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NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Judy Murff; 4809 Roany Rd.; Gillette, WY 82716

FROM THE EDITOR

Well, this is it, folks. The "new" Newsletter. It's a little different than before and I hope you will like the changes that have been made. There are a couple of things that should be said right from the start. DEADLINES WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED. NO EXCEPTIONS. NOT EVER. DON'T ASK. Deadlines and advertising rates are listed on the last page. Also, I will not even consider printing anything that comes in anonymous. 'Nuf said.

The response to the question of our standard has been overwhelming. I received so much material that I originally planned to divide some of it into two parts, with the second part coming in the next issue. I discussed the idea with Craig Huegel and he encouraged me to print all material available in this same issue. He felt that it is too important an issue to let two months slide by between receiving all of the ideas and material. He is right, of course. Therefore, in order to keep the size and mailing costs of the Newsletter under control, a couple of articles originally scheduled for this issue will appear in the March/April issue instead. To the people sending these articles, or featured in these articles, I apologize. To the readers, you've got a lot to look forward to in the next issue.

One of the terrific new things that you'll notice about the Newsletter is "NOW by Nan". Nan Burket is one of the funniest and most interesting ladies I've ever met. She has agreed to write a regular column which will include absolutely everything under the sun. If you've got news to share with us, give Nan a call (309/787-6719) or drop her a note (16401 Knoxville Rd., Orion, IL 61273) and she will be happy to include it in her column. Been to any shows lately? Who won? Was the site wonderful or one to be avoided? Tried any new grooming or training equipment lately? How about funny stories about your dogs? Expecting puppies? Drop a note to Nan (or to me and I'll forward it to Nan) and let her include it in her column.

FROM THE EDITOR (continued)

Although my assignment as editor is only a temporary one, I will do my best to keep things interesting for you.

Thanks.

Judy Murff

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

Although there have been a number of minor Club "happenings" these past two months, there are two areas that require your attention. First among these is the controversy surrounding the AKC's mandate that we revise our breed standard. I am aware that my last column has generated a large amount of member response. This amount of interest is as it should be. As I've said before, I don't believe that we should be "blackmailed" by forces outside of the Club into doing a real revision. However, we could do a "cut and paste" job, together with a few clarifications, and come up with a product that would satisfy all with no blood loss. What we as a Club do will depend on the general membership's response. I have no personal stake in this - only to represent the best interests of the Club. If the general response is to proceed cautiously, then I will begin, with the Board, to put together a Committee that will do the revisions in format, etc., requested by AKC. By no means will this opportunity be used to do anything other than the reformatting and clarifications outlined in AKC's letter printed in the last Newsletter. We will not do any major revisions or actual changes such as height specifications or limits. These are beyond the scope of what is necessary to comply with AKC's request. Any changes recommended by the Committee also would, by constitution, have to be approved by a full mailed vote of the membership. I would appreciate hearing from any of you regarding this approach. Remember, however, that if you respond only through the Newsletter that I will not see your response for nearly 3-4 months after I type this.

Along these lines, I have been in contact with the president of AKC, Kenneth Marden, regarding this issue. I want to say that he was most cooperative. It is not his personal desire that the standard be used as leverage to advance a Club towards full-Club status. It is a policy established in 1987 by AKC's Board of Directors. After several phone conversations, he agreed to run interference for us with the result that they will now approve our application to begin holding plan A Matches. This is without making any changes to the standard. These changes will have to be made, barring any reversal of policy by AKC's Board, if we are to ultimately make the final advancement of full-club status and the ability to hold shows. However, this will give us a year for a committee to develop a standard reformatting and will not slow us down in our quest for full status.

The second issue that I want to bring to your attention is the progress of the breed video. Right now, we have scheduled a meeting with AKC in late March to go over the script. We will do the actual video-taping of the dogs in May. The committee will have to invite dogs to cover what needs to be shown in the video. I would appreciate hearing from you if you would be interested in traveling to New York/New Jersey to assist in this project. Please let me know also the names of the dogs that you could bring.

Craig Huegel

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor:

Upon reading the latest Newsletter I noticed that our Standard is, according to AKC, "not up to snuff." In order to hold the "A" Match that we want our Standard must be revised. It would appear that although we voted NOT to change the Standard for 10 years that possibly to satisfy the AKC some of the wording could be changed. (Their policy sounds more like blackmail to me.) The Sussex Spaniel is still considered one of the rarest breeds by the AKC and also a growing breed. We need more time to work with the breed and to make it better. I believe that the way to do this is to form a committee to look over our Standard and to give their recommendation to the Officers and Board. It is imperative that we work together as a Club for the good of the Club.

Joan Dunn
N3 W31535 Twin Oaks Dr.
Delafield, WI 53018

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (continued)

Dear Editor:

We have spent several hours discussing the matter about the AKC request for a better definition of a breed standard for the Sussex Spaniel. We carefully read the letter from the AKC published in the last issue of our Newsletter and we came to the conclusion that the AKC was not asking anything unreasonable from us.

Sylvia sensibly suggested that we define the problem, and that's where we began. We decided that the AKC has asked for a more definite description of the Sussex Spaniel and we, as a club, have been trying to avoid confronting the issue because some members are going to disagree (perhaps disagreeably) about some points of that description.

We have avoided the confrontation so far by procrastination: we decided (was it in 1985?) not to define our standard more clearly for ten years until we had enough breedable dogs on the ground and enough thriving kennels to assure the survival of the breed. That time came to hand a little sooner than we expected--we grew like Topsy, didn't we?

We suggest that it might be time to reconsider our 1985 decision, then start with a small committee to work on the compromise wording of our breed standard to conform with the AKC rules.

Or we could remain a Class B club for another seven years, letting the problem fester. It's our opinion that we have a Class A dog and we should let the world know about it. We think the SSCA could become a bona fide Class A club in a year or two with a good committee working on the breed standard statement.

On the other hand, the AKC has been known to nitpick until the words a committee has carefully crafted become meaningless. So why don't we have another committee to consider a back-up plan in case we can't accept AKC's final nitpick. We could make orphans of ourselves in the twinkling of an eye.

We could think of two viable alternative plans to the AKC as our parent club. We could form our own registry or we could join the United Kennel Club. There may be other alternatives we haven't thought of, so those of you who have other ideas, please raise your hands.

There are two popular breeds of dogs that have formed their own registries and both breeds are flourishing: the Border Collie and the Cavalier King Charles Spaniel. Neither belongs to the AKC. We presume that each club had a wondrous organization in order to begin their own registries and we don't see why the SSCA couldn't do the same thing, if push came to shove with the AKC.

The UKC is also an alternative if we understand clearly what the UKC would require for a description of the Sussex.

Our first choice for a parent club is AKC so let's see if we can manage to compromise within the SSCA to conform to the AKC's quite reasonable request for a more definite description of our breed.

Nan Burket
Sylvia Schlueter
16401 Knoxville Rd.
Orion, IL 61273

Dear Editor:

I would like to add my two cents worth concerning the AKC and our standard. I, too, do not want to fool with the standard, but, if doing some rewriting in such a way the judges can read and understand the standard, it may be worthwhile.

I am cognizant that our standard is somewhat vague; but, with a worldwide gene pool as small as the Sussex, it must be that way.

