



NEWSLETTER

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

November 2020 • Published Quarterly • N.H. Holt, Editor

As many of you know we lost a dear friend and phenomenal AQH supporter in Harold Ridgeway. Harold served on the AQH board from early on.

Over the years Harold contributed to AQH in so many ways we don't have room to mention them here.

He will be sorely missed!

Our newsletter this quarter is dedicated to Harold.

Below is a thank you note from his widow - Sandra Ridgeway.

The family of
Harold L. Ridgeway
acknowledges with deep appreciation
your kind expression
of sympathy

*Dear friends, thanks to all of you who were such an important part of Harold's life. He so looked to the friendship and companionship of all of you for sharing your love of bird hunting and knowledge of the great outdoors. I will miss him but I know he took many beautiful memories with him of his life.
Best always, Sandra Ridgeway*

A Tribute to Harold Ridgeway

By Robby Thomas

A month ago, Frank Harris approached me and asked if I could write an article about Harold Ridgeway for the Alabama Quail Hunters Quarterly newsletter. I agreed as Harold and I were fairly close over the past 12 years and we spent many long weekends working on his Marion farm and working his endless string of bird dogs. Well, I did not realize how difficult it was going to be to condense 12 years of history onto a 4-page newsletter.

As I looked at the list of remaining bird dogs in his kennel, I began reflecting on the time Harold and I spent with them over the years and this would be a good starting point of discussion. Harold had left sixteen dogs and entrusted me to find them a home that would give them an opportunity to live out their lives. And with the assistance of Fred Rayl and his connections with various plantations we were able to get them to look at the dogs for consideration. Eight of the dogs I know very well and had spent a lot of time with them. I will give a brief summary on these eight dogs.

Ridgeway's Honey Rider (Dot) - Harold acquired Dot from Gary Lester in late 2009 as a puppy. He brought his female Liz to Gary Lester's place to breed her to Gary's National Champion Lester's Snowwatch. Now Liz was out of Harold's "Blue Hen" Blackhawk's Meg (Ch Rock Acre Blackhawk x Elhew Katie Lee) to Peewee Cole's Ch Rock Acre Playmaker. Most of Harold's kennel at the time were from Rock Acre Kennels and he felt he needed some outside blood lines. As Dot got older, she proved to be a lot more dog than what Harold had bargained for. I suggested he let Fred Rayl train her for a few months to get her to handle and hold on her birds.

Ridgeway's Journeyman (Bubba) - Bubba was the product of the breeding between the National Champion Lester's Snowwatch and Festival (Liz). The litter produced 5 pups, 4 males and 1 female. As we worked these pups in the spring the female pup was head and shoulders above the rest. Unfortunately, she somehow found a hole under the fence and met here demise. As the weeks went by these other 4 male pups, were cut of the same mold as Dot and required special handling going forth. He sent them to Buddy Smith to work and through process of elimination according to which pup suited Harold, Bubba remained. The next summer, Harold brought Bubba up to South Dakota for a few weeks. Bubba proved to be way more dog than expected. Bubba had a great nose and found way more birds than the other dogs but he was hard to control. After much discussion, the decision was

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made to send Bubba that fall to Fred Rayl to train. Harold sent Dot to Fred Rayl earlier in the spring with translated into great results! Hopefully the outcome would be the same with Bubba.

After a couple of months with Fred Rayl, Harold receive a call from Fred inquiring if he considered running Bubba in field trials. Harold agreed to let Fred continue working Bubba and run him at the National Derby Championship to be held at Shell Coin Plantation in Catherine, AL. Fred came up to Marion, AL to train the dogs. Fred also had another one of Harold's young dogs, Ridgeway's White Diamond (Cody). Bubba was doing a very nice job at the trial, running big and doing a nice job of handling. Fred sent him up the left side edge of the field and he disappeared out of sight. I was scouting for Fred and found Bubba on point. Bubba was polished- on his game, steady to wing and shot. We turned Bubba loose to continue the hour, but Bubba had plans of doing things his way. In essence, he gave Fred the finger and went his merry way. Bubba ran in one more derby trial and did a commendable job. But, at Fred's advice, Bubba's tendency to tune you out made it very difficult to finish him in a trial.

Bubba proved to be a bird finding machine in Texas. The rule was giving him his lead, track him with the GPS, and go to him when it signaled, he was on point.

Ridgeway's Belle (Belle) - Belle was the product of the mating of Ch Strut to Blackhawk's Meg. Strut belonged to Tommy Davis, Field Trial Hall of Fame handler. Strut was out of Ch Rock Acre Blackhawk, the same sire for Meg. Of the 4 pups in the litter, Belle made the cut. Belle was not the sharpest tool in the shed but she was biddable and a very attractive running dog. Harold sent her to Fred when she was a year old for a couple of months to get her steady on her birds. Harold kept her mainly for a brood female, but never did breed her or was unsuccessful.

