

Member profiles

Retrieving judges Ron Jackson and Paul Littlejohn



Ron Jackson.



Paul Littlejohn.

THIS YEAR'S SSAA & WGAA National Retrieving Championship Trial judges Ron Jackson and Paul Littlejohn both began shooting at a young age and as they grew up, they began to include their dogs with their shooting.

As a youngster, Ron would love early morning duck hunts and kangaroo and pig hunting weekends with his dad and younger brother. Paul began his shooting career helping to process trapped rabbits. Over the years, the pair has owned many breeds of dogs.

"I purchased a registered Springer spaniel some 24 years ago and this quickly resulted in me becoming interested in trials within Tasmania," Paul said. "I have owned numerous breeds of dogs, namely, English Springer spaniels, Labradors and a German shorthaired pointer. I'm currently hunting over an English Springer and German wirehaired pointer and have a young Labrador in training."

Ron, however, wasn't introduced to using dogs when hunting until much later in life. He started his shooting career when his dad thought he was old enough to handle a gun, and bought his first gun, a Winchester 201 Supergrade, at the age of 20. It was after this that fellow shooter John Michelle introduced him to the idea of retrieving dogs and Ron bought his first Labrador retriever.

In the years that have followed, the duo has increased their involvement in the retrieving competition circuit, gaining respect as both competitors and judges.

"I have made up three Retrieving Trial Champions, as well as a Field Trial Champion, but enjoy nothing more than a hunt and retrieve with trained dogs," Paul said.

Both Ron and Paul said they were looking forward to judging the SSAA & WGAA National Retrieving Championship Trial on October 9 and 10 this year and seeing the great talent sure to attend.

Club profile



United Field and Retrieving Branch Q73

THE SSAA UNITED Field and Retrieving Branch Q73 has helped to keep the sport of retrieving alive in the South East Queensland region since its inception in July 2007. At this time, a small group of gundog enthusiasts approached the SSAA in regard to creating the Working Gundog Association of Australia (WGAA) discipline for Queensland. Help from SSAA National President Bob Green, Queensland President Geoff Jones, Victoria's Barry Oliver and people within the WGAA brought the club to fruition. Since then, membership has increased five-fold and the sport is experiencing very positive growth in the state.

Retrieving trials involve testing the abilities of a handler and dog in various duck shooting scenarios. Competitions run by the Q73 Branch use Dokken Dead Fowl Trainers to simulate the 'fallen game' or 'despatched duck'. These artificial birds have the advantage of being long-lasting and are more readily accepted by non-hunters. The use of the trainers has been vital in helping the club to attract more people to the sport and creating a healthier attitude towards the SSAA, shooting, and retrieving trials in Queensland.

Competitions are run from March to October each year and the club currently holds around 10 to 12 retrieving trial events during this time at various properties in the south-east of the state. The branch also holds regular training days, where people who are interested in the sport can bring their dogs along for advice on training and competition.

Current President Jim Jeffrey said the club was looking forward to hosting the Inaugural SSAA & WGAA National Retrieving Championship Trial in October this year.

"The SSAA and WGAA National Retrieving Championships is the ideal place to see some highly skilled dog work, and observe dog and handler working together at this high level of competition," he said.

"People interested in retrieving, gundogs or those that would just like to take a look, are encouraged to come along - as with all our events, spectators are more than welcome."

For more information about the SSAA United Field and Retrieving Branch Inc Q73 or the National Retrieving Championship Trial in October, visit www.unitedfieldandretrieving.org.au or contact the Secretary on 0412 633 632 or 07 3289 9251.