I would like to suggest a committee of five (5) made up of three breeders (can be Board members) and two others - i.e. fanciers (also can be Board members). I would also suggest at least one of the breeders be an importer of new blood or some of their dogs no more than one generation removed.

The committee should then send the new wording (NOTE: no change in the standard) to the general membership via the Newsletter for a vote. The membership can vote "yes" or "no" with failure to return the ballot considered a "yes" vote.

I feel the committee must be appointed now and get in contact with the AKC as soon as possible. In no way should the club appoint or allow one person to be involved with Mr. Mandeville of the AKC, for my 14 years in dogs has taught me these are people who will sacrifice the breed and breed clubs for their own self-aggrandizement. That must not be allowed to happen in this case. Our spaniels and their future are far too important.

As to the standard, bite appears to be one area with which AKC has a real problem. I concur with the statement, "Bite is not to be penalized." That takes care of that.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (continued)

Needless to say, I have other ideas about the wording of the standard, but, I do not want to burden the club in Newsletter cost.

In closing, I wish to make the following comment. I think the AKC finds the vocabulary of our standard too advanced for many of their judges ergo: we are going to be forced to simplify it.

Dr. Robert E. Clark
3621 Laurinda Dr.
Cedar Falls, IA 50613

Dear Editor:

I have been asked to comment on the standard - regarding the changes the AKC wants, the moratorium now in effect, and the need for either.

My first comment was "This will upset a lot of people", but I was asked, as one of the "old timers" in the breed, to go ahead.

First of all, for some of you new to the breed and club, I would like to mention that my late husband, George, and I became involved in the Sussex breed in 1970. Since then we have had champions, litters, and Group placing dogs - even in the early 1970's when Group placements for Sussex were all but unheard of. As a result, having always owner-handled, we have compiled quite a sampling of judge's comments on the standard.

To be perfectly honest, there are a couple of technicalities that we should get straight before anything else. My first and remaining feeling when reading the AKC suggested revisions was "They have no right to make us do this." The AKC really has no business trying to make the breed clubs revise their standards to some "formula" worked out at 51 Madison Ave. by the powers-that-be. To those of you who want to railroad through all that the AKC wants, let me please comment.

Some of you seem to think that getting "A" matches and being able to hold a specialty show and be a "recognized" club is the ultimate goal for us as a club. Officially, we are already "recognized" as the parent club for the Sussex Spaniel breed here in the U.S. People who write to the AKC for information are given the secretary's name and address. We have a club file at AKC, and are allotted space for a breed column in the AKC Gazette. To be approved for "A" matches is not a great step forward. To hold a specialty show, while nice, is not essential to the well-being of either breed or club. As far as being a "member" club, a club with an actual delegate to the AKC - do you know how many new clubs have been approved for delegate status in the last 20 years? About 2% - out of the hundreds applying. There are approximately 3,400 clubs that sponsor AKC shows, matches, obedience trials, etc. About 445 of these are delegate clubs. So if you have aspirations to be a SSCA club delegate to the AKC - don't hold your breath - it probably won't happen no matter what we do in any of our lifetimes. You have to put on shows for over 25 years to aspire to delegate status, plus fulfill all sorts of things we simply cannot afford to do. This is a small club for a numerically small breed - do you truly want 20,000 Sussex registered each year just so the club will have more impact on AKC?

Well, now that I have alienated any of you who, when the AKC says "jump" you say "how high", I will continue to upset some more of you by speaking against the "moratorium" now in effect for the breed standard. This went into effect over two years ago for a 10 year period to stop all discussion of changes in the standard. The entire membership did not have the opportunity to vote on this. Only the few who were lucky enough to be able to attend the annual meeting had any say. My feelings are that anything as important as the breed standard concerns everyone and ample discussion should go before, and every member should have a vote. Just as the moratorium was voted in, I believe it can be voted out.

O.K. - now lots of you are angry with me. But moving right along. . . . Please let me give you some facts and then some thoughts and suggestions. Sit back down, take a deep breath (purple is really not your color) and read on.

AKC aside, many people feel the standard needs some work. George and I always preferred to call them "clarifications". There are lots of judges out there who have told us we need something on size, on bite, on movement.

Face facts - if it is not mentioned in the standard, this does not mean that the judges are not judging it. The judges do judge bite - even though it is not mentioned. Do you want to know what they are saying? Without any hesitation they will tell you that a scissors bite is a "good" bite and anything else is a "bad" bite.

Our standard does not define a proper movement. Some judges want Sussex to gait like Pointers or Cockers. Some want them to gait like Basset Hounds. Most of them do not realize that a Sussex gait is like only one thing - a Sussex. However, judges put Sussex aside many times for "poor gait".

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (continued)

Size - what should a judge do when confronted by three 12" tall Sussex and one 15" - he will probably leave out the 15" as being too tall compared to the others. Or the other way - a 15" in the ring with three or four 18"-20" will be too small. What about when an 11", a 12", a 14" - need I go on? Surely we can say something on height. Judges confuse easily anyway.

I have had a judge tell me my dogs were "nice" but he always liked the "black ones" better. There are judges out there who truly don't know a Sussex from a Field, and now that most of the Field Spaniels being shown are liver, this confuses them still further. Now I'm making judges mad. So be it. Clarifying the standard won't help with some judges - they haven't read it in years and probably won't now. However, there are some judges out there that do want information. It would be an excellent idea, if the standard were clarified, to send as a club mailing a copy to every judge licensed to judge Sussex, Sporting Group, or Best In Show. Perhaps if it were printed on bright red paper it might actually come into eye contact with most of them.

One of the reasons that I was asked to write this article is that over the years I have come into direct contact with more judges than any of the other Sussex people showing. This is not only that I have been in Sussex for so many years, but also that we have shown often and handled our own dogs in the ring. To hear what the judges have to say, that is what you have to do. Show in Bred-By classes, if judges have questions the intelligent ones will ask them there.

Please believe me when I say that the judges are out there judging with or without the correct knowledge and it is a part of our duty as a club to make available to them the correct material they need to do a decent job.

Now, last of all I will give you my suggestions on how to approach the current standard problem.

First of all, take a vote - an all membership vote - to see if everyone thinks clarification of the standard is needed.

If it is, then form a committee. Let the committee use all input from members and the AKC proposed guidelines to formulate a better understood standard, without losing the standard we already have or the "flavor" with which it is written. This then would go back to the entire membership (not just those who can afford to show up at the annual meeting) for approval or not.

For example. Bite. Our present standard does not mention it. My suggestion - scissors bite preferred, level bite acceptable, under or overshot a minor fault. This will keep an otherwise excellent dog from being overlooked if he has an undershot bite (very common) by actually identifying it as a "minor fault". How much better this would be than the way it now allows judges in their omnipotence to decide good or bad.

We always have and always will strive for scissors bites, but I am not one to discard one whose only fault is bite. No one has tried harder than we have to get all scissors bites but being a recessive, we may never succeed totally.

Size and movement can be handled in the same manner. Handled by a committee and through the entire membership.

No ruling one way or another should be railroaded through by a select few go-getters. Let us take this slow and easy and do it right. If we don't, we may all live to regret it.

