

## **Nose to the Ground**

# **TrackWest Newsletter – June 2013**

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# President's Report



Here we are well into another tracking season with one trial under our belts and one TSD trial as well.

A huge thank you to Judy and Valeta to the hours of work that go into the successful running of the trials. Great work. It was lovely to have Jim and Beth back doing the wonderful roast at our Saturday trials and of course Trevor and Fay helping.

Looking forward to our Christmas in July on the 13<sup>th</sup> July. Don't forget to see Natasha or Sue to put your name down and join in the festivities.

Hope you are all enjoying your training and if you have any problems please come and see me and I will do what I can to help.

Thank you to all members that stay and help put up stuff and take down equipment at trials many hands make light work and don't forget to offer to steward or track lay at trials. If everyone digs in and helps it all goes well.

There is a great article in the magazine re lead handling. I know when I first read it - it turned the light on for me and it all started to make sense I still go back and read it now just to refresh my memory.

Happy tracking and remember "Trust your Dog"

*We are all here to help. You only have to ask.*

Gerry



**Under NO Circumstances is anyone to interfere and take out flags as the judges may have to reflag their tracks for the Wednesday after the Saturday trial.**

**Please Do not Touch the flags**

## Secretary's Report



TrackWest recently held a Closed Club trial specifically for Pre-triallers/non TD1 qualifiers for those members who train with our club. This trial was very well received and congratulations to all those who passed. We hope that you benefitted from the experience of no flags and critiques from a qualified judge and someone who you have not trained with. Thank you for your participation.

Please consider volunteering to lay tracks - this will give you experience on the length and how your track might look when you enter an official trial. Also, please consider stewarding: you will learn how a judge sets a course and judging techniques, and perhaps what to do or not to do when handling your own dog.

We repeatedly say that tracking is a team sport and I congratulate all the members for upholding the spirit of our club. We are here to enjoy working with our dogs and I believe you are a credit to the Club.

TrackWest is continuing with having a roast lunch at trials, however our cooks need to know numbers staying for lunch. Please let your instructor or Beth ([jim.beth1@optusnet.com.au](mailto:jim.beth1@optusnet.com.au)) know.

Christmas in July is our next big event - information within this Newsletter.

Happy tracking  
Carol

## From the Editor's desk



In this edition the important notices have been red flagged. Become familiar with the Evacuation Procedure and then grab a cuppa and indulge yourself on the interesting article "Lines of Communication"

Please feel free to send me what you may think is interesting, informative and even the gossip.

Lynne Jooste  
[jooste@iinet.net.au](mailto:jooste@iinet.net.au)



***Remember to check the website regularly:***

- ***Trial schedules have changed and are not listed in the Canine News.***

## Tracking Trial Luches and their History

### By Jim and Beth Spence

Originally, the whole reason behind the Roast Dinners at Gnangara was from an idea that Jim had; to have a little bit of friendly socialization after a trial and it was also our way of putting some much needed funds into the kitty. Jim spent a few years building the trailer in his spare time. The very first dinner we did we paid for everything and from that we worked out how much the meal would cost each person. We both enjoyed doing this and we purchased the food and at no time was anyone forced to buy their lunch some members asked if they could contribute by bringing salads & desserts.

There were a few members who thought \$5.00 was too much to pay for the lunch so they brought their own. I asked most of the people who enjoyed the lunch if they thought the price was too high and I didn't have any complaints in fact they thought it was cheap. Some weeks we were out of pocket but over time it balanced out so that by the year's end we were able to make a healthy donation to the club for its Presentation Dinner.

The treasurer (Neil) used to pay for the Judges, Judges Stewards & Chief Stewards lunches but that didn't really make sense because at the end of the year it came back anyway.

So that was why the money was reduced in later years. When I offered to give the people who brought salads etc. the money they spent on providing them. They said no it was their way of putting back to the club.



Then at some stage the committee decided that committee members would provide the salads and desserts and claim the cost from the club. I don't know if they did that.

That was the origin of the cooked lunch on the Saturday tracking trial days. At the present time, the cooked lunch is to enable a social get together of all participants and especially the new members to get to know other club members and exchange information and ideas in a relaxed atmosphere.

The expense to the club is minimal as the most part is donated and any surplus funds are returned to the club. I would add that as the Judges and Stewards do not pay for their cooked lunch, the \$5-00 charged to others subsidizes this and is still a welcomed event on cold wet days.



