

SPORTS ILLUSTRATED

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JUNE IN JANUARY

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FAMILY FUN IN NASSAU

BIG DAY FOR SPRINGERS

PHOTOGRAPHS BY RICHARD MEEK

Nor rain nor cold nor reluctant birds could stop these spaniels from brisk completion of their top contest: the National Field Trial Championships

IN THE remarkable photograph at right veteran field-trial gun Ernest Burton (SI, Nov. 14, 1955) illustrates the climactic moment of test for a spaniel: when the bird he has flushed is brought down for his retrieve. Mr. and Mrs. Philip D. Armour Jr.'s National Champion Micklewood Scud is the dog concerned here, and the occasion is the 11th National Championship Field Trial for English Springer Spaniels, held last month at the Crab Orchard Lake Refuge near Marion, Ill. Here the 29 top dogs among the nation's thousands of springers met in a driving rain that soaked dogs, handlers, birds, guns and gallery. Numbed by wet and cold, pen-reared pheasants (\$17,000 worth) often refused to flush or fluttered dispiritedly a few feet above the ground, to the confusion of dogs, guns and handlers. But despite

these handicaps the seven series of tests (five on land, two on water) were run off briskly, and by Sunday noon Judges Harry Leeding of Portland, Ore. and Fred Sehnert of Lincoln, Neb. had chosen a new national champion: Field Trial Champion Staindrop Breckonhill Chip (*below*), owned by Mr. and Mrs. Roy D. Chapin Jr., of Grosse Pointe Farms, Mich. and expertly handled by Elmore Chick of Lemont, Ill. Runners-up were English Field Trial Champion Ludlovian Socks, owned by Edward D. Porges of Highland Park, Ill., in second place, and his littermate F. T. Ch. Ludlovian Scamp of Greenfair, owned by Joseph C. Quirk of Greenwich, Conn., in third. For the best performance by an amateur-handled dog, a trophy went to John L. Harding of Berwyn, Ill. and his 7-year-old F. T. Ch. Davellis Shot.

Evelyn M. Shafer



WINNER AND NEW CHAMPION, F. T. Ch. Staindrop Breckonhill Chip proudly poses for her portrait with one of the \$17,000 worth of pheasants used during the trials.



JUDGE'S-EYE VIEW SHOWS HOW SCUD.

WHEELING SHARPLY, Shooter's Exeditus flushes pheasant from the high grass.



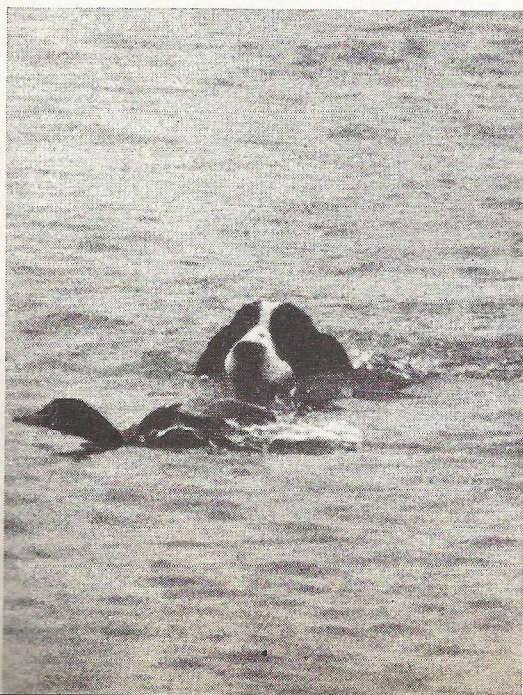


HAVING FLUSHED HIS BIRD, WAITS OBEDIENTLY FOR HANDLER STEVE STUDNICKI (RIGHT) TO GIVE THE ORDER TO MAKE RETRIEVE



JUMPING HIGH, Cavalier Dottie Jo grabs at bird flushed from cover.

SWIMMING HARD, Chip performs one of water-retrieve tests that helped her win the championship.



UP IN THE AIR, Ludlovian Scamp accomplishes a mid-flight turn to get his bird.

