

Colorado Hunt Test, 2009 by Carol Makowski



Winchester 20.01, Hunting Hound Owners: Michael and Dana O'Rell, Louisville, Colorado Judges John Meahl, Carol Peterman, Jean Dieden

On May 3, 2009, the Basset Hound Club of America and Timberline Basset Hound Club hosted a hunting performance test at Chico Basin Ranch near Fountain, Colorado, south and east of Colorado Springs.

This was the first time in many years that Colorado was able to find workable field grounds (thanks to John Meahl). There were a total of 13 stakes participating – 3 solos (2 Basset, 1 Dachshund) 5 braces (2 Basset, 3 Dachshund) and 5 2-coupled packs (1 Basset, 4 Dachshund). There was a total of 31 dogs participating in this test - 8 Bassets, 23 Dachshunds.

The test chairman was Dachshund Breeder/Exhibitor Dawn-Renee Mack of Lakewood, Colorado. Judges were Dr. Jean Dieden (Oregon), John Meahl (New York) and Carol Peterman (Texas).

It was a beautiful day for the test – clear, partly sunny, mild breeze. We were concerned because it had been raining quite hard the night before but on Sunday morning, the weather was clear and pleasant. We gathered at a predetermined place on the ranch which had some nice shade, outbuildings and seating – the same area used the previous day for bird banding.



Lookin' for rabbits.

A registration table was set up. Michael Moon is the ranch manager, and he began the morning by speaking to the group about the mission of Chico Basin Ranch, a working cattle ranch dedicated to working collaboratively with neighboring ranches and with people and organizations in the local community and nearby cities to establish relationships that enhance the ecological and economic stability of this ranching operation. Chico consists of 87,000 acres of land owned by the State of Colorado Land Board - www.chicobasinranch.com.



The Gallery



One of the Dachshund packs

The draw for order of running took place at approximately 8 a.m. – solos followed by braces followed by packs. Judges gave a briefing to the exhibitors about the procedure. There were several present who had never attended a hunt test before. It was wonderful to have so many Dachshunds present with their owners and handlers. What a sight that was – mostly mini's but a good variety of coats and colors.



Marshall hot on the trail

The terrain was rough but fairly level and had some cactus. The dogs were minimally bothered by the prickly plants and most were able to avoid them. The cottontails were sparse but nearly every stake had a rabbit to run. The rabbits were not surfacing that day in substantial numbers, so the dogs had to work hard, very typical of western hunting conditions; it was a challenging test for the judges and exhibitors as well. Surprisingly, a couple of jackrabbits also surfaced during the course of the day. Cattle and horses roamed freely in small groups and some were curious about us. Their presence nearby wasn't a problem – we just kept moving.



*Basset and Dachshund folk
new friends*

We had one qualifier owned by Dana and Michael O'Rell of Louisville, Colorado – a Basset Hound named Winchester who regularly goes out with his owners to find rabbits – no formal training whatsoever. Winchester's owners tell me he learned to open and follow a line from another local Basset named Clementine – a star at one of our earlier hunt tests in Ft. Collins. We'll be working with the manager of Chico to plan for future tests, possibly in the fall. Hope some of you plan on coming out to experience our Colorado hospitality.



Judges' Briefing



Ken Janiec with Stanley and Zoe.

*Carol Makowski
Hunt Test Secretary
Basset Hound Club of America*



Spectators!