

Irish COUNTRY SPORTS and COUNTRY LIFE

ON SALE TO
18TH MAY 2020

Volume 19 Number 1 Spring 2020 £3.00 / €5.00



Angling & Gundog Edition

In 2020 there will be ONE ALL IRELAND Game Fair



The **Irish Game Fair & Fine Food Festival** WHERE TOWN & COUNTRY MEET

Shanes Castle, Antrim **Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th August 2020**

The Irish Game Fair & Fine Food Festival celebrates its 42nd anniversary as an ALL IRELAND SHOWCASE for IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS, the Irish countryside and the Irish country Lifestyle.

COUNTRY SPORTS enthusiasts can enjoy an action packed Game Fair programme of international country sports competitions with the best ever prizes, many new trade stands, attractions and 'have a go' activities.

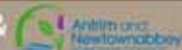
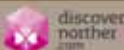
And the huge array of FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT including a great range of country orientated trade stands, a huge Living History Village with Encampment & Displays including Medieval Jousting; a superb Fine Food & Craft Festival including game & fish cookery demos and non stop entertainment for the whole family in three arenas.

TRADE STAND BOOKINGS NOW BEING TAKEN



Keep up to date with Fair news on www.irishgamefair.com or in the Irish Countrysports & Country Life magazine www.countrysportsandcountrylife.com

The Fair is supported by



Video : <https://vimeo.com/389920988> E: irishgamefair@btinternet.com

**For info:
call
028
44839167**



Front Cover:

Fishing for steelhead in the Smith River in Northern California.

Photograph by Jan Evans,
Polarstar Photography.

Contents

- | | | | |
|-----------|--|------------|---|
| 4 | ROI Comment | 71 | FISSTA's News & Views |
| 5 | Northern Comment | 74 | Hunting Roundup -
By Tom Fulton |
| 6 | Countryside News
(including LEAD SHOT
UPDATE) | 78 | The Multitalented Stanislaus
Lynch - By Derek Fanning |
| 30 | THE 2020 ALL IRELAND
GAME FAIR, SHANES
CASTLE | 82 | Dog Show Calendar |
| | Be part of the greatest
demonstration of support
for Irish Country Sports
ever! | 83 | Terrier, Lurcher & Whippet
Show Roundup -
By Margaret McStay |
| 34 | The Country Sports Interview
- With Derek Bell Jnr,
Angling Guide | 84 | New Lurcher Racing &
Showing Classification and
Rules for the Irish Game
Fair, Shanes Castle, 27/28
June 2020 |
| 40 | Shooting's Big Days & Small
Days - By David Hudson | 85 | IKC Spaniel Championship -
Report By Norman Blakeney |
| 44 | Nile Buffalo Quest -
By Simon K. Barr | 90 | Dog Test Calendar |
| 48 | Art & Antiques -
By Michael Drake | 91 | Pointers & Setters Autumn
Review - By Hugh Brady |
| 51 | Country Life & Air Rifles -
By Frank Brophy | 95 | The KC AV Spaniel
(exc. Cocker) Championship |
| 54 | In Search of Wild Trout -
By Simon Everett | 98 | 2019 IGL Retriever
Championship -
Report By Peter Smith |
| 57 | Boat Build - A Winter's
Project By Joseph Owens | 103 | 53rd IKC Irish Retriever
Championships - Report
& Photography
By Mary Murray |
| 60 | Plastic (not so) Fantastic -
By Johnny Woodlock | 109 | 2019 Irish Kennel Club
Championship for Cocker
Spaniels -
Ronan Gorman Reports |
| 64 | Inland Fisheries Ireland -
Initiatives & Outreach | | |
| 68 | Fishing Resolutions -
By Michael Martin, Six Mile
Water Trust | | |

Managing Editor: Albert Titterington, **ROI Editor:** Derek Fanning, **NI Editor:** Paul Pringle, **Associate Editor:** Irene Titterington

Publishers: (Editorial & Advertising) Country Lifestyle Exhibitions Ltd. Cranley Hill, 5b Woodgrange Road, Hollymount, Downpatrick BT30 8JE **Tel:** (028) (from ROI 048) 44839167

Email: Email: irishgamefair@btinternet.com **Web:** www.countrysportsandcountrylife.com

ROI Office: ROI Office: Derek Fanning, E: derekfanning123@gmail.com Tel: 05791 20003

Printed by W.&G.Baird **Distributed by** Easons (Dublin), E M Distribution Also Available by Subscription ISSN No. 1476-8240

The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the editor or the publishers. Whilst every care is taken to ensure that information published is accurate and reliable, the publishers cannot be held responsible or accept liability for any errors or omissions in this publication. ALL RIGHTS ARE RESERVED. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise without the prior written consent of the owner. No liability is accepted for the safe custody of unsolicited materials and manuscripts. Publication of accepted articles is not always guaranteed and the publishers will not be held liable for any manuscripts, photographs or other materials lost or damaged while in their possession, although every care will be taken. The editor reserves the right to amend any such articles as necessary.



