

Coursing Ability Test – An “On the Field” Perspective

By Tracey and Tim Marks

On May 15, 2011 Pocatello Kennel Club Lure Coursing launched our latest coursing endeavor sanctioned by the AKC. The Coursing Ability Test (CAT) is lure coursing fun now available for ALL canines, whether of mixed origins or of highly pedigreed origins, sighthounds or non sighthounds! While it is somewhat tamer than its prototype as far as distance, and is without the same scoring rigors as lure coursing trials, these are exactly what make it accessible to all. Any of our beloved pooches are able to come out and demonstrate their prey drive and their athleticism.

We had so much fun with not only our familiar hound faces, but with the new doggie faces that were all over the canine gene pool spectrum!! There was the dainty Papillon who proved that even the smallest dogs have the heart of a hunter. We had the large and lovely Dogue de Bordeaux who showed us that brachycephalic should never be misconstrued as “shortened nose, shortened interest.” Who could help but notice the mighty Doberman who displayed his inner sighthound? What a thrill to watch these guys “go primal”. Something Tim and I always find rewarding out on the field is being a small part of that “YES!” moment when handlers watch their dogs kick into gear. The looks on their faces are often priceless emotion and our hearts pump a little faster right along with theirs. Whatever your sport, there is no denying the absolute bliss of watching dogs work.

After running 100 dogs (wow!!) we walked away with not only sunburn and windburn, but something deeper and more lasting – a feeling of camaraderie. How do we say “Thank You” for all the support and hard work? Once again, our club reminded us of what its greatest attribute is... WE, THE MEMBERS! We’re basically a family brought together by a common interest. As such, of course there are “quarrels” from time to time. But when it counts, our people are notoriously good at rallying in support of each other’s interests whether their dogs participate or not. This event was no exception. And while Tim and I never had a spare moment to go support the agility event going on in conjunction with the coursing, those folks involved with agility who made a point of supporting coursing did not go unnoticed. Thank you! Thank you so very much to everyone who teamed up to make this thing such a success. PKC, you did yourselves proud!

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