- *The roast will be on Saturday's trial only. Please contact Beth Spence mailto: jim.beth1@optusnet.com.au*
- *Wednesdays (Tracking or Track & Search) will be those that wish to contribute to bring a plate please.*
- *Track and search Trials on a Sunday- Lunches will be organised through Jo Washington King if you wish to bring something please let Jo know and she will let you know what is required.*



## Evacuation Procedure

In the event of an fire emergency please take the following steps

### **Trainers**

Round up your group If laying or working tracks they must stop immediately and follow you to gate at Pessoa Rd (where we meet in the mornings) and please sign out before you leave so you can be accounted for.

On trial days the same applies only judges will be in charge of their individual groups of people and once everyone is together to proceed to morning tea area and then move down to gate at Pessoa Road and be checked out before you leave.

Please always let Chief Steward know if you are training on trial days and where you will be.

Someone will drive around tooting their car horn This is your signal to immediately stop what ever you are doing and follow the above steps.

### In the event of a Medical emergency

#### **On training days.**

Contact Carol or Gerry (please put these mobile phone numbers in your phone)

Carol 0478603991 — Gerry: 0439911250

Carol will contact First Aid officer on duty and phone ambulance if required.

Carol will send someone down to Pessoa road gate to meet ambulance. This person will have location of medical emergency to guide ambulance to their location

#### **On trial days (Saturday, Sunday or Wednesday).**

All judges to make sure they have Chief stewards number in their phone.



## **TRACKING'S LINE OF COMMUNICATION**

**by G D Murray**

Most dog handlers think of their long line as a piece of equipment. But it is more than that.

I can't tell you how many times I have seen dog handlers snap on their long line to their dogs harness and went along for the ride. They fail to realize that the line is a physical link between the dog and their hand. Other than the length of the line it is no different than rubbing your dogs ear while doing obedience.

The long line can be a very strong communication tool between the dog and handler. With proper use the communication flows back and forth all the time during the track. It uses a language that is only known by the dog and handler which both learn and grow with from the first training track. It is refined through out the years but all too often I see only the dog using it and the handler blindly following.

Let's start at the beginning and see if we can not develop a greater understanding of the long line, it's purpose and how to communicate with our dogs through it.

The first step is to choose the right line. Like all tools of the trade there are personal preferences. I have seen all types of lines used for tracking, rope, climbing rope, leather, and all types of webbing. They all have some good points and some bad. I personally stay away from any form of rope as it has a tendency to burn your hands as it slides through. Yet it is strong, easy to obtain and inexpensive. Leather is costly but has the most natural feel and spring to it. The down side is that when you buy a 20 foot line after a number of tracks you soon have a 30 foot line and as time wears on a 40 foot line which can break as the line pulls thinner and thinner.

The line used by most handlers these days is a webbing about 3/8" to 1/2" is width. It is strong, inexpensive and long lasting. Be sure to buy a quality webbing which is supple so it won't be too hard on your hands.

Line length is something there will always be a lot of discussion about. I have seen handlers track with lines from as short as 6 feet all the way up to 30-40 feet in length. Personally I feel that 20 feet is about the right length. This puts you far enough back to see your dog and read his body language. It also allows you when your dog indicates track loss to stop, circle the dog and be standing right on the corner. This should insure that the dog will re-locate the track somewhere in the arch of the line and therefore you don't blow a corner. Another point for those of you who are doing criminal work the 20 feet gives you some distance if your dog tracks right up on a suspect and you need time and distance to react.

No matter what line you choose there will be numerous times when your dog comes in close to you and you pull in the slack. Just as you have the line down to 6 to 8 feet the dog hits the track, pulls hard into the harness and the line pulls through your hand causing friction burn. Occupational hazard I guess! Some handlers wear gloves while they are tracking.

Personally I don't. I feel that bare hands listen a lot better to the line and what it is saying.

As far as the friction burns go I feel that if I get one I deserve one. I should of been paying attention, getting off my butt and going with the dog if he has indicated the track. A number of friction burns can teach a handler a whole lot.

A handlers primary job in line work is to keep the line from distracting the dog. Keep it out of the dogs way and not let it get tangled. All the time this little rope ballet is going on you must keep a steady tension on the line constantly.