Country Sports and Country Life

Rol Comment

My last day out mink hunting during the 2019 summer season took place in mid September on the Bandon River in southwest Cork. I joined about 40 other hound enthusiasts at ten in the morning at one of those myriad, stonecut bridges which are such a rich part of our country's heritage. Motorists don't have an opportunity to appreciate the beauty of these bridges as they whizz past, but when you are hunting on foot and up to your waist in the waters of a river you have time to give them due appreciation.

My fellow Cork hunters were, as always, very friendly. It was obvious that their mink-hunting excursions were something they greatly looked forward to every Sunday, that it was one of the highlights of their week. As I was speaking to these friendly Cork people I was reminded of the words written by a politician in his diary when visiting the county many years ago - "They are a splendid people."

One of the great pleasures in this world is following a pack of hounds as they go about their business with considerable energy and enthusiasm. It's a pleasure which never palls for me.

This day's hunting along the Bandon was a red letter day, the best mink hunting day of the whole season for me. We didn't catch any mink but the hounds never stopped speaking for five hours solid. My legs were weary and aching after so much exercise.

A couple of weeks later I enjoyed my last game fishing outing of the year. I went to the same small lake in Offaly where I had caught five fish in an afternoon in August, but on this occasion, despite doing my best for four hours, I caught nothing. The trout and perch nosed around the worm bait on several occasions but they never bit. The previous outing they had been practically leaping onto my lap. This time around, for some unknown reason, they weren't interested. I didn't mind, but I felt sorry for my ten year old nephew who was with me for the afternoon. This was his third time fishing, and his Dad and myself were hoping he would enjoy a catch on this particular afternoon. The fact he didn't, didn't seem to phase him one bit. He was still as enthusiastic as ever about the pastime. He's a great young lad.

It was good to receive a press statement, at the beginning of 2020, from the governmental department which looks after Inland Fisheries, which stated that the government is opening 82 rivers for salmon and sea trout fishing this year. Forty-one of the rivers will be fully open with a further 41 available on a "catch and release" basis. It's all being done on an environmentally aware basis, therefore the forty-one rivers which are being fully opened have been found to have a surplus of fish in their waters. The other forty-one rivers don't have the same surplus therefore a catch and release system will be in place.

The statement pointed out that 65 other rivers will be closed as they have no surplus of fish available for harvest. It seems the government is taking a common sense approach to the situation, closing some rivers to give them time to replenish their stocks, whilst giving anglers plenty of scope to enjoy fishing on lots of other rivers. It will no doubt be irritating for anglers to see they can no longer fish rivers which they have fished for many years, but the vast majority of anglers are reasonable people and they will see the logic of the situation.

During the winter hunting season I usually get out once or twice a week but this year, up until Christmas I only managed a few days, which was unusual for me. Life got very busy for me in November and December and I couldn't get out as much as I wanted to. When I did get out, the scenting conditions were poor and the hunting was disappointing. That all changed in January when I joined a number of beagling packs around the country for several days hunting. The scenting conditions also noticeably improved during my January outings.

There were a couple of outstanding days during the month when I experienced foot hunting at its finest. The first day was with a beagling club in Westmeath consisting of many friendly followers, including quite a few children (which was great to see when one is considering the future of beagling). The pack of ten couple gave a very fine display of venery, pursuing two lines of scent for a couple of hours each along the picturesque shores of the wide expanse of Lough Ennell. Lots of exercise and a nice endorphin high for yours truly! The ground was often very

soft and we sometimes sank up to our knees in the mud, which at one stage sucked off one of my boots! A short while later, as I was struggling through a thicket of brambles and branches, the briars removed my cap, my spectacles and scratched my cheek, drawing blood. I am quite shortsighted so I needed the glasses for the drive home. A foot-follower coming behind nearly stood on them as he passed through.

A couple of weeks later I was down in north Cork for an annual beagling festival which I have attended every February for several years. It was good to see many familiar faces and catch up with old friends. The festival lasts for nine days and on the sixth day of hunting, about fifty of us gathered with 12 couple of beagles in the village of Kiltelly in east Limerick. The pack had been invited over from Somerset by the local organisers.