Marcia Deugan
Ziyadah, Reg.
26297 Morton Ave.
Bonita Springs, FL 33923

Dear Editor:

Craig has asked for our comments concerning the standardization of our standard which will have to take place before we can have "A" matches, and thus, point shows. Certainly, we want to be able to one day have point shows. I don't believe that the decision to bring our standard into conformity is going to be the controversial issue. I think that the suggested additions to the standard are going to be the problem, specifically the sentences concerning bite, grooming, and height and proportion.

What we must keep in mind, and what I'm sure most people are well aware of, is that nothing can be added casually. The standard cannot be updated from year to year as fanciers see fit. For example, a statement such as "bite is not to be penalized" is ridiculous. It is allowing for bad bites to be continued on for generations without consideration. Do we want to have faulty bites in existence for generations to come? In a Sporting breed, the mouth is a vital part of the dog. An over or undershot bite effects the way that a dog handles games. It does a lot to alter the soft expression. I would think that a statement such as "scissors bite preferred" or something along that line would

be more in the best interest of a Sporting breed.

As for height and proportion, there is such a great variation in type that agreement on this subject is going to be hard to come by. I keep hearing things like "these dogs need more leg under them so they can hunt" and "a 13" dog can't hunt" (by the way, I have pictures of my 13" dog hunting if anyone is interested). We seem to be losing sight of the original purpose of the Sussex Spaniel. The Sussex was not originally bred to do the same type of work as the other Spaniel breeds, which is why he is built differently. The Sussex is not supposed to be a fast dog which leaps over brush and dashes through fields with amazing speed. The Sussex is supposed to go under and through cover in search of game. In the AKC's The Complete Dog Book, it reads: "he (the Sussex) has not been imported to any great extent in this country, however, probably due to the fact that he has not sufficient speed for the average sportsman, WHO FACES CONDITIONS FAR DIFFERENT FROM THOSE ABROAD." Those last eight words are the key to my point. Just because the American terrain is different, does not mean that we should strive for an untypical dog which can do a faster job of working it. The Sussex is a slow, thorough hunter which NEEDS to be low to the ground to do the job it was meant for. If that's not the kind of dog you would want to work with, then why not get a nice, quick Springer which can bound over thick cover and miss those birds which were hiding inside?

However, for the sake of soundness and movement (also essential Sporting dog traits), we don't need them so low that they are walking on their bellies.

As for grooming, it is a matter of personal preference. The standard does say, "short hair between the toes", but you don't see many Sussex with trimmed feet. Whether we prohibit trimming of the ears and body coat is not really going to effect the judging of the dogs. A lot of standards call for the dogs to be shown in a natural state, but how many actually are? The Bearded Collie standard is a great example. I, for one, would go on thinning the tops of my male's ears, and I believe that he would go on placing in groups whether the standard prohibited that trimming or not. One statement in the Bearded Collie standard is one which I think would well describe the state in which I believe most people would prefer the Sussex be presented, it being: "the dog should be shown as naturally as is consistent with good grooming..."

I'm sure there are those who will definitely disagree with me, particularly on the height issue. But, the more people contribute, the more information Craig will have to go on. Bringing our standard into conformity can be a great thing if it is done carefully and with plenty of forethought.

As long as I have this space, I would like to confess to being the one with the "nice personality", a "pretty good dog" and "some money", which has "campaigned" "his" Sussex to a Group win, if you consider his fourth show of the year (in June) a campaign.

A nice personality? Well, most of the time. A pretty good dog? I think so. Some money? Well, not nearly enough!! In the four and a half years that I have owned Vicar, I have yet to have a single breeding inquiry, so I don't think we need to worry about Vicar becoming the breed standard anytime soon. Congratulations to the others of you which placed in groups in 1988; I think that we have shown that a good dog can win on good old merit!

Erin L. Emmons
517 C Frederick St.
Santa Cruz, CA 95062

Dear Editor:

It was with a bit of alarm and perplexity that I read of the proposal to revise the AKC Sussex Spaniel breed standard.

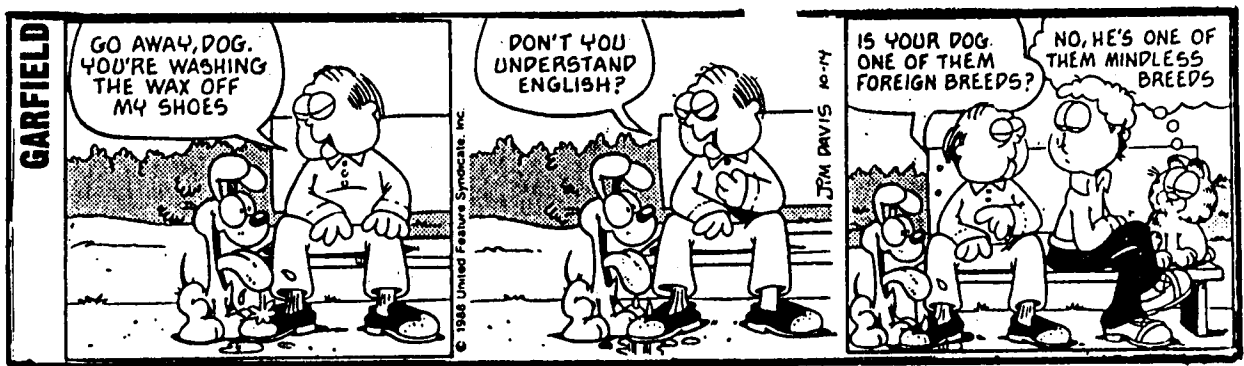
At the 1988 general meeting, the SSCA membership voted to re-affirm the 1985 decision to keep the current standard intact for ten years. Regardless of AKC urging to upgrade it to their preferred format.

Revising our breed standard is not a trivial chore - nor is it to be pursued lightly. Slight variations in wording could suddenly throw a heretofore winning dog out of the running. The concensus of the membership was that we simply have not amassed sufficient expertise to undertake a revision at this point.

So why is it comming up again???

Perhaps the true issue at hand is whether or not the SSCA really needs to achieve AKC "A" status? And if we do, when? What will it do for us, and for (or to) the breed? Is it so important that it absolutely must be done NOW? Might their not be some advantage in following the club dictates of a ten year moratorium on breed standard revision? And if this means forestalling "A" status for another six years, so be it.

Susan M. Wagenhals
118 W. 44th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55409



BREED STANDARDS

By Susan Wagenhals

(Enough of the editorial, now for some factual reporting.)

Because the issue of the Sussex Spaniel breed standard was brought to the fore, I thought it would be interesting to look at other standards for Sussex. To this end I compiled a chart of "Sussex Spaniel Standards at a Glance." It juxtaposes the AKC cut-and-paste with current American, Canadian, and British standards, as well as three historical "standards" gleaned from Orton's A History of the Sussex Spaniel. The seven standards are presented in this newsletter verbatim and without judgement. Text has been reproduced word-for-word with the barest minimum of editorial intervention for clarity. (Of course, the order of the features has been re-arranged to make all standards consistent.) It is by no means exhaustive. I suspect there are other standards and revisions floating around. If members know of any, I would be most interested to receive copies. Nothing would please me more than to have to issue an addendum. The computer will happily store it all.