This is where the communication through the line begins, at the constant tension. Any change in the tension, increased, or decreased is telling you something. This change in tension can be produced by the dog or the handler. No matter who changes the tension for what ever reason it should be telling the other something.

The proper tension on the line will keep it straight in the air from the dogs harness to your hand. I keep the line between my index finger and thumb letting the last foot or so fall down through my hand so I can grab it with the whole of my hand if I have to. This allows me to change the tension on the line from as little as a couple lbs. pressure(finger and thumb only) to pulling the dog to a complete stop(the whole hand).

Lets start from the middle and work up and down with the amount of tension on the line.

You are on the track, the dog is tracking well, and everything is going just fine. The tension on the line is enough to keep the line straight from the harness to your hand. At this point you know everything is O.K. and so does the dog. Any change in that tension and something is being said. Keep in mind that all this communication is in conjunction with you reading the dogs body language.

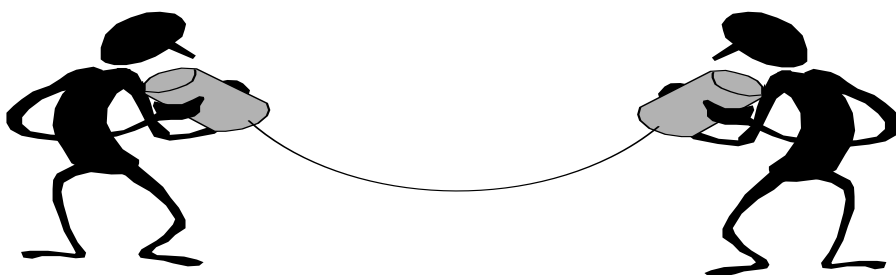
As you track along the dog starts to lift his head and move it from side to side as if looking for the track. The second he does this you start to increase tension on the line. This increase is a question to the dog. Are you on the track? If his head goes back to the ground and he increases tension back into the harness and the line he is saying "yeah I'm on track and here it is". The handler then eases off the tension until it is back to the point where everything is normal(straight line from harness to hand) If as you put tension on, the dog lifts his head, relieving tension you keep adding tension quickly but evenly until a point where you have the dog stopped and starting to turn into a circle at the end of the line. At this point your dog has given you a track loss and most likely a corner. As the dog swings through the arch of the long line you should be standing on the corner. Somewhere in the circle he now is searching for the track in he should hit the track.

When the dog hits the track he will give you a head turn that will show you where the track is going and then follow it with his body. This will increase the tension on the line. He is now saying to you through the line "here it is lets go" While training a new dog each and every time this happens your response would be "Good Boy" and the second you praise him you let the tension off the line and go with the dog. This conditions the dog how to communicate through the line back to you and as time goes on the dog will give stronger and stronger track re-locations. It also gives him physical praise through the release of tension in the line.

In time this increase and decrease of tension through the line becomes a language between dog and handler. More can be said through that line than you could ever imagine.

So the basics in line communication are. Increase tension from the handler-Are you on track? Increase tension from the dog-I'm on track or here is the track. Decrease tension from the handler-Good Boy I'm following you. Decrease tension from the dog-I've lost the track and I'm looking.

Proper line work is more than just snapping the long line to the harness and following your dog on a track. So lets stop being dead weight on the end of the line for our dogs to drag around. Lets use our lines, ourselves and our dogs to the fullest, communicate he may be trying to tell you something!



## DISCLAIMER

The information in this publication is of a general nature. The articles contained herein are not intended to provide a complete discussion on each subject and or issues canvassed. TrackWest Magazine does not accept any liability for any statements or any opinion.



# Passes in the Pines

## Trial results

### 18<sup>th</sup> May 2013

#### TDX 6

SHERMAN TD	Natasha Douglas	Very Good	Judge: Mrs Sue Fletcher
BANDIT TD	Charmaine Gill	Good	Judge: Ms Geraldine Jenkins

#### TD3

DONNA	Kim Higgs	Very Good	Judge: Ms Christine Weetman
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#### TD2

*GUNCLIP COSMOPOLITAN	Holly Cassin	Good	Judge: Mrs Sue Fletcher
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### 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2013

#### TDX 3

*LARNOOK NO NO NANETTE	Vicky Morris	Good	Judge: Ms Christine Weetman
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#### TDX 2

