



VOX

The Newsletter of the Twin Cities Voyageur English Springer Spaniel Assn.



From TCVESSA's President by Julie Roberts

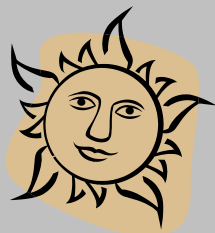
It seems hard to believe with this never ending winter, that our annual specialty show is right around the corner. For those of you that are new to TCVESSA, our specialty show is held at On the Run agility center in Ham Lake. We have exhibitors in both performance and breed that come from all over the country to participate at our show. As always, we welcome any help that you can give, from set-up on Friday to ring stewarding, clean up—and the list goes on. If interested, please let me or somebody on the TCVESSA board know of your interest.

Our annual awards banquet is being held on March 12 at the Sunshine factory. This is a wonderful event, honoring the many accomplishments for our members. Once the night is over, I'm always in awe of how much individually we accomplish, and what ambassador's we all are for our breed.

The same day as our awards banquet our club will be represented at Pet Expo. Again, a tremendous exposure to the public for the English Springer Spaniel. Thanks to all who have taken time out of their busy schedules to participate at this event.

Hopefully, we'll see you all at the banquet.

Julie



TCVESSA's Sunshine Coordinator

Do you know a club member who is suffering an illness or loss? During difficult times it is comforting to know that others care. Please contact Maryevelyn Monty (mmonty@att.net) so that we can offer encouragement and sympathy to our TCVESSA friends.

Board Meeting Minutes—October 14, 2010

Officers present: Julie Roberts, President; Francie Nelson, Vice President; Kathy Raidt, Secretary

Directors present: Liz Pike, Carmen Laing, Jean Dockendorf, Maryevelyn Monty

Officers absent: B.A. Breese, Treasurer

The meeting was called to order by Julie Roberts, President, at 6:45 PM.

Secretary's report: The notes from the September 16, 2010, meeting were read. A motion to accept them as amended was made, seconded and approved.

Treasurer's report: B.A. reported \$12,917.41.

Membership report: A new membership application from Janice Wavra received the first reading.

Fun Match: Gloria Zopfi will be a judge. Jean will send a request for volunteers and the entry fee will be \$5. Kathy will send an e-mail tonight and another reminder on November 6, 2010, to communicate to the members about the Fun Match.

Vox: A series about a springer topic is needed for the VOX and Francie has offered her Breed series.

Banquet: Options are still being researched but the date will be March 12th, 2011. Certificates were discussed with photos for awards. A separate mailing for the Banquet and the awards for January is planned. Carmen will write an article for the VOX for December.

Specialty: A double obedience ring was discussed. Sean Dunford will be our photographer. Liz has left a message for Alice Howe to judge Sweeps for the Sunday of our Specialty.

Membership list: Motion to offer an extension to pay the dues for 2010 was made, seconded and approved for members who have not paid their 2010 membership dues yet. Kathy will send a letter to everyone requesting membership renewals for 2010 and 2011.

Miscellaneous: Jean is our new web master.

The next meeting is November 7th, at the Fun Match at C & E.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:31 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Raidt
TCVESSA Secretary



TCVESSA Board

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The TCVESSA Trophy Fund by Maryevelyn Monty

What is the Trophy Fund and Why Should I Contribute?

The Trophy Fund provides for the purchase of all AKC rosettes and ribbons that are required for our performance and breed winners.

I have been asked if AKC provided them. Don't we wish! They are surprisingly expensive. In addition to the award of ribbons and rosettes, winners are presented with a gift to serve as a memento of the occasion. A well-funded trophy budget allows a club to award trophies of value. Being known for thoughtful and useful gifts complements our specialty show package: great location, good food, and excellent competition. Your contributions help ensure that TCVESSA specialty shows are highly regarded and well attended. If you haven't done so, please send your contribution, using the form on the reverse side of this page.

The Trophy Committee thanks you!

Maryevelyn Monty
Trophy Fund Committee Member

TCVESSA Trophy Fund Pledge

2011 Specialty Shows

TCVESSA needs your support so that our winners are awarded trophies that are useful, welcomed, and appropriate. Contributions and pledges are due by March 1, 2011. Your gift will be recognized in the VOX this spring and in the Specialty Show catalog.