P.S. Statesman's Resolute Emma CAN CD, thinks winter is just keen. Snow rolling, snow burrowing. and snow eating number high on her list of priorities. And after play nothing pleases her more than to tromp into the living room, feathers laden with snowballs, and melt. She and I have had many the soggy nap together. Down comforters are oh so much nicer than old towels for fluffing the fur to perfection, after all.

Our obedience lessons are momentarily on winter holiday. Trainer Susan does not do very well at walking on icy sidewalks all by herself, much less having to stay erect and simultaneously correct Emma the Incurable. This maneuver usually ends up with me groaning in one snowbank, and Emma chortling in the other. My nerves won't take the combination of ice-terror and Sussex condescension. Spring will come soon enough.

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Susan's "Sussex Spaniel Standards at a Glance" is included in this Newsletter as a separate section. She did a heroic job of compiling and typing this chart. Every Sussex Spaniel owner would be wise to study it carefully and keep it handy when considering the question of how to handle the question of changing our standard. Many thanks to Susan for making this chart available to us.

The late Joy Freer is credited with saving Sussex Spaniels from extinction after World War II. Few people would dispute that she played a major role in developing modern day Sussex. In 1978 Mrs. Freer was asked to speak before a Swedish kennel club and give her thoughts on Sussex Spaniels. What follows is her speech, in it's entirety. All underlining and emphasis is Mrs. Freer's. ed.

SPEECH BY JOY FREER

When I think of Sussex Spaniels the first thing that comes to mind is their remarkable colour. It was the thing that struck me most when I saw them for the first time. There is no other animal that has this colouring except the lion which has the same tawny shade. They also have the same big bone and big feet, and something of the same steady way of regarding you that the lion has. I understand that the lion hates to be alone which is another resemblance to the Sussex. Sussex have wonderful noses and rarely miss any game. They are, therefore, useful gundogs and though not so fast as some they never ever run their noses. They are always anxious to please and for that reason, easy to train.

There seem to be many theories as to their origin. For my part, I always think they must have a strong mixture of the old Norfolk Spaniel and that is

SPEECH BY JOY FREER (continued)

how they have come by their love of water. The temperament of the Sussex should be quiet and steady and their movement the same. I don't like to see a Sussex bouncing about. He moves with a roll that is quite distinctive.

I have owned and bred Sussex for 50 years and one odd thing I have noticed is that one dog, usually the oldest, will stay with me and never be very far away. Whether this is a guarding instinct from somewhere in the past I do not know but it has always been the same. In addition to colour the texture of coat is very characteristic. It is very short and very soft with a very thick undercoat which never grows much feather. The late Col. Claud Cane once described it to me as being like sealskin which I think is very apt. The old description ran that they were "long, low, level and strong", but we had so many complaints from gundog people in the 1930's that we were ruining the breed by getting them too low and too small (!), that we decided to insert the words "moderately low" and raise the height at shoulder to 16 ins. more or less.

Considering the necessity for constant inbreeding the breed is an extraordinarily tough one. We found that dogs which had just had ordinary exercise daily could go out at first light and work solidly all day without feeling the least fatigue. They seem to require no extra walking to get them into working condition. The Sussex head is a smaller edition of the Clumber Spaniel, though the old Harviestoun strain, which was still going when I first owned one was more of the Bloodhound type not quite so broad across the muzzle as the Rosehill strain; personally I prefer the latter, but as I used both strains when I started I still get an occasional Harviestoun head cropping up. It is such a very distinctive head that it is impossible to mistake a Sussex. The eyes are large, from hazel to amber and have a very soft expression and the neck should be long and arched; we still have the arch, but I'm afraid most Sussex today are rather inclined to be too short in the neck. Movement is another distinctive feature as the Sussex is supposed to move with a roll. Probably due to the fact that he has a short thick straight hock joint whereas in most breeds it is longer with much more bend.

Having owned Sussex for so long they have become so much part of me that I cannot imagine what life would be like without one and I know a great many other people who feel just the same. They are extremely hardy. My own dogs have never had any artificial heat of any kind and are kept out in one pack winter and summer in two kennels for shelter and when the weather is dry prefer to sleep under a large Ilex tree only using their kennels when wet.

The Sussex are a slow maturing breed and do not reach their best until 2½ to 3 years old and I have found that most of them live till about 12 years old with one or two exceptions. As regards working I have found that it is best not to start serious training until they reach a year old. I find that as with most breeds too much dummy retrieving too early sours them, so we generally start them on a dummy retrieve at 6 weeks when they find it great fun and then once a week and only once for another 2 weeks and then every other week for a month and that seems to be ample until they go into full training. In the interim we let and encourage them to hunt - this is most important. Most Sussex don't get their noses down until 7 months or so, some even later. Once they start they are great questers, quartering the ground eagerly and well and are a delight to watch and there is no cover they will not face. One final point, always get your puppies to retrieve before they hunt, this is most important. I do hope that people will work them as well as show them, there is such a lot of fun to be had pitting your wits against theirs. About 40 years ago I once said to Mr. Cornthwaite of the celebrated "Rufton" Springers - "Do you think Sussex are stupid?" He replied, "Heavens no, they have always thought of it before you have", and I think that just about sums up their intelligence.

The Sussex Spaniel was first bred by Mr. Fuller of "Rosehill" in 1795 and once established most farmers and farm labourers in the County of Sussex owned one and they were big dogs, much bigger than the dogs of today although we are slowly getting them back to their original size!!

One final word, Sussex puppies must be done well from the time they leave their dam as they need lots of protein for their big frame and I like mine to be if anything on the fat side with plenty of reserve to draw on for their strong bone. In choosing your puppies for the true type pick on those with the biggest head, strongest bone, large feet and fatter tail. You never see a good Sussex with a thin tail.

Joy Freer

No Sussex with a thin tail was ever any good. Just take note!!

(the above addendum added by Mrs. Freer. ed.)

What's everyone waiting for?

IF YOU HAVE NOT PAID YOUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

THIS IS THE LAST NEWSLETTER YOU WILL RECEIVE

Annual membership rates are \$15.00. Junior (non-voting membership) - \$5.00

If you have not paid your dues yet this year rush to the nearest checkbook--make out a check payable to the SSCA--and mail it to:

LINDA LEGARE
4488 280TH ST. E
RANDOLPH, MN 55065



GOLDEN LIVER OBEDIENCE

by
Sam Skoog
118 W. 44th St.
Minneapolis, MN 55409

Winter is a slow time for the obedient Sussex, at least up North. Not too many shows, we spend our time indoors learning new and perfecting old, wondering if this dog will possibly be ready to show sometime this year.

We did go to one show in the last two months though, and it was kind of a big event. Dogs that had won a High-in-Trial in Canada were invited to a National Obedience competition in Toronto, best of the best as it were. This was the first of what is planned to become an annual event, so I figured that Sussex should be there if it's to be a real event. Hudson rose to the occasion and delivered his best performance to date. (I think he was showing off for his new sweetheart, Bubbles the Clumber.) So did many of the other dogs, and we wound up in a 4-way tie for second place at 197½. (First place and H.I.T. was 198.) Didn't do quite as well in the runoff, but well enough to secure a fourth place medal for a Sussex.