ICEWHEAT ANGUS BOY	Vicky Morris	Excellent	Judge: Ms Geraldine Jenkins
*MAERCECI UBER MAGIC	Valeta Pethrick	Excellent	Judge: Ms Geraldine Jenkins
*EISENLAND OUTLAST	Diane Webb	Very Good	Judge: Ms Geraldine Jenkins

### 8<sup>th</sup> June 2013

#### TDX 7

BANDIT TDX	Charmaine Gill	Very Good	Judge: Mr Neil Fletcher
SHERMAN TDX	Natasha Douglas	Excellent	Judge: Mr Neil Fletcher
*SNOVANTAGE DIESEL GAL TDX	Jo Washington-King	Very Good	Judge: Ms Geraldine Jenkins

#### TDX 3

*Ch FETCHITUP DARE TO DREAM	Sonja Pfister	Good	Judge: Ms Lauren Fergerson
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#### TDX 2

*BELBRACON SEEKER LOVER KEEPER	Andrea Maxwell	Good	Judge: Mr Neil Fletcher
*ZEBA	Peter Ward	Good	Judge: Ms Geraldine Jenkins
*Ch GRAUSTURM SILVER LINING	Jo Ward	Very Good	Judge: Ms Geraldine Jenkins
BORDERLIGHT ZIVAS DREAM	Irene Levitzke	Good	Judge: Mrs Judy Tsakalos
BORDERLIGHT I AM A ROCK	Paula Wilkins	Good	Judge: Mrs Judy Tsakalos

### 12<sup>th</sup> June 2013

#### TDX 7

Ch GLENBOGLE BOTTOM LINE TDX	Corinne O'Hehir	Pass	Judge: Mr Neil Fletcher
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#### TDX 5

GLENBOGLE UNEXPECTED SURPRISES TD	Corinne O'Hehir	Pass	Judge: Mr Neil Fletcher
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#### TDX 4

*Ch ERLANDER GINETTA TD TD 3	Geraldine Jenkins	Pass	Judge: Mrs Valeta Pethrick
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#### TD 3

ROOKIE	Yvonne Fimmell	Good	Judge: Mr Neil Fletcher
ICEWHEAT ANGUS BOY	Vicky Morris	Very Good	Judge: Mrs Valeta Pethrick
*EISENLAND OUTLAST	Dianne Webb	Very Good	Judge: Mrs Valeta Pethrick
*MAERCECI UBER MAGIC	Valeta Pethrick	Good	Judge: Ms Lauren Fergerson

#### TD 2

MADRODISH MADE FOR LUVINU BRUNO	Sue Fletcher Judy Tsakalos	Very Good Very Good	Judge: Ms Lauren Fergerson Judge: Ms Lauren Fergerson
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#### TD 1

*MODADOBE PANTZ ON FIRE BROOKSVALE PHANTA	Carol Freele Peggy Waller	Good Very Good	Judge: Mrs Valeta Pethrick Judge: Ms Lauren Fergerson
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## Christmas In July

13<sup>th</sup> July 2013

After Trial held on that day  
(approx 12.30)



Come and join us for lots of fun!

Christmas Fancy Dress Parade

(dog and handler)

Games and Raffles

**CATERED ROAST LUNCH**

**BYO - Please drink responsibly**

**\$10 per person**

*RSVP required by: 1st July, please.*

Sue: [sue@bigpond.com](mailto:sue@bigpond.com)

Nanasha: [n.sherman@bigpond.com](mailto:n.sherman@bigpond.com)

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2013

Saturday, June 22, Sunday June 23 and Wednesday June 26	Track & Search Trial
Saturday, June 29 and Wednesday July 3	Tracking Trial
Saturday, July 13 and Wednesday July 17	CHRISTMAS IN JULY - Tracking Trial
Saturday, July 20, Sunday July 21 and Wednesday July 24	Track & Search Trial
Saturday, July 27 and Wednesday July 31	Tracking Trial
Saturday, August 10 and Wednesday August 14	Tracking Trial
Saturday, August 17, Sunday August 18 and Wednesday August 21	Track & Search Trial
Saturday, August 31, Sunday September 4	Tracking Trial
Saturday, September 14 and Wednesday September 18	Tracking Trial (last one)
Saturday, 21st September	BREAKFAST IN THE BUSH
Tuesday, 16th October	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Saturday, 26 October	Track & Search Trial - Urban only
Saturday, 9th November	PRESENTATION DINNER



*The last word.....*

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