I have enjoyed some of my best days beagling in the Kiltelly area, and this particular occasion was no different. It was a cracker of a day, in calm, sun-blessed conditions with plenty of quarry in the vicinity and excellent, lengthy chases. It's hilly, picturesque terrain with wide valleys, and hills defined by cliffs which were formed by volcanic activity millions of years ago. Wide drains crisscrossed the valleys which were too wide to jump across and meant we had to wade across, sometimes up to our waists. This was a hunt with plenty of walking up hills and jogging down the other side. The beagles were large for their breed and fast. We enjoyed five hours of nearly non-stop action.

Afterwards, we drove back to the pub in the village where the publican very kindly provided us with soup and sandwiches. As we chatted, one of the foot-followers told me he's in his seventies and used to be a huntsman. He said retirement doesn't suit him and he has continued to work. On the hunting field one could tell that he was as physically fit as a man thirty or forty years younger. Another follower, also in his seventies, proclaimed himself delighted with the day's outing. There are a number of fantastic beagling festivals held every year in Britain and Ireland. Long may they all continue.

Derek Fanning, ROI Editor



Country Sports and Country Life

Northern Comment

Spring is on its way and while I wait for the trout season to open there's an opportunity to catch one or two television programmes that I would otherwise 'sadly' miss due to editing, PR or country sports activities.

I say 'sadly' sarcastically: I'm not a great fan of what passes nowadays for entertainment on the haunted box. Nor am I captivated by the increasing surge towards everything conforming to a standard of PC on the box. Surely that defeats its avowed purpose of trying to be fair to all groups, classes, creeds etc.

Which by roundabout means brings me on to Towniefile..sorry I mean Countryfile, the programme so avidly watched by some 'interesting' folk, judging by the Tweets which shout loudest on Twitter.

The programme was recently at the Auchlyne Estate near Killin in Perthshire, Scotland and after meeting Emma Patterson, the Laird it was over to Charlotte Smith who met with Emma's daughter, Nicola, the young Laird of the estate.

Ah, I thought quietly to myself, someone at the Beeb has thought to make a programme that appeals to country sports enthusiasts - maybe even people who work, live and play in the countryside. As the presenter looked at the pros and cons of deer stalking and culling aided by some facts from the estate team, we saw an archetypal gamekeeper 'on the hill'; we watched a presenter 'learn to cast' for salmon, met the estate handyman in his 'shed' stuffed full of every odd and sod. It was the 'man cave' supreme. An interesting character who might have been straight from an edition of the Fast Show. Intriguing to say the least.

We saw deer carcasses hanging ready for collection. Ah I thought: sustainability, nothing wasted, local produce, few air miles, local economy boost etc. but I'm not sure if the presenters were as keen to highlight that as me.

Were the viewing public also entranced? I checked Twitter. I noticed that those who appeared to be the most 'offended' by programme's content strangely continued to watch the programme while airing their comments along with much rage and disgust.

'The deer are difficult to find so how can there be too many?' 'One family owning thousands of acres of land for killing wildlife and culling the natural wild landscape to facilitate this.' Someone hoped that the programme 'will look and address issues such as raptor persecution, which can be rife on many estates'. (A topic not unfamiliar to viewers I mused - selective memory perhaps?)

And on the other side of the coin, some said things like 'Haven't watched countryfile for years - since it stopped being a programme about the country by those & for those in the country & turned into a fluffybunnyhuggingveggiecutetowniefest.' While another thought 'they should do a feature on nasty bunnies eating poor defenceless plants.' Good to see that some folk can retain a sense of humour.

Anyway, well done Countryfile for mentioning shooting, stalking and fishing in what was the least loaded way that you have managed so far in my opinion. I'll watch the upcoming estate-located programmes with much interest. My ancillary fun was almost as entertaining, antis and others self combusting on Twitter. As they say on social media - LOL.

Sadly, the news arrived that CAI had undergone a significant restructuring process and closed its offices in the ROI and Northern Ireland. According to their statement which you read elsewhere in the magazine, Gary McCartney has been appointed as Regional Director for Northern Ireland and will continue to develop campaigns, lobby political representatives and give full support to members. We hope to interview Gary for the next magazine.

I would like to express personal thanks for the dedication and hard work of Lyall Plant and his team of Ashley and Liz and would like to wish Gary McCartney every success in taking forward the important work of CAI.