The dogs did quite well with Santa this year. A few days before Christmas, they received a package of bird wings in the mail. They both enjoyed chasing about the yard looking for the rest of the bird, and were pretty good about bringing the wings back in one piece, so I guess their instincts are in the right place. I have mixed feelings about that, as I may be obliged to teach one or both to hunt. I don't think I've even touched a shotgun in 20 years or so, but may see if my brother remembers who "his" really belongs to.

Dogs also found a copy of the new AKC videotape "High on Hunting Spaniels." While it is not exclusively about Sussex, there are some shots of Leslie and Frank Komatar's dogs that break up the monotony of English Springers. While there could be more Sussex, the video is very well done, and is informative about the AKC's hunting tests. Well worth watching.

While I hear intriguing rumors from the West, not too much new in the world of Sussex in obedience has come to my attention. So I guess I will fulfill my threat to take some time to write an introduction to what an obedience trial is all about. This time, I'll try to explain an obedience trial as a whole, as well as some of the terminology that is used. I'll save discussion of particular classes for later. I'll try to point out things that are of particular concern to Sussex as we go along. But I'm not attempting to write a training manual here: purpose is merely to explain Obedience competition.

Obedience as a competitive event has changed a great deal over its fifty year lifetime. Originally, it was intended to be a demonstration of "dogs' utility to man," and the fact that the dogs could do the activities as all was regarded as quite a feat. Now, dogs are expected to do the activities, but winning dogs must also do them with a high degree of accuracy and style. Winning is frequently a matter of a dog being one inch off of a straight line in a sit.

Fortunately, it is not necessary to achieve this kind of accuracy to participate and acquire the various AKC (or CKC, UKC) obedience titles. Most people work toward this as a goal, and are ecstatic to place once in a while.

An Obedience Trial may be held as a separate event, but is more commonly part of a dog show. In this case, separate ring space is devoted to obedience competition. Whether separate or as part of a dog show, the obedience is organized and run in the same manner.

Obedience trials are divided into six classes into which a dog may be entered. The six classes comprise three levels, each of which leads to an AKC title. Each level is divided in two (hence six classes) with the A division being reserved for less experienced handlers and dogs. A dog must achieve the AKC title associated with each level before progressing to the next.

The levels are:

NOVICE: the first level, and said to be the most difficult for which to train. Novice A is for handlers who have never owned all or part of a dog with an AKC obedience title. Novice B is for all others. Both classes are scored identically. A dog who "qualifies" three times in either Novice class receives a Companion Dog (C.D.) title. A dog may be entered in Novice classes only for a month after he receives his third qualifying score, then must compete at high levels.

OPEN: the second level, reportedly the easiest to train for. Open A is for dogs which have not yet received the title for this class, a Companion Dog Excellent, or C.D.X. Open B is for dogs which have earned a C.D.X. Obedience judges and very highly experienced trainers must also compete in this class. A C.D.X. title is awarded for qualifying three times in either Open class. A dog is not eliminated by obtaining its C.D.X., but may continue to show in Open B indefinitely.

UTILITY: the final level. This level leads to a Utility Dog title (U.D.) upon qualifying three times. In the past, this level has only occasionally been divided into A and B classes, but in the future, it will always be divided. As with Open, Utility A is for dogs without a U.D., while Utility B is for experienced handlers or dogs with U.D. titles. Again, a dog may compete in Utility B indefinitely.

For each title, it is necessary for the dog to "qualify" three times. Each qualifying score is sometimes referred to as a "leg." Each class requires that the dog perform a number of exercises. For example, Novice classes require the dog to heel on leash, heel off leash, come when called, stand calmly during a brief examination by the judge, stay in a sitting position, and stay in a down position. Each of these exercises has a point value assigned; the exercises for each class total to 200 points. Every dog enters the ring with 200 points; as each exercise is performed, the judge deducts points for each error he sees. To qualify, a dog must keep 170 points in total,

as well as at least half of the available points for each exercise.

Scoring is, or at least tries to be, consistent from class to class, trial to trial. Judges (and exhibitors) are not permitted to impose their own interpretations of the exercises: they must always be performed and scored in the same manner. Judges are human, so variances do occur, but generally they are very minor, seldom more than 2 points out of the 200.

At a trial which offers all of these classes, after all the classes are judged, the highest score among all the classes is called High In Trial. In the U.S., ties are decided by a runoff where tied dogs do



GOLDEN LIVER OBEDIENCE (continued)

a heeling exercise off leash, as would be done in the Novice classes. In Canada, ties for H.I.T. are left unbroken.

A further prize is given to the dog with the highest combined scores from both Open and Utility.

After a dog has attained his U.D. title, he may continue to compete in the Open B and Utility B classes. This may be to accumulate H.I.T. and High Combined awards, but also to attain an Obedience Trial Champion (O.T.CH.) title. Points toward this championship are awarded for first or second place in Open B and Utility B, but only if the dog involved has its U.D. How many points depends on the number of dogs in the class: an average might be 10 for first place and 3 for second.

To become an O.T.CH., a dog must:

- 1) Accumulate 100 points
- 2) Win a first place in Open B
- 3) Win a first place in Utility (B when divided), and,
- 4) Win an additional first in one of these classes

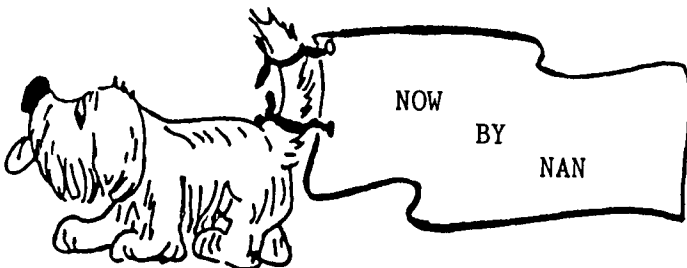
At the moment, discussion of O.T.CH. is merely theoretical for Sussex. I don't think we have any dogs that are even close to thinking about this. Yet. Sussex are probably even less common in obedience than in conformation. But bringing a rarity into the ring is part of the fun. It certainly gets attention.

##

THE 1989 GAINES DOG OBEDIENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS

Sam doesn't like to brag on himself so I'll do it for him. Sam and Hudson have qualified to participate in the Gaines Regional Championships this year. Only the dogs with the highest averages of their scores are eligible to participate. Sam and Hudson's consistently high scores from the Novice A class have earned them the right to show in the 1989 Central Regional Championship in Des Moines, Iowa, June 2nd, 3rd and 4th. To my knowledge, Hudson will be first Sussex Spaniel to qualify for the Regionals (if anyone knows of another Sussex to do so, please let me know.)

We are fortunate to have such a fine team representing our breed at such a prestigious event. GOOD LUCK TO SAM AND HUDSON!



Nan Burket
16401 Knoxville Rd.
Orion, IL 61273
309/787-6719

FLASH!! Sylvia has gone to live with the Rev. Cannon Keith Gentry in Peoria! Yes, indeed, she flew to Peoria on a cool November afternoon and has been living the life of Riley ever since.

Father Gentry wanted a Sussex Spaniel because his ancestors came from Sussex, so he got Sylvia from Marcia Deugan (Ziyadah Kennel). She is a daughter of Ch. Ziyadah Black Tower--Father Gentry sent along more pedigree information but I've misplaced it. (Good, Nan.)