Ridgeway's Penny Line (Penny) - Harold acquired Penny from Pee Wee Cole. Harold always wanted a pup out of PeeWee's dog Rock Acre Swinger. When PeeWee came to Alabama to judge the National Open Shooting Dog Championship held at Union Springs, AL, he brought Harold Penny. Penny turned out to be a pup with a lot of prospect. Harold was so impressed with her that he wanted to campaign her in field trials. Harold sent her to Fred in October when she was 9 months old. Within a couple of months-old Penny was derby broke as a pup and ran an all

age ground race and was biddable. With no wild birds in Texas, Harold was ready to go watch his Penny at the field trials. Over the next few years Harold and I went to watch Penny as she ran over some of the finest wild quail plantations in South Georgia and North Florida. In Florida, the Dixie Plantation and Chinquapin Plantation (only one missed), and in Georgia, Abigail Plantation, Blue Springs Plantation and Nochaway Plantation. Penny's field trial career came to an end in the spring of 2016 when she was reaching her prime at 4 years old. Since the quail population in Texas had made such a comeback in 2016 Harold was going to have more enjoyment bird hunting behind Penny.

Ridgeway's Windstorm (Lacy) - Lacy was another dog acquired from PeeWee Cole. PeeWee brought her at the same time he brought Penny. Lacy was a nice handling dog. The challenge with Lacy was keeping her staunch on her birds. Lacy spent some time in Fred Rayl's spring training puppy program.

Rock Acre Jo Jo (Jo) - Jo was a product of one of Harold's male dogs Ridgeway's White Diamond (Cody) and a female he acquired from Joe Don House. Jo had a lot of potential as a field trial dog but Harold was only interested in getting her ready for quail hunting. She spent the summer in Montana with Fred Rayl. And Harold thought she was going to be one of his best dogs yet.

King's Court Jewel (Jewel) - Harold reminisced about wanting another English setter in his kennels. Some of his best bird hunting days were behind 2 of his favorites, Skip and Jake. He contacted his good friend and old hunting buddy R.B Garret who Harold met when he had the lease in Albany, Texas. R.B. had one that was too much dog for the NSTRA trials that he liked to compete in. Harold agreed to take Jewel. A few weeks later R.B contacted Harold and told him that we have a problem. It had become apparent that an accidental breeding happened and Jewel was bred by a son of her littermate. I asked Harold to get me a copy of the pedigrees from R.B. so we could decide on whether he wanted to get Jewel or not. The pedigree of these setters was just as impressive as Harold's pointers pedigree. I told Harold to go ahead and get Jewel and I would keep her until she whelps and wean the pups. Harold agreed and we met R.B at the Bass Pro Shop in Leeds, AL.

On June 9th, 2015, Jewel whelped 8 of the prettiest pups, 5 females and 3 males. My brother, Paul Thomas, and I tagged team in raising the pups until about 12 weeks. I made an arrangement with Harold that I will find homes for the females and when the male pups were around 12 weeks of age I would bring to his kennels. Harold kept the 3 males and sent them to Fred Rayl's for training before the pups were a year old. He would select the best one and sell others.

H R's Tucker (Tucker) - Tucker was the lone setter male that Harold kept out of Jewel's litter.

These dogs brought Harold many hours of enjoyment as did the many others that have passed through his kennel. Hopefully, I can put some additional thoughts together for the Spring newsletter and provide some insights on his earlier dogs and how our friendship began with a pup.

From the Treasurer's Desk

I hope that you and your family are well. Please look at your printed mailing address. If you see "12-20" after your name, you have paid your 2020 AQH dues. Any other numbers or if "???" is after your name, your 2020 dues are past due. Please make you check out to Alabama Quail Hunters and mail it to me at 2245 Pine Lane, Hoover, AL 35226.

Thanks, Bob

Welcome to our Newest Members:

Allen Brooks - Vestavia Hills
Mark Crews - Tuscaloosa
Brandon Harris - Dora
Perry Smith - Birmingham

The Harold Ridgeway Fall 2020 Field Trial

As a tribute to Harold Ridgeway we would like name this year's Fall field trial in honor of him. The Fall field trial will, once again, be hosted by Gates Shaw at his Brierfield Farm on December 12th. We would love to have your participation! Please be sure to thank Gates for his continued support, friendship, and willingness to share his property!

Please pre-register your dogs by December 10th (Thursday) at the latest. Please contact Bob Carr (205-902-4156) or Frank Harris (205-595-0203) to register.

Registration Fees:

Puppy Class (Up to 12 months old): \$35

[Class dependent on number of pre-registered pups]

Derby Class: (Up to 36 months old): \$40

Gun Dog: (Open to any dog): \$45

Senior Dog: (Dogs over 8 years old): \$45

[Class dependent on number of pre-registered dogs]

Directions to Gates Shaw's Farm

- Take I-65 and Exit at the Montevallo & Calera Exit onto AL Hwy 25.
- Go South on AL Hwy 25 through Calera, Montevallo & Wilton (about 13 miles total) to Bibb Co. Hwy 65 (about 7 miles from Wilton).
- Turn Right onto Bibb Co. Hwy 65 and go about 1 mile to Carlton Pass.
- Turn Right onto Carlton Pass and go to the dead end. The gate at the dead end is the entrance into Gates Shaw's Farm. Go through the gate to the designated parking area.



MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

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

Cell Phone (____) _____

Email Address _____

2020 DUES — \$15

Check payable to "Alabama Quail Hunters"

Call Bob Carr, (205) 902-4156 for more information.



2245 Pine Lane, Hoover, AL, 36226



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