As enthusiasts, we are fortunate to have various membership organisations to support and develop country sports and conservation along with organisations such as the GWCT who do much excellent work on related scientific matters. They cannot flourish without your support and participation at open days and training events as well as financial support. We should be grateful for what they do. As the old saying goes 'use them or lose them!' And that goes for every aspect of country sports and countryside events too.

We have watched as magazines such as Irish Shooters Digest, Irish Anglers Digest and the Irish Angler ceased to appear on the newsstands. Events such as the NI Countrysports Fair will not be going ahead in 2020, with their FB page saying 'with rising costs in organising an event of this size we are finding it unsustainable and cannot justify continuing at this time.' Magazines and major country fairs in GB have also reported difficulties.

It seems that if ever there was a time to support and celebrate the world of country sports and the rural way of life it is now. As we start a new decade we invite you to help us enhance the public profile of Irish country sports through supporting the Irish Game Fair at Shanes Castle and the Irish Country Sports and Country Life magazine - the premier Irish country sports event and the most read ever Irish country sports magazine, now with over 100,000 readers worldwide.

OUR commitment in 2020 is to make this magazine available to the widest possible audience and to deliver the largest ever audience for a showcase All Ireland Game Fair at Shanes Castle.

To demonstrate OUR commitment to Irish country sports, we have committed funds to make the internet version of Irish Country sports and Life available FREE to read online, and for those people who prefer a hard copy glossy magazine we have held the cover price for over 20 years. Similarly we have held the price of admission to the Fair to £10/€10 (with FREE car parking & programme) AND are promoting a huge value offer of a year's subscription to the hard copy magazine plus two tickets to the fair for just £25 or €25. In addition we have launched and funded a FREE car sticker to show the world that we are PROUD OF IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS.

Against the backdrop of question marks over some country sports, country sports events and publications, and the rural way of life, we are asking for YOUR SUPPORT to help us continue to promote and defend Irish country sports by delivering a huge Irish Game Fair at Shanes Castle on 27 & 28 June.

TOGETHER we can showcase our country sports pride in a way that demonstrates to politicians, media and public the strength of support for country sports in Ireland. We have discounted admission, and there's a huge range of discounted accommodation and local attractions so that you can have a great weekend while at the same time helping ensure the future of the fair and the future of Irish country sports. There's even specially discounted Irish Game Fair rates for traders, competitors and visitors from across the Irish Sea.

So let's see everyone come along to the beautiful country splendour of the glorious Shanes Castle Estate in June and show the world WE ARE PROUD OF WHAT WE DO.

#proudoirishcountrysports

Paul Pringle, Northern Editor



A joint statement on future shotgun ammunition for live quarry shooting

In consideration of wildlife, the environment and to ensure a market for the healthiest game products, at home and abroad, we wish to see an end to both lead and single-use plastics in ammunition used by those taking all live quarry with shotguns within five years. The shooting community must maintain its place at the forefront of wildlife conservation and protection. Sustainability in our practices is of utmost importance.

Many years ago, wetland restrictions demanded a move away from lead shot and we believe it is necessary to begin a further phased transition. Recently, there have been significant developments in the quality and availability of non-lead shotgun cartridges, and plastic cases can now be recycled. For the first time, biodegradable shot cups for steel shot, with the necessary ballistics to ensure lethality, are available. These welcome advances are continuing at an ever-quicken pace, in response to demand from a changing market. Such advances mean that, over the coming years, a complete transition is achievable.

We are jointly calling for our members to engage in this transition and work with us, the Gun Trade Association and the cartridge manufacturers to ensure that further viable alternatives are developed for every situation involving live quarry. This is an opportunity to take the initiative and ensure the reputation of the shooting community, as custodians of the countryside, is both maintained and enhanced.

British Association for Shooting and Conservation

British Game Alliance

Countryside Alliance

Country Land and Business Association

Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust

Moorland Association

National Gamekeepers' Organisation

Scottish Association for Country Sports

Scottish Land and Estates

Q and A provided to Irish Country Sports & Country Life with the Joint Statement

What are the organisations calling for?

Collectively, we are calling for a phased transition away from the use of lead shot in shotgun shooting for all live quarry. We are also calling for the end of single-use plastics in all shotgun ammunition. We feel that both goals are achievable within a five-year time frame, allowing suitable time for the industry to respond with new

product development and ensure adequate supply.

Why now?

