Dukeries Open HPR 2018

Rhug Estate

5 October

Judges: E Kania, N Dear

The Dukeries Open Stake was held at the Rhug (pron. Reeg) Estate by the kind permission of Mr Wayne Tuffin and Mr Chris Lockwood. Guns Karl Field, Patrick Cliffe and Bradley Dymond were also kindly sponsoring the day.

A full card of 12 dogs comprising 2 Large Munsterlanders, 2 German Longhaired Pointers, 1 German Wirehaired Pointer, 6 German Shorthaired Pointers and a Weimaraner started the stake, a pleasing mix of breeds. This ground is ideal HPR territory, open space, reed, white grass and gorse permit open running for the dogs and the best opportunity for them so show their hunting ability. It has to be one of the best grounds on which to test HPRs. A backwind beat was generally worked well. Birds were sparsely distributed so that dogs had to work hard to find them. The first 2 dogs were lost due to basic faults - moving forward on flush and chasing. Lucie Hustler’s GSP Aytee Juniper is a lively hunter which came across residual scent which it followed into some gorse. After a short while, several birds exploded out and 1 was shot. As the dog was out of sight, it was not possible to credit a point. The subsequent retrieve was satisfactory. Paul Nixon’s Quintana Hollie Berry impressed with its well-paced, rangy style which produced a single partridge from behind a gorse bush which was nicely retrieved. Running on, the dog came across residual scent which it tracked into gorse and flushed several birds of which 3 were shot. A messy retrieve of 1 of the birds completed the run. Steve Kimberley’s GLP Questor Karson of Caldera made hard work of a straightforward retrieve but hunted well up to the end of the beat where a single hen pheasant was flushed and shot. The dog failed to find this retrieve which was hand-picked by a judge. Jaudas Heartbeat, Lynn O’Connell’s LM, handled by Rory Major, showed promise with bursts of energetic hunting marred by getting bogged down on residual scent. A loose bird was shot on the right flank. With the dog steady the fast retrieve highlighted excellent marking. Now into wind, Peter Howard’s GLP Tickencote A Night Like This showed high energy and a very erratic ground treatment but by chasing several outraged duck off a flight pond, the run came to abrupt end. Maureen Nixon’s GSP, Quintana Quixotic is a careful hunter which came unstuck by failing to retrieve a wounded duck. This was collected by Dawn Elrington’s, GSP, Barleyarch Beetle at Tequesta JW which then went on to demonstrate a wide ranging pattern, excellent ground treatment with an elegant, effortless style which was a joy to watch. Gill Pillinger’s GSP Witham Friary Maddison is more workmanlike in its pace but nonetheless covered its ground but finished with a blank run. Louise Holmes’, GSP Ladyhawk Perdita has a lively style, good pace and generally good ground treatment. Coming to the end of the beat necessitated a change of ground, where the remaining few minutes of the run were uneventful. Suzi Burton’s WEI Trubon Flysse Trevive showed good pace with a loose bird providing a 70 yard retrieve which was made with some handling.

6 dogs went forward to the 2nd round.

Aytee Juniper came onto point after a few casts, positively flushed but unfortunately continued to move forward which meant her departure. Quintana Hollie Berry similarly did not need many casts before coming on point and a successful long retrieve ensued. Jaudas Heartbeat came into line and showed good pace pulling up to the top of a rise where a pheasant lifted and a spectacular shot provided the retrieve. The judges were once again unsighted due to the terrain and a point could not be confirmed. Barleyarch Beetle at Tequesta worked an awkward beat with the little sight of the dog. It was found on point, flushed nicely to command and achieved the retrieve. Witham Friary Maddison started a new piece of ground, largely reedy grass. Coming quickly onto a tentative point, it was just firming up when the bird lifted. The subsequent retrieve satisfactory. Ladyhawk Perdita set off with great purpose and pace but not an ideal pattern, finding foot scent and tracking ahead some distance until the handler called the dog back which then went forward and flushed the bird that it had been tracking without stopping or acknowledgement, thereby spelling the end for this stake. Trubon Flysse Trevive was called forward to retrieve the bird which had caused the demise of the previous handler and this was achieved without difficulty. Working on did not provide any opportunities but the handler was asked to explore the boundary where birds had been spotted. Sure enough, very quickly a bird lifted, unfortunately followed by the dog ending its participation.

Jaudas Heartbeat was called back for a 3rd run in order to gain the point missing from its card. This turned into a mammoth 21 minute search, finally fruitful but not helped by the dog’s tendency to get caught up with scent which slowing it down considerably with the result that it was not able to get ahead of the birds which were undoubtedly there.

The blind water retrieve was short over the slow moving river Dee. All dogs completed this but 3 of the 4 showed varying degrees of reluctance in entering.

We were pleased to award;

1st. Quintana Hollie Berry, GSP o/h Paul Nixon

2nd. Barleyarch Beetle at Tequesta JW, GSP o/h Dawn Elrington

3rd. Jaudas Heartbeat o. Lynn O’Connell, LM handled by Rory Major

4th. Witham Friary Maddison, GSP o/h Gill Pillinger

This was all in all a delightful trial. Good humoured and with fine sportsmanship it was a model of the perfect day out with dogs.

Nigel Dear