

2011 NGSPA QUAIL CHAMPIONSHIP  
January 26-February 2  
By Will Barbee

The running of the 2011 NGSPA Quail championship was held again this year at the Lake Murray field trial grounds in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Thankfully this year we enjoyed completely different weather conditions than the last few years. We started with chilly mornings and mild afternoons the first three days. Followed by a couple of warm to hot days. Cooling off before the big winter storm which blanketed the region with ice, sleet, and snow. The forecast for ice forced us to cancel the Open All Age and Futurity stakes. This enabled most of the participants to get out before the worst of the storm; however, four rigs got iced and snowed in and were unable to leave for five to six days.

This years entries of 46 Open Shooting Dogs and 40 Amateur Shooting Dogs is the largest number of entries at the championship in recent history. The drawing for the Open Shooting Dog was held Tuesday evening at the clubhouse. This building has been updated by the Oklahoma Field Trial Association and friends who have made personal donations. The improvements consisted of a new bigger stove, gas heater, and a sink with running water. These changes make the clubhouse a more comfortable place to meet, eat, get warm and socialize with tall tales and stories of the days runnings.

Thanks to all the judges for the hours they spent in the saddle with their keen eyes and final judgements. Judges for the Open Shooting Dog included Jack Murphy from Nowata, Oklahoma, Ken Levy from Onawa, Iowa. Judges for the Amateur Shooting Dog included Gene Mosley from Hempstead, Texas and Mike Martin from Bella Vista, Arkansas. Your efforts and hours were sincerely appreciated.

I would like to extend special thanks to Purina and Pat Lamantia who continue to sponsor our Championship and support the field trial world. Their donations of Pro Plan Dog Food for the winners, and monetary contributions which sponsored the Pro Banquet steak dinner on Thursday evening, help to continue the excellence and success of this field trial. Thank you to Kevin Temple who manned the dog wagon all day and grilled the steaks for the Pro Banquet the same evening to perfection!

Thank you to Sierra Trading Company for your sponsorship which included Smith's workwear coats with a gorgeous embroidered quail in flight on the back. These were presented to our judges. Also to Panterra Construction for their donation which provided evening hospitality in the clubhouse. Christie's Enterprises crafted a pair of saddlebags which were not awarded due to the storm which resulted in cancelled stakes. The saddlebags will be used next year.

Thank you to all from the LSGSPC and others for your active help and participation which make this event happen. Grant Stanfil, Scott Bodenstab, Kevin Temple, Nathan Lester, David Vogelsang, Andy Gerdes, Terry and Kirk Bommer, and of course James Messer from Houston. My job was more manageable this year with your help.

Thanks to my wife Kathleen, for your tireless efforts prior to the trial as well as during the trial. Helping me to organize, cook, serve and of course the baking. Our trial had the best cookies and blonde brownies north of the Red River! All returning participants look forward to your sweets and this year was no exception.

Special treats were enjoyed by all this year. Dennis Brath prepared his delicious shrimp and chicken jambalaya for dinner for the Amateur dinner on Saturday night. Not a piece of rice was left uneaten!

Hayley and David Killam hosted Sunday's dinner with an extensive Mexican buffet. From chicken and beef fajitas to enchiladas with all the trimmings, the food was delicious. The wheelbarrow full of iced down Corona beer was icing on the cake. Hayley and David also donated an impressive framed print which was raffled off. Proceeds from the print as well as the clubs proceeds from the Amateur Calcutta made for a nice donation to the Bird Dog Hall of Fame. Thank you Hayley and David.

The champion of the Open Shooting Dog this year was, Happy Hollow's Uodibar Tex, (Tex) owned by David Quindt and handled by Dennis Brath. The runner up went to Hodibar's Smart Albert, (Albert) owned by Hayley and David Killam, and handled by Eldon Hongo. Tex's race was strong and to the front the entire hour without being over handled in any way. He finished very strong which was what the judges were looking for the entire stake. Very few of the other dogs were able to accomplish this as the cover was thick on the course this year. Tex had four finds with excellent manners and style which impressed the judges. Our runner up Albert had a bird dog kind of day! Albert was rewarded with 9 finds as he made his way around the course which were all to the front. His lack of a bigger run, was in the judges mind, only due to so many finds. Albert's last find was a "big, big limb find" and his style was as top notch on the last point as it was on his first. Congratulations to both owners and their handlers.

The champion of the Amateur Shooting Dog this year went to Uodibar's Chocolate Wonder (Hank), Owned by Hayley and David Killam and handled by Hayley Killam. Runner Up honors to going to MSR'S Opalescence (Opal), owned and handled by James Messer. Our champion Hank was a true Shooting dog with lots of pop and style. Hayley handled Hank to three quality finds as he went to all of the places that an effective dog should go. All the time he using the wind to his advantage. The judges stated he was fun to watch and that they appreciated the quality of his championship effort. Our runner up handler James, had to endure a huge cast on the break away with Opal, but they came back with four finds and two stop to flushes, earning her the runner up spot. Opal had a high head and tail on her finds that displayed true championship style. The judges were "in the front of their saddles" enjoying her performance.

Thanks to everyone for attending this years running of the NGSPA Quail Championship and we hope to see you next year.