Recent technological developments have made non-lead shot more effective, more widely available and more affordable. Equally, biodegradable wads are now a possibility. These advances are continuing at pace and it is now time for the wider live quarry shooting

community to join the wildfowling, who have used non-lead alternatives successfully for the last twenty years. In addition, there are over-burdening legislative changes coming down the line as a result of work being undertaken by the European Chemicals Agency (ECHA). Despite Brexit we are expecting that these regulations will be implemented in the UK either due to a requirement to sell

lead free game into Europe, or by UK legislation.

Why is using lead shot a problem?

Concerns around the use of lead shot limit the current market for game products, and retailers are increasingly asking for game that has been shot with non-lead alternatives.

Additionally, lead has been progressively removed from other substances, such as petrol and paint.

There is growing concern about the damage lead shot causes to wildlife away from wetlands. The fact that non-lead alternatives of suitable quality are increasingly available means that we should transition towards them.

What are the alternatives?

Alternative include steel, bismuth and tungsten-based shots. These are available in a variety of shot sizes and calibres.

So do the alternatives all behave the same way?

No. Each metal behaves differently and those that shoot need to be aware of the differences. Simple patterning tests and practice on clays will help ensure that guns identify which is best suited to their guns and their intended quarry.

I've heard that steel shot is ineffective.

This is a rumour from the very early days of steel shot development. Field trials comparing lead and steel shot have found no differences in a number of measures, including lethality and effectiveness at practical shooting ranges¹.

¹ An 11 year study at the Camargue, in France, found that: "After 11 years of hunting with non-toxic shot, there was unexpectedly no clear pattern in trends of individual effectiveness among hunters." (<https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10344-014-0897-x>)

Can I fire steel shot through my shotgun?

Steel shot is classified as either standard or high performance. If your

gun is nitro proofed (i.e. it can fire modern lead loads) then it will be safe to fire standard performance steel.

This is generally steel of size 4 or smaller. High performance steel must be marked as such on the box, and should only be fired through guns bearing the fleur-de-lys proofmark, and usually with the words "STEEL SHOT" stamped on the barrel. If you have any doubt about your gun, seek the advice of an expert gunsmith.

I have an old gun and am worried about possible barrel damage.

Tests have found that standard performance 24g steel loads did not cause any damage in thin-walled game guns, even after a thousand shots². However, if you are unable to use steel then your main alternative is bismuth, which is suitable for both muzzle-loading and Damascus-barrelled guns. Bismuth does cost more than both lead and steel but, ultimately, this is all about choices and securing the future of sustainable shooting.

I was told this will be the end of high bird shooting.

Recent developments in soft steel shotgun cartridges should provide alternatives to lead suitable for all normal game-shooting ranges. Such ammunition is safe in the modern guns that are generally used for high bird shooting.

What about steel ricochets?

All shot can ricochet. This is most likely to occur off rocks or other hard surfaces and, to a lesser extent, water and trees. There is evidence that steel ricochets slightly more than lead, but this is in a more predictable path³. The fact remains that an unsafe shot with lead is an unsafe shot with steel.

Am I more likely to damage a tooth on steel shot?

Caution should be taken when eating game, because any type of shot can damage teeth, including lead and bismuth. There is a chance of damage if you were to accidentally bite steel shot, but dentists in countries that have already phased out lead have not

seen an increase in tooth damage due to biting shot since the transition.

Are American rules for shot ballistics different from the UK?

They are. Gun and cartridge manufacturers must test to agreed standards. The USA standard allows for higher and faster loads than Europe.

Is anything being done to change this?

A CIP (the European organisation responsible for the safety testing of firearms and ammunition) working group, with UK representation, is studying the possibility of raising velocity and shot weight limits for steel to those set by SAAMI (the US equivalent to CIP), to increase performance. We are collectively lobbying to ensure priority for such changes.

² The Assessment of the Tolerance of Shotgun Chokes to Steel Shot – An Initial Study: Dr DF Allsop, Royal Military College of Science (1991).

³ Ricochet & Bounce Back Studies Using Steel & Lead Shot: Dr DF Allsop, Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, Cranfield University (2009).

Are new cartridges being developed?

Yes. We anticipate that, as interest and demand for non-lead shot grows, further developments in cartridge manufacture will rapidly meet any remaining needs. We are working closely with manufacturers, and lobbying for technical development grants from the government, to ensure that these advances continue apace.

What about those of us who use large lead shot for controlling foxes?

Advances in steel shot cartridges have resulted in viable lead shot alternatives for larger wildfowl such as geese. However, adult foxes may require greater shot pellet density for effective penetration, energy transfer and humane despatch. There are a number of excellent non-lead alternatives in use for coyote and fox shooting in the USA, said by many to work even better than lead. During the

transition period, we will be working with cartridge manufacturers and importers to ensure these alternatives become available in the UK.