Please select your gift level and dollar amount:

Diamond, \$100+: _____

Platinum, \$75-\$99: _____

Gold, \$50-\$74: _____

Silver, \$25-\$49: _____

Bronze, \$10-\$24: _____



Your Name: _____

Your email address: _____

Gift is in honor of:

Thank you for mailing your Trophy Fund Contribution check to:

TCVESSA Trophy Fund
Maryevelyn Monty
370 Pleasant View Road
Chanhassen, MN 55317

Any questions? Contact us!

Maryevelyn Monty, mmonty@att.net, 952-474-3434

Kathy Petregnani, tworedheadchildren@hotmail.com, 763-494-0994

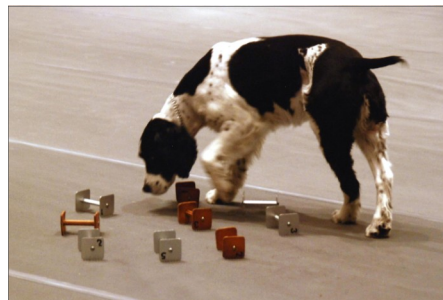


A First-Timer's Trip to the National Obedience Invitational

by Jon Pidde (& Benson McGee SH UDX3 OM3 OA AXJ RA)

The 2010 National Obedience Invitational (NOI) was held in Long Beach, California, on December 4th and 5th. A dog and handler team gets invited to the NOI by the number of Obedience Trial Championship points they earn. The top three point earners from each breed get an invite. Also, enough other top point earning dogs get invitations to make the number of participants about 120 (mostly Golden Retrievers, Shelties and Border Collies). For this year's NOI, the English Springer Spaniel teams of Jon Pidde with Benson AND Kathy Patregnani with Splash were both invited. Kathy was unable to attend but Benson and I were able to make the trip.

The NOI is actually a tournament and not a



regular competition. There were 6 rings and the 117 participants were split up by jump heights into groups of about 20 teams. The exercises from the open and utility classes were mixed up and split up between the 6 rings. We did the equivalent of two complete shows in one marathon day. After the first day the top team from each group, as well as the next 25 top scoring teams, come back for day two.

My trip started on the Sunday after Thanksgiving. Looking at MapQuest it was a 2000+ mile trip each way. I arrived in Long Beach on the Wednesday before the NOI. As a last tune-up, we were entered on Thursday in obedience. We were able to compete in the same room in which the NOI was going to be held. Benson was all wound up after three days in a crate so he didn't perform very well. That afternoon we went to a dog beach and I let Benson run until he was worn out. On Friday, the day before the NOI, Benson was entered in rally advanced (his third leg, a 99!). I wanted to be able to talk to him as necessary and make sure he would be ready to pay close attention the next day.

At the NOI, I was put in a group with mostly Golden Retrievers and Border Collies. After doing three rings and the group exercises, we were out of contention for the tournament but still were having a good time. It is a very stressful environment to compete in and it turns out that Benson stresses WAY up. With my back turned he would walk about a body length toward me and then stop right before I turned around. The two times he did that amounted to an 80-point deduction. The 2 times that he did the correct directed jump and then jumped on me was cute to the audience but cost me 10 points. When I add in Benson pouncing on the dumbbell on most of his retrieves, the scores were not real good. Benson seemed to be having way too much fun. I did not let it get me down because, even though we didn't do as well as I had hoped, Benson was fired-up and he wanted to be in the ring. To end the morning, we did the group exercises and Benson went down on the sit-stay. (That problem will just not go away.)

The afternoon session went a lot better. Benson quit jumping on me and did every exercise with only a little ad-libbing during the dumbbell retrieves. We had a number of near-perfect exercises—enough that it showed we really did know what we were doing. By the time we finished in the last ring, Benson had finally settled down and performed like he should. It did get to be a long first day. The first dog went into the ring at 7:00 AM and Benson was the second to the last dog to finish at about 5:15 in the afternoon. We had a different kind of distraction in our final ring: the "roadies" had started to tear

(National Obedience Invitational, continued)

down 2 of the rings and hauled in some bleachers for day two.

