enhancement is the key to good quail populations, I encourage each of you to make a special effort to improve habitat on your land or lease this spring.

Frank

DON'T FORGET TO VISIT
www.newleafpub.com/alaquail
www.alabamaquailtrail.com

Also remember the Q.U. Banquet on March 6
Contact Katie Robertson at 205-669-9253

Quail Hunting in Texas

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my shooting. I hit more tail feathers than I care to admit but I learned, slowly I do confess, that speed in the swing is a critical skill when dealing with coveys that seemed to literally burst forth from the ground and rocket away.

Oh, I mentioned the humility of my friend and host, Harold Ridgeway. The first day of the trip I was in awe of the surroundings. I have never seen so much open sky, and the tremendous amount of game, all types of game, was enough to leave anyone speechless. At one point, as we were driving to the lease, I excitedly hollered "Harold, look at that huge deer". Harold glanced over and at the deer and said "Mike that's not a big deer, just wait and you'll see a real big deer". Shortly, I found out what he was talking about. I saw deer that looked like they could serve in the place of draft horses! It was no different with the ducks, turkey, or quail. I was coming to the realization that yes, things are bigger in Texas. By the second day I had come to understand that the land was capable of bleeding you dry if you didn't watch where and how you stepped. I think that this part of Texas was why briar pants were

invented. On the third day I was wondering how in the world Harold could experience this big piece of outdoor paradise and still walk and talk like a regular guy. I thought that to Harold, Texas versus hunting in the south must be kind of like the difference between the major leagues and the farm teams but remembering past conversations with Harold, I'd never heard him boast, brag, or say anything condescending about the quail hunting adventures of those of us in the uninitiated group. Then I came to the realization that having a wonderful lease is just a part of the picture. The effort put into assembling a fine string of pointers, training them, and enjoying their performance in the field provides a level of satisfaction that is hard to match. To attain this level competence Harold's ability to train the dogs and his appreciation of the hunting experience had been developed and honed over a lifetime of hunting, his skill level had just experienced a Texas style stretch of the envelope! Yet there was a third component, good fellowship and the pleasure of sharing fun times. This is where I came in the picture and boy am I glad! The chance to share



Mike Barlow & Kate

an experience heightens the joy of a day in the field and also makes for some fine story telling material. Fortunately for those of us that have had the chance to hunt with Harold, or with other good friends and family, the opportunity to share the experience just reinforces the feeling that a day spent in the field with fine friends and good dogs, hunting a noble bird, is just about impossible to beat.

I said I'd give you the "short" version of my Texas quail-hunting trip and I'm trying to keep my word. However, if you want the two-hour double back flip version, just give me a call. Now, I close with hope that this New Year provides each of you with great health, happiness, and lots of wonderful hunting experiences.

Mike Barlow

Directions to Frost Farm (FROM PAGE 1)

- Take I-65 South from B'ham or North from Mont.
- Exit at the Shelby Co. Airport Exit.
- Take Left onto Co. RD. 12-Go to the end
- Take Right onto Co. rd. 22, then 1st Left back onto Rd. 12
- Stay on Co. rd.12 till it dead ends.
- Take Left onto Co. Rd. 16 and go over hill
- Take Right onto Co. Rd. 23
- Take Right onto 1st paved road-Co. Rd. 222
- Follow to the dead end- Go through the Field

Treasurer's Desk

Thanks to all of you who have already paid your 2003 dues. If you have not yet paid your dues for 2003, your \$15.00 is due at this time.

My mailing address is:

1901 Morgan Road SE
Bessemer, AL 35022

If you have moved, changed telephone numbers or have a new Email address, please include a printed or typed note to me with your correct personal information, particularly your correct Email address. Thank you very much.

Bob Carr
Treasurer, AQH

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone (____) _____ Office Phone (____) _____

Email Address _____

New Member Renewal

2003 DUES – \$15.00

Check Payable to "Alabama Quail Hunters"

Call Jim Bradford, 991-8635 or for more information.



Alabama Quail Hunters

1901 Morgan Road S.E. • Bessemer, Alabama 35022



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