

Bromyard Gala 2011

In July, a plucky team from WVRC attended Bromyard Gala to provide demonstrations of gundog work in the main ring.

As last year, it was a very hot day (resulting in poor Jon Stannard going down with heat-stroke) and the challenge that faced the dogs should not be underestimated - an arena filled with smoke from the adjacent steam-engine displays, all the noise, plus a multitude of scents from previous demonstrations including horses, plus what they left behind – oh so delicious! The Paws For Thought display team also did their best to knobble our demonstration by having their picnic on the ground where they were sitting at the edge of the ring....

Roger manned the microphone for the morning demonstration, with Claire at one end of the ring guiding one half the team and John at the other with the rest. A very slick, totally un-rehearsed demonstration resulted, with dogs demonstrating obedience, retrieving marks and blinds down the whole length of the arena, and sitting out away from handlers while other dogs worked past them. Roger's expert commentary gave the audience a better appreciation of what was going on. At the end of the demo, children from the audience were invited into the ring to have a go at handling the dogs, and it is a credit to our dogs that all were so willing to cooperate and remain obedient!

The afternoon demonstration was a little depleted in terms of numbers, with some of the team having other commitments. After a trip out from the site at lunchtime, Angela found her way back in barred by stewards and nearly didn't make it, but she proved more than a match for them!!! Bernard took the mike in Roger's place and also ran his dogs (who says men can't multi-task!!). Now standing in for Claire and also some throwing of dummies at our end for John's team to retrieve, I was not quite as good at deciphering his semaphore as to what was to happen next but another excellent demo was put on along similar lines to the morning. Even more children were very keen to work the dogs at the end.

In between the demonstrations the team took turns to man the Club's tent, with our fabulous new display boards showing photographs of our events and giving information about the Club. The team talked to lots of visitors to the Gala interested in learning about working gundogs or wanting advice. There was also plenty of time to wander around the Gala, see the other exhibits and demonstrations, do a bit of shopping or even take in a ride on the fun-fair!

We had a very enjoyable day and it is a credit to our dogs that they can work obediently and quickly in those conditions, especially the less experienced among them. Thank you to all who did take part, whether commentating, throwing dummies, or working their dog(s), or even all three!! - John Jones, Roger Wiggins, Bernard Pound, Claire Raymond, Peter Boxall, Mick Downes, Terry Dukes, Lorraine Goodwin, Angela Judge, Richard Price, Jo and Jon Stannard, Sacha & Mia Treadwell, Anna Yates. Also thanks to Lorraine's husband for taking charge of Bernard's camera and providing us with some lovely photographs of the day (ok, so Bernard can't manage 4 things at once then!)



Bernard (plus drink...) leads the team to the arena



Peter's dog keeping a careful eye on that giraffe...



John ready to throw, Larraine's dog all set for anything! Angela's dog demonstrating stop whistle.



Leaving the dogs in the middle for "through" retrieves.



Multi-tasking Bernard!



Flatcoats like to make sure the audience is watching!



Young handlers get a go. A dummy throwing recruit??