

DACHSHUND FIELD TRIAL HISTORY - by Carrie Hamilton

Dachshund field trialing was initiated in the United States in 1933 by the United States Dachshund Field Trial Club Inc. The club, which was based in the Connecticut-New York-New Jersey area, was only in existence for a few years.

Following the demise of the USDFTC, the Dachshund Club of America Inc. stepped in and began holding field trials in 1935. From 1935 to 1984, with the exception of 1948-50 when no trials were held, DCA has held at least one trial every year. Many of these early trials were held in New Jersey, primarily in the Fall. Starting in 1985, the Dachshund Club of America has been holding two national trials. One, which is designated as the National, has been rotating throughout the United States and is held whenever possible in conjunction with the National Specialty events. The other, which has become known as the Annual, is held in the Fall usually in New Jersey.

It is perhaps only logical then that the second oldest field trial giving club is the Dachshund Club of New Jersey. The following is an excerpt; from the DCNJ club news printed in the March 1967 American Dachshund, announcing DCNJ's first field trial:

Because two men had a dream and worked hard to make it come true, Dachshunds aspiring to gain the coveted title of Field Trial Champion will have a second opportunity each year to earn their championship points. The AKC has licensed the DC of New Jersey to hold its first championship point field trial this spring. This trial will supplement the DCA's annual offering.

Several years ago, Charlie Campbell and George Wanner became deeply interested in the working, or field, Dachshund. Charlie had actually worked his dogs under the gun in the field. Both men recognized that there just wasn't ample opportunity for the dogs to earn their points with only one field trial a year. Unlike many of us who give birth to a good idea and then sit on it, they set out to do something.

First, they determined what steps were necessary to become licensed by the AKC. Two fun matches were held to prove to the AKC that the willing sponsors knew what they were doing. Then there was the question of a suitable tract. This was answered through the New Jersey Fish and Game Commission, on the hunting grounds in Bevans, Sussex County. Finally, the first AKC-sanctioned fun match was held in April 1963. April 1964 saw the second fun match, 1965 the first AKC-sanctioned trial, and 1966 the second one. Having successfully led the club and their committees through all the preliminaries, Charlie and George, in the name of the DCNJ, petitioned the AKC for permission to hold a licensed point field trial, and this permission has been granted.

George and Charlie's dream will come true Sunday, April 23. Classes will be: Open All Ages, Dogs; Open All Ages, Bitches; and Open, Champions Only. Judges will be Lloyd Bowers and Dr. Helmut E. Adler. The fee is \$5 per entry, and entries close at the home of the field trial secretary, Mrs. Charles Campbell, at 7p.m., Saturday, April 15.

DCNJ's trial in 1967 was the first to offer a Best in Trial. This first ever Best in Trial was won by Field Champion Cyrano Plume of Greenfield, a standard longhair. Previously, only Best in Open All-Age Stakes was offered, and this continued to be the highest award offered at the DCA field trial for many years to come. It was only a few months earlier at the 1966 DCA field trial that the first Field Champions only stake was offered. The total entry at these

trials was usually between twenty and thirty dogs. However, until the mid-eighties it was not unusual to have few if any field champions entered.

In 1985, dachshunds began running under their own field trial rules and procedures. Prior to this dachshund field trials were run under the AKC Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedures for Pointing Breeds, Dachshunds, Retrievers and Spaniels. In 1987, DCA set up a field trial advisory council or committee (TAC) to promote dachshund field events and to make field trial policy recommendations to DCA's Board of Directors.

The two oldest field trialing clubs held back-to-back trials twice in 1993. 1993 was the first year that the Dachshund Club of New Jersey held more than one field trial. A Spring trial was held in conjunction with the DCA National in Pennsylvania, and a Fall trial was held in New Jersey with the DCA Annual trial. Much has changed since 1967. Entries have really taken off. Over 80 dogs were entered each day at the DCA National and DCNJ spring trials, for a total of one hundred dogs competing over the two days of trials. The Dachshund Club of America celebrated its Centennial in 1995. The 1995 DCA National, which was held in Kentucky, at the time set a record for total entries (104) and for the number of dogs entered in the Field Champions Only Stake (47). At the 1999 DCA National a new record was set for total entries (125)! At the DCA Regional trial the preceding day, a record was set for the Field Champions Only Stake with an entry of 54. Now it is not uncommon for the DCA National to draw over 100 entries.

The Connecticut Yankee Dachshund Club joined DCA and DCNJ by holding their first licensed trial in 1971. Since then, twenty-eight other dachshund clubs have held licensed field trials. These are Northern California DC (1978-), Santa Margarita DC (1979-1988), Albany Capital District DC (1979-), Western Pennsylvania DC (1980-1984, 1997-), Central Ohio DC (1982-), DA of Long Island (1984-), Midwest DC (1987-1999), Badger DC (1987-), Greater Portland DC (1988-), Hudson Valley DA (1989-), Golden Gate DC (1990-), DC of St. Louis (1991-), Hoosier DC (1993-1998), Bay Colony DC (1994-), Dallas-Ft. Worth DC (1997-), Bayou DC of New Orleans (1998-), Madison Area DC (1998-), Louisville DC (1998-), Wolverine DC (2000-), Dachshund Fanciers Assoc. of Berks County (2000-), DC of Santa Anna Valley (2000-), DC of Metropolitan Atlanta (2001-), Houston DC (2001-), Metropolitan Washington DC (2002-), DC of Greater Buffalo (2002-), Minnesota DC (2003-), Cascade DC (2004-), and Sierra DB of LA County (2005-).

In addition, three clubs (Antelope Valley DC, Buckeye DC, and Metropolitan Baltimore DC) have held sanctioned trials but no licensed trials. Other clubs are also working towards holding field trials.

Most clubs hold at least one field trial each year, often in conjunction with a DCA regional trial. If you are interested in attending field trials in your area or in getting your club started in field trials, contact the DCA Trial Advisory Committee. They are available to assist clubs in starting field trial programs.