Lady S. (currently Sylvia's favorite nickname) is allowed to go to the office occasionally where she gets a large amount of attention. She accepts this as her just due, with dignity.

COMPANY

After I went to work on the evening of December 28, Frank and Leslie Komatar from Utah dropped by with several Sussex Spaniels in the back seat and a bottle of rum in hand.

Frank, Leslie and Sylvia (my housemate, not the dog) had a good time around the fire with a mug or two of hot buttered rum. Here's the recipe for the batter:

1/2 lb. butter
1/2 lb. granulated sugar
1/2 lb. brown sugar

1/2 tsp. ground cinnamon
1/2 tsp. ground nutmeg
1 quart vanilla ice cream

Cream butter and sugars. Add spices and ice cream. Store in freezer until Frank and Leslie come with the rum. (In a pinch, buy your own.) Put a ladle of batter into your mug, add an ounce of rum and fill with boiling water. Stir. Light the fire and converse. Life doesn't get much better than this--and I was at work and missed it all.

RECOMMENDED

Judy Murff forwarded a copy of the premier issue of The Spaniel with a grand cover picture of three Cockers, (black, ascob and parti), a Springer, a Sussex, an English Cocker and an American Water Spaniel.

I suggest you subscribe. I think it's THE coming magazine for Spaniel people. A few other Sussex people realized this before the premier issue: Erin Emmons had a full page ad about her winning dog, The Vicar of Lexxfield, and Linda Legare's Rustwell Kennel ran a small ad.

This is a magazine we need to support, folks--we really do. This is where we're going to learn about Hunting Tests and Show Wins and Obedience (there's an article by Marly Whiting in this issue) and all the Spaniels and who's doing what.

The ads are quality, the dogs are delicious and the magazine has class. Heaven knows we need that.

Subscription rates are \$39 per year, first class, and \$32 a year, third class. Send your check to 13830 Dan Patch Lane, Savage, MN 55343. The name of the magazine is The Spaniel.

LOOK AT THIS

Erin Emmons reports that her dog, Vicar, went to the American Spaniel Club where he went BOS and got the final leg on his CD with a very respectable 190. Kudos, Erin.

Vicar is the only current Group First winner in the Sussex breed--he managed that last spring in California--and he needs only one point to finish his championship.

Erin also wrote that she has a new Sussex pup named Josie which has put Vicar's nose out of joint and all of them will move to the East Coast in April.

ELIZABETH

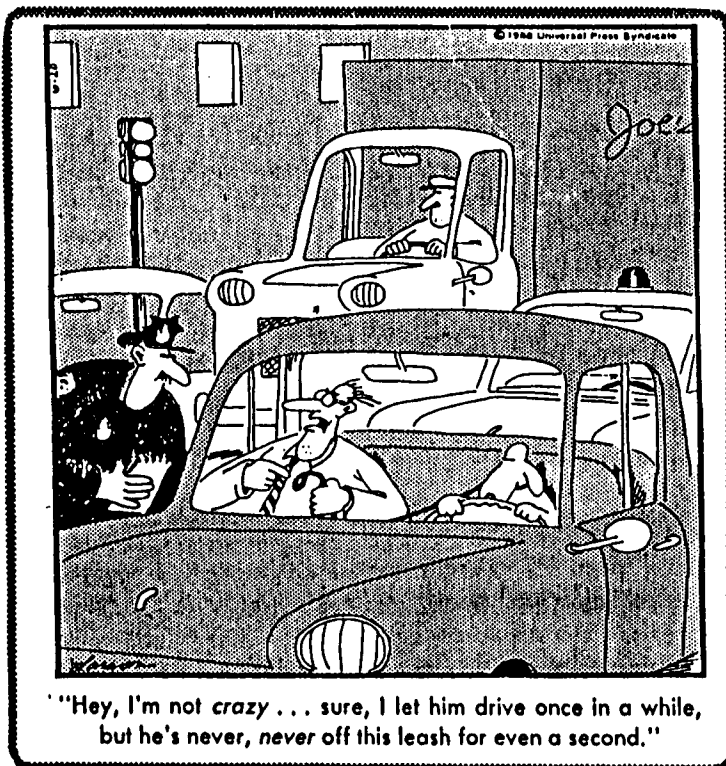
Lexxfield Queen Mother B. TD (Elizabeth) is our Sussex Spaniel. Sylvia (my housemate) and I own her together and she visited Ch. Longjon Deeptrees Lexxfield in Cleveland, Ohio in November for the purpose of reproduction.

A few days before Christmas we took Elizabeth to a vet who has an ultrasound machine and sure enough! He found a little black, pulsating blob that he declared was a Sussex puppy. "She's pregnant," he beamed and turned off the machine.

"But how many puppies are there?" we asked.

"Dunno. You'll have to x-ray her between 45 and 50 days to find that out."

Well, you can bet that on the drive home we decided that we weren't going to have any of that dangerous x-ray stuff on our Elizabeth and her pups, no sir. Not on our puppies! Elizabeth began to inflate just after Christmas. First she looked like she had swallowed an overstuffed sausage, and then one day the sausage slid to the back and turned sideways. Elizabeth's tummy touched the ground sometimes. She found the daily walk to the Wild Place was more of a chore to be



"Hey, I'm not crazy . . . sure, I let him drive once in a while, but he's never, never off this leash for even a second."

NOW BY NAN (continued)

endured than an opportunity to read rabbit trails.

We began to rearrange the parlor to be a Sussex nursery. A friend built us a 4'x5' whelping box and we washed the 22 towels and 10 old flannel sheets and gathered three heating pads to put along one side of the box and bought a box of disposable bed pads (just like disposable diapers, only they're flat) and we felt we were ready for the Big Event. We counted the days again and again. The earliest due date we figured was January 17th and the latest due date was January 24th.

On Tuesday, January 10th the vet suggested an x-ray to see how things were progressing and we agreed promptly. The x-ray showed three puppies and everything progressing to plan.

We began 24 hour surveillance on January 15th and we watched and we waited and we did a lot more of both those things. Elizabeth basked in the special attention. She liked it so well that she decided not to deliver her babies.

On Monday, January 24th, her cervix was fully dilated and the vet gave her a shot of oxytocin to help contractions. But it didn't happen and Elizabeth had a caesarian section. She had four pups (one of them hid from the x-ray machine.) They were born as follows:

3:15 pm	girl	pink collar	14 oz.
3:17 pm	boy	blue collar	14 oz.
3:18 pm	girl	gold collar	14 oz.
3:19 pm	girl	red collar	14 1/2 oz.

The collars are made of rick rack.

The active pups are nursing well but Elizabeth is not pleased with the maternal role we have forced upon her. She'd rather be tracking.

* * *

Please send your news of moment to me at the address at the start of this article. Otherwise, I will have to fill this space with news of Elizabeth, so SEND YOUR NEWS.

COME JOIN US!

ANNUAL SUSSEX SPANIEL MATCH
FRIDAY, JULY 28th*

MATCH SHOW CHAIRPERSON:

Joan Dunn
N3 W31535 Twin Oaks Dr.
Delafield, WI 53018
414/646-4114

MATCH LOCATION:

Sun Valley Motel
Delafield, WI 53018
414/646-4202

Most of the people attending last years match stayed at the Sun Valley Motel. The motel's manager was so taken with our dogs that he invited us to hold the match on the motel grounds this year. Next to the motel is a large grassy lot with tall shade trees. The big advantage is that the dogs can stay in the room in the cool air conditioning until time to show-- then be wisked back to air conditioned comfort as soon as they are through in the ring.

