

# Field Trial Report 2021



In my last report we were hopefully looking forward to the Summer Grouse trials in 2021 and ISAE/S&P trials on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> July. Well this time nature was against us.

This year the weather became the cause of concern. After a very warm April when the grouse start to nest there were extremely hard frosts and cold weather in May. The hen alone incubates the eggs for about 25 days, leaving the nest a few times in the day to feed and drink. During this time the eggs were exposed to the freezing temperatures and failed to hatch.

The grouse may try another clutch of eggs, usually smaller in number, and because of the length of incubation the keepers were not seeing them hatch until mid/late June. With the trials due to start on 14<sup>th</sup> July in the north of England it was obvious the young birds would not be grown and strong enough to fly well and the gamekeepers did not want them disturbed. Gary Taylor, the head keeper at Swinton, phoned me to say he had been talking to the Lord Masham and they had sadly agreed that the trial could not go ahead on their moor. The other trials in the first week were also cancelled with the first trial going ahead on 21<sup>st</sup> July. And some subsequent trials also cancelled. It did depend on individual moors how the weather had affected the birds

As the Irish Setter breed stake not been able to run for the previous 3 years we were determined to try and make it go ahead, but had to find a moor willing to hold it. In the end Steve Robinson managed to secure East Allenheads for the breed stake only to run on 30<sup>th</sup> July. Many thanks to Mr J Herrmann and the head keep Steve Colmer.



Colin Forde with FT Ch Bownard Delegator

After a week of hot weather the weather changed and we had a day of pouring rain for the breed stake.

The judges were Nicky Ackerley-Kemp (A panel judge) and Rob Gould. We took late entries up to the day of the stake which gave people who had come over from Ireland for the Champion Stake the previous two days to enter.

In the end we had 24 dogs (12 brace) running.

After the first round the judges had three and half brace (7 dogs) in the second round. The dogs were all given good runs to try and find birds. In the end there was only one dog that came through to win the stake. This was Colin Forde's dog FT Ch Bownard Delegator. Gun's choice was Steve Robinson's bitch Coldcoats My Newt.

Typically the rain stopped just as we finished the stake. But it was a great relief that we had managed to actually hold the breed stake and we were extremely grateful to Mr Herrmann and Steve Colmer enabling this. And many thanks to our sponsor Skinner's for vouchers for 15kg sacks of dog food for the winners.



Left: Steve Robinson with Coldcoats My Newt and Colin Forde with FT Ch Bownard Delegator

Right: Colin Forde with his Father Jimmy who is a great supporter of the trials



When we are not at trials most of us are on moors working the dogs grouse counting for the keepers. This was also delayed until late July on a lot of moors to let the birds grow. Grouse counting is an important part of moor management for the keepers and it lets them and the land owners know how many grouse there are and if there are enough for shooting to go ahead. If numbers are very low shooting is cancelled. The numbers have been low for a couple of years, and this year has depleted them even more.

People often ask me how you count the grouse with the dogs. It is quite simple really, we run the dogs, individually, as if you were running in a trial or shooting over them. When a dog comes on point the handler goes to the dog and the dog is instructed to flush the birds, all under control, when the birds lift the dog drops and you count the birds that have flown. As well as providing a count for the keeper and land owner this is good training for the dogs and keeps them fit.

If anyone wishes to attend the trials to watch they are most welcome, they just need to ask the FT secretary of the trial they wish to attend.

For judges working towards awarding CCs they need to attend an Open stake to appreciate the work and the conformation required for the breed to do the job. Please contact me if you are interested and want to know more, I can give you all the relevant information.

If anyone is interested in learning more about the working side and training their dog there are people who can help and give advice, particularly the members of the field trial sub committee.

On the Kennel Club website there is a section on Field Trials and lots of information for anyone new to the sport. I also recommend you familiarise yourself with The Kennel Club Field Trial (J) regulations, which is available online from the Kennel Club website, this will explain the different stakes and what is expected of a dog in a trial etc.

I look forward to hopefully seeing some of you at the trials.

Maggy Halliday, FT Secretary

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ISAE/S&P Spring Partridge trial 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> April 2022 To be held at Wadlow Farm, West Wrattling, Nr Newmarket, by Kind Permission of Mr Richard Clarke Judges Mr David Hall and Mrs Barbara Smith

Summer Grouse trial 22<sup>nd</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2022 on Reeth Moor, North Yorkshire.  
Judges Ms Sara Chichester and Mr Bob Whitworth