What should I be asking for at my local gun shop?

If you have checked with a gunsmith, and are confident that your gun is suitable, we suggest using steel shot going forward. Ask for shot two sizes larger than you currently use in lead (e.g. size 4 steel if you currently use size 6 in lead) and insist on biodegradable wads.

Are there some countries in Europe that have stopped using lead shot?

Yes. Denmark, the Netherlands and the Flemish region of Belgium.

How have these countries got on with the alternatives?

They have not reported any problems with the effectiveness. Indeed, in many cases steel shot has been found to pattern more successfully than lead and to have superior levels of penetration.

I heard that Norway reversed its lead ban.

This is true, but the situation Norway faced in 2014 is quite different from where we are now, in 2020. Their principal reason for reversing a lead ban was insufficient lethality in their available non-lead rifle ammunition. In addition, the use of shotguns in Norwegian woodland is very low compared with the UK. Furthermore, the quality of non-lead shotgun cartridges has increased significantly over the last six years and will only continue to do so during our transition period. We are not proposing any change to rifle ammunition.

What do you mean by a 'phased transition'?

The development of non-lead cartridges has been rapid and ongoing. However, there are still improvements to be made in availability and choice, especially for smaller-gauge guns. We are therefore phasing the transition over a five-year

period to enable manufacturers to bring the products that are currently in development to market.

Are you asking people to stop using plastic cartridge cases?

No. There is now a huge market for recycled plastic and we are encouraging guns to support manufacturers' efforts to produce plastic cartridges from recycled, rather than new, plastic. We are calling for an end to non-biodegradable plastic wads in shotgun cartridges, which are not routinely or effectively collected during live quarry shooting.

What about ammunition for: rifle target shooting, including with muzzle loading and historic arms, clay shooting and live quarry rifle shooting (including pest control and large game shooting)?

Viable alternatives are being researched. Where lead ammunition is used in a contained environment, such as a range, or there is an absence of reasonable alternatives, we feel lead should continue to be used.

Ronan Gorman, Chief Executive, Country Sports Ireland states:

"Country Sports Ireland has not been consulted by the group that issued a recent statement calling for an end to the use of lead and single use plastics in ammunition used for all live quarry shooting within 5 years and does not support its content. Setting a time frame of 5 years for ending the use of lead in ammunition for live quarry shooting without humane, cost effective and widely

available alternatives risks doing substantial self-inflicted damage to our sport.

"Thankfully, any restrictions on the use of lead shot for live quarry shooting in Northern Ireland is likely to be a devolved matter and therefore the responsibility of the Northern Ireland Assembly. Although the recent statement will not make our job any easier, Country Sports



Ireland members (and indeed the wider Northern Ireland shooting community) can be assured that we will protect their interests and oppose any attempts in Stormont to legislate for a ban on the use of lead shot."

Irish Country Sports & Country Life magazine states:

We at ICS&L will take your concerns to the membership organisations and we will keep you

updated through our online version of the magazine until a full update in the Summer magazine.

We are grateful to Gary McCartney, Chief Executive, CAI for the Joint Statement and Q & A.

COCKER SPANIEL OPEN STAKE AT CASTLE DOBBS

Ken Lindsay reports on The Working Cocker Spaniel Club of Ireland's Open Qualifying stake which was at Castle Dobbs Estate by kind permission of Mr Nigel Dobbs and Lady Dobbs.

Steward of the beat was Mr Willie Thompson and Judges were Mr Ivan Wilson and Mr Willie Edgar.

The trial was sponsored by Feedwell Dog Foods

The ground was mostly woodland with bramble which was testing for the dogs and when the judges had seen all the dogs they retired to make up their books. Tom Haden and Brian Crothers were then called for a run-off which also took place in light woodland.

Results:

1st Gardenrath Cadillac owned and handled by Tom Hayden

2nd Tamneymartin Ferrin owned and handled by Brian Crothers

3rd Ardcaein Jitterbug owned and handled by Ieva Grigaite

4th Brybwl Balloo owned by and handled by Jon Rees

Com Dakotagun Elena owned and handled by Domnall Creamer

Com Leeglen Shea of Byrbwl owned and handled by Danna Rees

The winner was asked to say a word of thanks on behalf of the handlers and Tom thanked the Working Cocker Club of Ireland for organising a super trial on Dobbs Castle Estate and he thanked the Judges and host for providing the location.