The top 32 teams came back for the second day. During the second day's competition, I was able to just sit and watch the top handlers get their dogs ready and keep them focused. There were a number of different ways of doing this but it seemed to come down to knowing what motivates each dog and being good at tuning out distractions. When the top people were in the ring there was not a very big difference between them. At a certain point, the difference between moving on and going home was just a crooked sit. For the first four rounds the teams did a mixture of exercises from both open and utility. There were four rings in use at the same time. When the field was narrowed from 32 teams down to 8 teams only two rings were used. For the final head-to-head between #1 and #2, these teams did a full set of open and utility exercises. By the time their day was over, the top teams did the equivalent of three complete shows in one day. That is a marathon.



I learned a lot about this kind of a tournament. I received a lot of advice from different people who had been there before. The main thing everyone told me was I shouldn't work Benson too much between my going into the rings. The idea was that I shouldn't tire him out because the NOI is a marathon, not a regular competition. What I found out was that, the way Benson stresses up, I should have worked him almost constant to keep him focused on me and into his routine. If we ever earn another trip to the NOI, I will do things a little different.

I extended my trip home by swinging through Texas and visiting a friend for a couple of days. I had some tickets for a football game so I drove through a "little" storm at the end of the trip arriving home at 2:00 PM on the Saturday before the Vikings vs. Giants game.



I should have stayed in Texas.





Krista and Edie

Tracking 101 by Krista Trempe

If you're looking for a hobby to participate in with your English Springer Spaniel and you don't mind being outdoors on a rainy, blustery day or feeling ticks crawl up your pants leg, tracking may be for you. Even though I've experienced all these situations, out of all the companion dog sports I participate in with my English Springer Spaniel, tracking is the sport I enjoy most.

Tracking, which was originally part of the utility obedience class, was made into a separate class by the American Kennel Club (AKC) in 1947. The first tracks had very detailed regulations and only included one testing level. Today, there are three tests, and the original single descriptive paragraph of regulations has been expanded to 45 pages. This article will focus on the basics of tracking and the Tracking Dog (TD) test, which is the first AKC test. In the next issue, I'll cover the Tracking Dog Excellent (TDX) and the Variable Surface Tracking (VST) tests, which are the more advanced AKC tests.

An inherent advantage?

You may think that English Springer Spaniels have an advantage in tracking because they are sporting dogs, however, Becky Johnson, an AKC Tracking Judge, has a different outlook. She says, "The hunting breeds have the advantage of having a great nose. But, that can also be a big disadvantage when you encounter the fresh scent of pheasants, fox or rabbits on a practice or test track." Thus, learning how to read your English Springer Spaniel's body language, and being able to distinguish when he is tracking and not tracking is an integral part of long-term success. This all takes time, Johnson says. "But, no matter what breed you love, if you learn to read your dog and teach him to follow the correct scent, in time he will be a great tracker," she concludes.

Equipment

If you're going to teach your English Springer Spaniel how to track, you'll want to invest in a high-quality tracking harness. I like to use the Surefit harness, which is available for purchase online. You'll also need a 3/8-in.-thick, 30- to 40-ft.-long line, lots of motivational treats and tracking articles. Tracking articles are any object or personal item that carries the tracklayer's scent. It can be fabric, leather, metal or plastic. For beginning trackers, it's best to use fabric articles because they hold more scent, making it easier for your dog to scent and indicate them.

The First Track

As with any dog-training sport, commitment, persistence and repetition are key. When I begin to teach a dog to track, I lay a lot of short tracks. I also track every day for the first week. Then I try to get out at least 3-4 times per week. By following this plan, your dog will have a solid tracking foundation and understand that when the harness goes on, it's time to work.



The first tracks I lay are straight, no more than 20 ft. and into the wind. I like to lay the first tracks on short grass because it's usually more difficult for dogs to track in short grass than in long grass. I also choose a low foot-traffic area that's as flat as possible since hills and cross tracks can present scenting challenges. Begin your track by planting a marker flag, then drop the start article near the flag and walk a straight line. Every 3-5 steps, drop a treat. After 20 steps or so, plant another marker flag, drop the end article and a jackpot of treats. Continue walking 15 more steps in a straight line, following the line of the original track. As you walk back to the start flag, be sure to

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(Tracking 101, continued)

stay at least 20 steps away from your original track. This is an important part of track laying. You do not want to contaminate the original track with cross tracks, which can be very confusing for the dog.

Ready set, track!

Now the fun begins. Get your dog ready by putting on the harness and a 6-ft. leash. Take your dog to the start and place him in a sit or down position. Hold the start article in front of his nose, point to the ground and say "find it." Keep your finger pointing to the ground so your dog can follow it to the first treat. Try to get the dog to work in front of you as much as possible. Continue to point at the ground and the track while guiding your dog along the track

until you hit the treat jackpot and the final article. Praise your dog enthusiastically when you reach the end.