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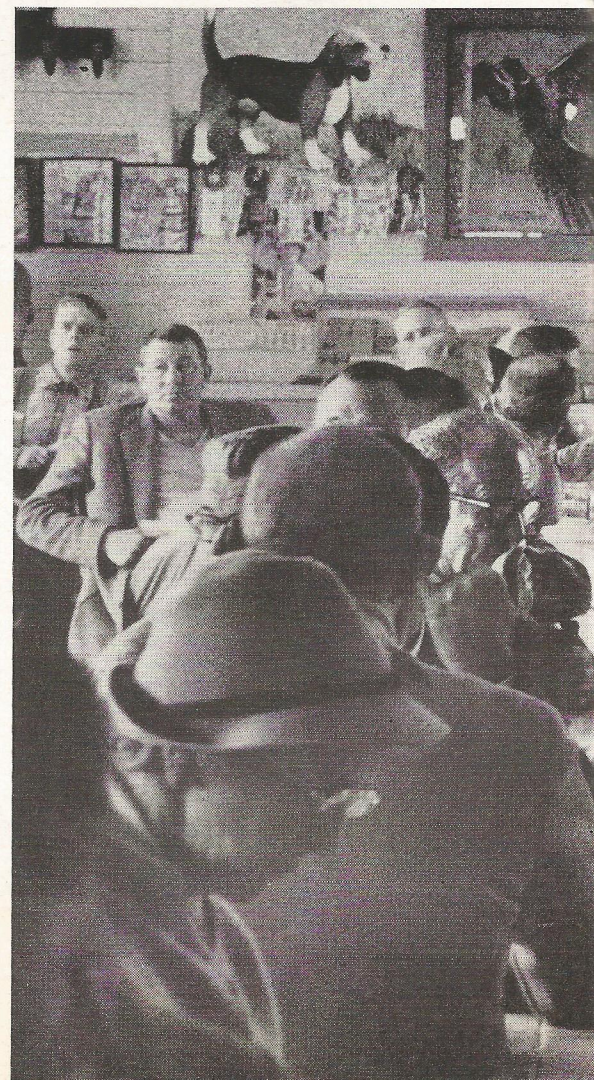
HARD-WORKING DOGS AND HAPPY OWNERS

THE PURPOSE of a Spaniel Field Trial," says the national association, "is to demonstrate the performance of a perfectly trained Spaniel in the field." Another important purpose is to enable spaniel enthusiasts to renew old and doggy friendships as they follow the action across the fields. In fact, most of the hard work at spaniel trials is performed by the gallery as it trudges through briers, bracken and brush to follow handlers, guns and judges. Dogs hunt in braces in the early series, each spaniel quartering ahead, windshield-wiper fashion, to work a swath of bird cover. Bird boys precede the entourage, planting pheasants in clumps of grass where they stay until flushed. Spaniels are judged on scenting ability, perseverance, courage, steadiness to wing and shot, obedience, aptitude in marking and finding shot birds, responsiveness to the handler's signals and retrieving style. After the last test, all hands gather at the clubhouse where the judges' decisions are announced and where this year the chairman, having failed to get attention by rapping on a glass, finally shouted "Heel!"



MRS. ROY D. CHAPIN JR. watches as her bitch, Chip, performs in the manner that won the championship.

AT THE SPORTSMEN'S CLUBHOUSE AFTER THE LAST



MR. AND MRS. ROBERT McLEAN of Philadelphia and Fristoe Mullins (center) of St. Louis look pleased as one of two McLean entries retrieves stylishly.

GUN ERNEST BURTON of Long Island awaits call from judges to resume duties.



MRS. PHILIP ARMOUR JR. with Arm forth Kennels entry she handled as an amateur.



MRS. ROBERT McLEAN chats with Joseph C. Quirk, whose Scamp won the third award.

SERIES TENSE OWNERS AND HANDLERS AWAIT JUDGES' DECISION AFTER COUNTRY-STYLE SUNDAY DINNER PREPARED BY LOCAL HOST