In their summing up the judges said how much they enjoyed judging the Cocker trial and Willie Edgar said although he had

judged a Cocker trial in England he was delighted to judge his first Cocker trial in Ireland. In conclusion the secretary thanked the Guns and Stops at Castle Dobbs for making this such a successful trial.

N.B. If you would like to see your club's trial or test featured in Ireland's most read ever hunting, shooting & fishing magazine – please email a short report & a couple of High Resolution photographs to irishgamefair@btinternet.com



Winner Tom Hayden (centre) is pictured with Judges and award winners at Castle Dobbs (Photo: Michael Shanks)

An Annual SUBSCRIPTION to
Irish COUNTRY SPORTS and COUNTRY LIFE Magazine
And 2 FREE TICKETS to the 2020 Irish Game Fair,
Shanes Castle, Antrim 29/30 August 2020
FOR JUST £25 or €25

Please enrol me as an annual subscriber to Irish Countrysports and Country Life with TWO GAME FAIR TICKETS. I enclose my cheque for £25/€25) made out to COUNTRY LIFESTYLE EXHIBITIONS LTD.

Name (Block Capitals):

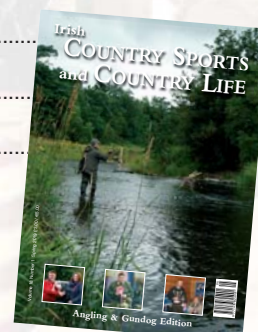
Address:

Telephone No:

Email address: Signature:

Subscription to start with : Vol No

Send To : Country Lifestyle Exhibitions Ltd, Cranley Hill, 5b Woodgrange Road, Hollymount, Downpatrick BT30 8JE





NEW K18i Perfected for competition



The new K18i has been specially designed for use in sports disciplines such as IPSC and 3-Gun competitions and is the result of radical further development of its successful predecessor, the K16i. The characteristics of the K18i have been developed in collaboration with the best pro-shooters in Europe and North America and thoroughly refined for intuitive and rapid target acquisition between 20–300 m (IPSC) and up to 700 m (3-Gun). Consequently, the K18i features perfect optical performance, a large eyepiece for immediately gauging your point of focus in relation to your surroundings, an excellent field of view of 5.3–42.5 m/100 m and a new, innovative illumination function by the name of "KAHLES MAX LIGHT".

The large zoom factor (8x) in conjunction with the actual 1x magnification provides the ideal combination for target acquisition over a variety of distances and makes an ideal complement to the two completely newly developed reticles (IPSC and 3GR). These have been specially designed with these competitions in mind, for an image that is as distortion-free as possible with fewer, yet still precisely coordinated points and lines of aim. The newly developed and individually positionable throw levers (two sizes included in delivery) and a robust housing design that is tailored to the shooter – along with various other features – allow for the best possible performance in tough competition environments where just a few tenths of a second can make the difference between failure and success.

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

- Uncompromised optimised for IPSC and 3-Gun matches
- Ultra wide field of view, 8 times zoom and true 1 magnification
- 2 sizes of integrated throw levers with free selectable position
- Extra bright day/night illumination in 2nd focal plane with MAX LIGHT-function for strongest backlight situations
- With pro-shooters designed reticles especially for IPSC and 3-GUN
- OILPHOBIC coated lenses

NEW HELIA RF-M 7x25

Fast distance measurement in the hunting area



KAHLES is presenting its first monocular rangefinder in the form of the new HELIA RF-M, which has been specially designed for hunting situations. Its key features include fast target detection up to a range of 2000 m, a large field of view with exceptional edge sharpness, intuitively simple operation/menu navigation, an extremely compact and ergonomic design, a high-quality OLED display and the integrated EAC function (patented enhanced angle compensation). At just 214 g, it is also incredibly lightweight.

PRODUCT HIGHLIGHTS

- Easy and reliable targeting up to 2.000 m
 - Ergonomic design, intuitive handling, simple menu navigation
 - Exceptional edge to edge clarity and large field of view of 117 m / 1.000 m
 - Premium-quality OLED display with five manual brightness settings and display in meter or yards
 - EAC-function (Enhanced Angle Compensation) for angle correction (patented)
 - Scan mode, temperature- and air pressure measurement
 - Extra-long battery lifetime ~ 4,000 measurements
- The HELIA RF-M will be available in stores starting April 2020 for a retail price of €550.