By following these simple steps, your dog will soon understand there are treats and articles to be found if he follows the scent. As he becomes more confident, you'll find pointing less necessary and you'll be able to space the treats further apart, eventually eliminating the food altogether. When your dog consistently keeps his nose on the ground, you can move on to longer tracks.



Adding turns

After you've increased the distance of your tracks to 40 ft., you can begin to add turns. Your first turn should be laid at a 90-degree angle and should be into the wind. This is very important. When teaching a turn, do not place treats directly on the corner. Instead, put a jackpot of treats about five steps past the turn and then every 5-10

steps until the final article. The jackpot of treats will help pull the dog in the right direction. When your dog is comfortable with one turn, you can add more corners and build to what is expected in a TD test.

Little by little, you'll also want to increase the age of your tracks and eliminate the end-marker flags. It's also important to train in all types of weather and different terrain situations. You never know what test day will be like and you want to be as prepared as possible. As with any sport, if your dog gets "stuck," step back a few steps and wait for the dog to be successful.

Once you begin tracking, you will be amazed at the bond that forms between you and your dog. You will also be amazed at your dog's enthusiasm and motivation for the sport. Remember to enjoy each other, enjoy the great outdoors and, above all, have fun with your English Springer Spaniel.



Editor's Note: Krista Trempe owns two English Springer Spaniels and has earned two TD and VST titles and one TDX title. She also competes in obedience and agility. When she's not training her dogs, she's an art director for two leading agribusiness

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(Tracking 101, continued)

publications. She resides in Minneapolis, MN.

Tracking Dog (TD) Test Regulations

The TD track is from 440-500 yds. long with 3-5 turns (or changes in direction) and aged from ½ to 2 hours. A dog must indicate the end article (usually a glove) placed at the end



of



the track. Tracks are plotted in an open field with uniform cover. There are no obstacles such as roads, ditches or woods. The start of the track is marked with a flag. A second flag is placed 30 yds. from the start flag to indicate the direction of the first leg of the track. There are no other flags in the field. Dogs must follow the track and indicate the final article to pass the test.

— Adapted from the AKC *A Beginner's Guide to Tracking*

Member Wins and Brags

CH Eldamar's Dartek Rising Star "Phoebe" & Courtney Hansen
 Owned by Julie Roberts, Tekla Viker, & Melissa Thorson
 10/7/2010—National Specialty
 Melissa: Best Juniors
 1/23/2011—Chattahoochee Specialty
 Melissa: Best Juniors

Rosebud's Lion Heart "Leo"
 Owned/handled by Alice Musburger
 1/8/2011—Land O' Lakes KC
 Winner's Dog

Eastwood Vinehill Nick of Time NA NAJ
 OA OAJ AX "Niki"
 Owned by B.A. Breese
 12/12/10 - Granite City KC - WB for a 3
 point major (handled by Sarah Salzwedel)
 1/1/11 - Northstar Hearing Group
 Agility Trial
 AXJ Exc Agility JWW Title Earned!

Hirdler Hill's Kinetic Energy CGC
 Owned by Julie Wilson
 2/13/2011—DMOTC (First place)
 RN Title Earned!

GCh, Can and International Ch
 Cymbeline's Final Tally "Tally"
 Owned by Barb Ciresi
 11/20/2010—Mpls. KC BOB
 11/21/2010—Mpls. KC BOS
 1/8/2011—Land O Lakes KC Select Bitch
 2/10/2011—Central Indiana KC BOB
 2/11/2011—Hoosier KC BOB
 2/12/2011—Central Indiana KC BOS
 2/19/2011—Cyclone Cty KC BOS
 2/20/2011—Cyclone Cty KC BOS
 Grand Champion Finished!

CH Woodridge's Nevagard Lead Off Man
 CDX SH OA MXJ WD "Wrigley"
 Owned by Julie Damgaard
 1/16/2011—Am Belgian Malinois Club
 Agility Trial
 MXJ Agility Title Earned!

Spellbound's First Half Stache "Stache"
 Owned by Jim/Pat McGowen



NOTE:

Please be sure to
 email me your wins/
 brags by
 April 15
 for the next Vox!

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