The Sun Valley Motel is about 30 minutes west of Milwaukee on I-94 at the Hwy. 83 exit. Room rates are:

Single\$36.00
1 Double & 1 Single.\$42.00
2 Double beds.\$48.00

When you make your reservations mention that you are attending the dog shows.

The match is on Friday, followed by three days of AKC All-Breed shows:

July 29 - Kettle Moraine K.C. - Waukesha, WI
July 30 - Waukesha K.C. - Waukesha, WI - SSCA SUPPORTED SHOW
July 31 - Burlington, Wisc. K.C. - Elkhorn, WI
Superintendent: MB-F (Tom Crowe)

*pending Board approval

OPUS FROM OREGON....

by
Sandra Adams
P.O. Box 116
Alvadore, OR 97409-0116

Happy New Year Sussex Lovers! Hope your showing, training and playing are more fun than ever this year. The pups here are ready to get back at it after the holidays' hiatus. P. loves her new carting harness. Everybody else is begging for the collars and leashes to go back on. So, despite the almost daily rains, training will begin again.

With that thought in mind, this issue's Opus will disgress to a subtitle. No, not in a foreign language, well, maybe a little bit foreign. The sub-heading is:

A Synthesis of "Regulations for AKC Hunting Tests for Spaniels" for the Inexperienced Novice by an Inexperienced Novice

Chapter 1. General Regulations

The eligibility of clubs to hold these tests, judges selection, submission of records, test committee, etc., etc., don't concern us here. Who may enter does. These tests are for all flushing spaniels - no Brittanies. Dogs must be at least six months of age, AKC registrable, and not having been reported for attacking another dog. No bitches in season, and no dog "related" to a judge (like any other AKC function.) No severe training or correction on grounds. Entries may be made up until the day before the test. Dogs are run singly in order of drawn lots. There are two judges.

Chapter 2. Qualifying Scores, Awarding of Titles

There are three testing levels - Junior, Senior and Master. The inexperienced novice will focus on Junior. There are five categories of the test which a dog must earn a minimum average score of 5 on each, with an overall average score of at least 7. More on these categories later.

To earn a Junior Hunting Title (JH) the AKC registrable dog must acquire qualifying scores in four AKC licensed or member club tests. Senior and Master Titles have similar requirements.

Chapter 3. Instructions to Hunting Test Committees

"The purpose of a Hunting Test for Spaniels is to test the merits of, and evaluate the abilities of Spaniels in the field in order to determine their suitability and ability as hunting companions." The test grounds need to simulate actual hunting conditions. Pigeons may be used in the Junior hunting test. (Pheasants, chukars and ducks only in Senior and Master.)

In the Junior test, the dog handler does not carry a gun. Two gunners selected by the test committee do all the shooting. A marshal regulates, controls, advises spectators, judges, handlers, gunners, etc. Safety is of the utmost concern.

Scorecards are kept by the judges, and averaged for the final score. Scorecards are available for public inspection.

Chapter 4. Standards of Performance

Chapter 5. Test Requirements and Instructions

These two chapters are the nitty-gritty of the test. Rather than go over them one paragraph at a time, a general overview of the actual test with specifics to follow should be more helpful.

In the Junior Hunting Test, the handler sends the dog out into the field to find and flush the game birds. When the bird is shot by the gunner, the dog should, upon command, pick up the bird and bring it back to the handler, letting the handler take it out of his mouth. In the test, the dog must find and flush and retrieve two birds on land. One additional bird must be retrieved from water at a distance of at least 20 yards with a shot fired.

The specifics are easily enumerated using the scorecard categories:

1. Hunting Ability (desire, courage, perseverance, intelligence.) This seems fairly self-explanatory. Is the dog ready, willing and able to go out there and search for game? Sussex stubbornness becomes an asset here. Singlemindedness, fearlessness and the dog knowing what it wants and refusing to give up until it gets it are all frequently frustrating around the house, but most useful in the field.

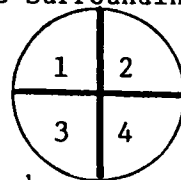
2. Bird Finding Ability (bird sense, response to wind and scenting conditions, use of nose.) Some of this is inherant, but it can be developed with proper training. The dog goes out in a ground-covering pattern sniffing the ground, checking the wind, listening for little bird sounds. Common sense and experience tell the dog a bird might be here, or in this clump, or hidden

in the trees. Using these senses greatly enhances the speed in finding a bird. Aimless wandering or the handler's directions don't help as much as the dog's instincts. Additionally, if the dog "blinks", he is scored a zero. Blinking is when the dog comes across a bird but ignores it or even avoids it. Not good!

3. Flushing Ability (boldness). This is what makes a spaniel a spaniel. Ever see your dog dive headlong into something Good? The dog gets a whiff of a bird and Goes In After It. Neither brambles, nor icy water, nor concrete walls, nor any obstacle in heaven or earth shall deter him from his appointed flush. Blinking is definitely out here. So is turning around and saying, "Hey, Boss, there's a bird here, what do you want me to do next?"

4. Trained Abilities (range, pattern, gun response, response to commands). Visciousness, gunshyness and out of control are grounds for a zero score. That includes snapping or growling at other dogs, cowering when guns go off and running every which where as soon as the leash is off.

This is really where the handler gets to take all that instinct and ability and channel it into a pleasurable gun dog. Basically what you want is this: The dog is "sent out" on command, optimally in a quartering pattern. That is, from where the handler stands, the surrounding field is divided into quarters, like a pie. Quarters 1 and 2 are in front. Handler starts dog in Quarter 1, dog covers ground, using his bird-finding ability. Handler uses voice, whistle or hand-much - mostly command signals to direct dog through pattern - (but not too bird. to keep dog within reasonable shooting and range) or to move dog to Quarter 2. Dog flushes Handler ideally commands (or by virtue of gunshot) that dog waits, or sits, until retrieve is commanded. It is less important in the Junior test, but required in the Master test.



5. Retrieving Ability (marking, enthusiasm, mouth). This is the followup to #4. After bird is shot, dog is commanded to retrieve it. (Open obedience comes in quite handy here.) Dog finds downed bird (hopefully by "marking" the fall, or watching the bird go down so when commanded can go to it immediately). Handler can then, by hand, whistle or voice, assist dog in finding bird. Dog runs and picks up bird. Dog must hold bird firmly but gently. Birds that have not been killed but are just wounded or stunned might otherwise get away, and, dog must bring game in fit for consumption. No "hard mouths". No munching or mashing. Dog brings bird to handler. In the Junior test, close proximity is OK, but Senior and Master must bring it directly to "hand". (Check Open obedience again!) Dog releases bird into handler's hand on command.

The water portion of the test is done without quartering or flushing. Trained and retrieving abilities are more important. Junior dogs can be gently restrained at water line. Gun is fired, bird drops into water, dog is sent to retrieve. Dog hopefully marks fall and boldly plunges into water and brings it back as described previously.

Test is finished. Great. Now, "How do I get my dog to do all that?" Don't panic. Next issue's Opus will include "Getting Started in Field Training for the Inexperienced Novice by teh inexperienced Novice." In the meantime, start working on heel, come and sit-stay (hup). To paraphrase (again), "Learn along with me, the best is yet to be."

The daffodils are two inches out of the ground, the roses have little red nubs along their branches and occasionally the sun pokes out a tiny bit from behind the clouds. In the blink (not in the bird-dog sense) of a Sussex it will be tomorrow. See you then

##



Just last year Bob Clark discovered "The Joy of Sussex." And when Bob finds something he likes, he dedicates himself to doing it right. He has been a consistent winner with his Gordon Setters for many years, and, now we can look forward to seeing lots more of Bob with his Sussex Spaniel.

SPOTLIGHT ON....

DR. ROBERT CLARK
3621 LAURINDA DR.
CEDAR FALLS, IA 50613

I currently reside in Cedar Falls, Iowa, site of the University of Northern Iowa. I am a Professor of Geography with a research interest in various aspects of rural settlement and rural planning.

I am originally from Oklahoma (where my parents still raise Polled Herefords.) I received my B.A. from Oklahoma State, M.A. from the University of Oklahoma and Ph.D. from the University of Nebraska.

I started teaching at U.N.I. and met a lovely lass named Janice. Jan and I had many mutual interests (she was a geography student and an Iowa farm girl), with a love of animals.

After graduating from U.N.I., Jan taught geography for two years at Iowa Central College in Ft. Dodge. We managed to wear out two automobiles in the process. We were determined to get a dog when we got married and we were thinking "Irish Setter." That changed one spring night when we were dining at Trelor's restaurant in Ft. Dodge. We came out of the door and there, tied to a lamp post, was a lovely black and tan setter, "a Gordon." I recognized the breed from old sporting magazines of my youth.

We got married, bought a house and started the search for a Gordon Setter in 1975. Our search took us to Omaha and resulted in Brandy (Camelot's Bold Brandy). When we picked out Brandy, her breeder inquired, "Why did you want a Gordon?" We told her about the Gordon tied to the lamp post. Bev looked shocked and said, "That was Toni - Brandy's dam."

The Iowa Gordon people said, "You have to show her," so we joined a local kennel club to learn how to do just that.

Brandy won her class in her very first show (known as "setting the hook".) She was clearly Jan's dog . . . I was tolerated, so I decided I wanted a Gordon for my own. In showing, we had met and became good fiends with Jim and Alyce Westphal (Greenglen Gordon Setters) and got a male pick of the litter. The choice was difficult between two of the puppies, but one finally took a large puppy paw and dumped a hot cup of coffee on me. All agreed this one was my dog. He was my dog his entire life. Known as Bourbon (Greenglen's Dark Cavalier). I began showing him with success.

In April of 1977 we found out Janice had Hodgkins. Even though Jan was in the hospital at the Mayo Clinic much of the time, with much help from our Gordon Setter friends, especially Jim, Alyce and their daughter Teddie, I finished Brandy and Bourbon's championships that summer. We stopped showing, concentrating on other things. Janice died in November of 1978.

I specialied the two old dogs on occasion and had fun with them and stayed active in the Gordon Setter Club and other activities. Jim and Alyce have a Gordon Setter bitch that I think is the quintessential Gordon Setter, Greenglen's Gaelic Essence (Tess). I really waned a Tess puppy and on New Year's day, 1987 I received the happy news, Tess just had a litter and a girl was mine. In March, I went to Rochester and got Geena (Highland Gaelic for Beautiful Lady). Her full name is "Greenglen's MacAlder Geena". Her first show was Ames - Mason City in the fall of 1987. She took puppy class and reserve over the Open bitches.

That show was also responsible for this entire biography, for I knew of and was intrigued with, Sussex Spaniels, but had never seen one in the Golden Liver fur. I there met Linda Legare and Sterling and Judy Murff, and lots of people whose names I cannot recall. The dogs won my heart and the Sussex people reminded me of the Gordon people in years gone by.

I decided I might like a Sussex; but, I wanted to know more about them. The best place to learn is the breed club, so I joined the Sussex Spaniel Club of America.

As I went to shows with Geena, I kept running across Linda. She always pushed Sussex. Then this past summer she called, saying Judy Murff had a litter of lovely Sussex and one was my girl. I did not commit myself, but waited. . . .

Linda told me the puppies would be in Mason City this fall. I was showing Geena there, and I really did want to see the puppies. On Saturday, I deliberately left my checkbook at home, so irrationality would not over-

SPOTLIGHT ON . . . (continued)

whelm me. Linda (with a pixie smile) and Judy reached me on Saturday and I went and looked at the puppies. I lost my heart to a little bitch with a scarlet ribbon around her neck. I went home that evening and called Puppies Anonymous. All I got was, "BUY HER". I returned the next day with my checkbook, after getting everything ready in my house to receive a new puppy. That Sunday, I added Scarlet (Sand Creek's Cover Girl) to my household. Geena had a pinched nerve in her neck, so I was not able to let them together at the very start; but, finally they got together and established their pecking order. For now, Geena is Number 1 and Scarlet is Number 2 (I don't think that is written in stone).

The differences between Scarlet and Geena are becoming more pronounced as Scarlet gets older. The Sussex is more dignified and more deliberate in her actions, as well as not quite as restless in the house. I must say, I thought Geena had a real mouth on her; but, compared to Scarlet, she is "Geena the Silent." The Gordon and Sussex compliment each other; but the sight of the Sussex pointing a bird with Geena was a start. (Yes, tail out and the huge right front foot raised in the classic setter stance. Wonderful, I am going to end up with a flushing Setter and a pointing Spaniel.) They are both lap dogs (why I have to choose 40 to 60 pound dogs for this is beyond me), and I would not have it otherwise.

Scarlet is a real joy and I am so glad I have added her to my home; without her my life would be much more dull. The two keep the house jumping.

I wish to thank all of the Sussex people, present and past, for keeping the breed alive. This would be a much more depressing world without the spirit lifting Sussex Spaniel. I promise I will do my best to help keep the breed alive and well. We all must try and do as much for the Sussex as they do for us. This goal may be impossible, but, let us try.

##

Membership applications are available from the Secretary/Treasurer. Annual Membership rate - \$15.00. Junior (non-voting membership) - \$5.00.

ADVERTISING RATES: full page - \$10.00; half page - \$5.00; quarter page - \$2.50
litter listing and brags - \$1.50

Send prepaid ad copy to the Newsletter Editor. No telephone copy, please. Photocopy quality of photos in ads cannot be guaranteed.

No portion of this Newsletter may be reprinted without credit given to both the author and the SSCA Newsletter. Material from another source must be identified as to the source and author.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES (STRICTLY ENFORCED)

January/February Newsletter. .deadline February 1st
March/April. April 1st
May/June June 1st
July/August. August 1st
September/October. October 1st
November/December. December 1st

Materials received after these deadlines will be held for the next Newsletter.
NO EXCEPTIONS!

Editor: Judy Murff
Sand Creek Sussex Spaniels
4809 Roany Rd.
Gillette, WY 82716
307/686-7036