BY APPOINTMENT TO
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II
SWAROVSKI OPTIK
SUPPLIER OF BINOCULARS

NOW ALSO WITH
SWAROVSKI
OPTIK **RAIL**



dS
START
SMART

SEE THE UNSEEN



SWAROVSKI
OPTIK

Barbour Spring Summer 20 Countrywear range

Classically timeless, the Barbour Spring Summer 20 Countrywear range is designed with functionality in mind. Offering the very best in country style for men and women, outerwear pieces include traditional waxed jackets, practical quilts and waterproof breathable styles, coupled with high-performance fabric shirts in classic patterns to build a versatile wardrobe of must have pieces for those who live, work and enjoy the countryside.

Traditional Barbour colourways of navy, rustic and olive remain at the heart of the collection with new intricate tattersall and detailed seasonal trims. Under stated and comfortable clothing offers countryside enthusiasts a choice of styles for milder Spring days, whilst gilets add extra warmth, designed in box-quilted styles with Barbour's iconic ring pull zip, welted side pockets and smart stand collar. Quintessentially Barbour, the Spring Summer 20 Countrywear range celebrates heritage with a modern twist.



Barbour Blakewood Knit - RRP L69.95 and Barbour Haley Tee - RRP £24.95



Barbour Clapton Wax - RRP L209.00 and Barbour Batley Shirt - RRP £59.95

APGAI Ireland new qualified and advanced level instructors

APGAI Ireland was formed by a group of Angling instructors including the late great Peter O'Reilly with the aim – 'to provide qualified professional game angling, fly-casting and flydressing tuition of the highest international standard, and place it on the plane of a responsible profession'. The journey to qualification can entail more than 300 hours of study.

The Association has recently celebrated new candidates success in their examinations in Double-handed casting (Richard Morrison and Ian Gamble) and in Fly Dressing (Peter Driver, Trevor Greene, David Kidd and Jimmy Tyrell).

Congratulations to all!



APGAI Chair Glenda Powell with Tevor Greene, Jimmy Tyrell and Peter Driver.



Smyth Country Sports, 1 Park Street, Coleraine BT52 1BD N. Ireland
(+44) 02870343970

Homefield & Stream, 18 Church Street, Enniskillen BT74 7EJ N. Ireland
(+44) 02866322114

Sportsden, Trimgate Street, Navan, Co. Meath Ireland
(+353) 0469021130

Barbour®

Catch and release the byword as Irish Specimen Fish Committee publishes report

Anglers fishing Irish waters caught hundreds of large fish in 2019 according to the Irish Specimen Fish Committee (ISFC) report.

For the first time in many years no new records were set but over 500 exceptionally large fish of different species were caught by anglers from venues throughout Ireland in 2019. The main species were smaller shark species like Smooth-hound and Spurdog and in freshwater large Bream and Pike dominated. All fish were caught, weighed, measured and released. From 2020 there will be a new award for the best length-based specimen, for the fish which represents the greatest percentage of the threshold length for all eligible length-only species.

Details of all of these fish and the current Irish record fish are in the Irish Specimen Fish Committee Report 2019, which has just been released. The Irish Specimen Fish Committee, which is supported by Inland Fisheries Ireland, is an independent all-Ireland voluntary body which verifies and records the capture of large fish caught on rod by anglers in freshwater and marine waters.

The Irish Specimen Fish Committee report is available on the ISFC website www.irish-trophy-fish.com or from the Inland Fisheries Ireland website <http://www.fisheriesireland.ie/>. Hard copies of the report are available from Inland Fisheries Ireland Citywest office from Friday the 31st of January 2020.



James Dignam's tench of 8lb 2oz won the Minister's award for 'Fish of a Lifetime'

GORDON RAMSAY & SHANES CASTLE GAME FAIR CALLING ALL FOOD STARS



Gordon Ramsay has asked The Irish Game Fair & Fine Food Festival to help him find potential Irish food stars for his TV programme - Gordon Ramsay's Future Food Stars (BBC One)

Whether you are one of the exhibitors at the award winning Game Fair Fine Food Festival, someone who could benefit from promoting their products at the Fair or someone just starting out - would YOUR exciting and innovative idea impress Gordon Ramsay?

Outspoken and world-famous Gordon Ramsay is coming to BBC One with his brand-new show Gordon Ramsay's

Future Food Stars. Gordon will put 12 entrepreneurs through their paces as they compete for HIS investment in their food and drink ideas.

In an era of subscription boxes, food apps, and high-tech delivery services, The UK is in the middle of a food revolution. Gordon's always been at the cutting edge of the food industry, and he's prepared to put his money where his mouth is by backing the winner with an investment to take their idea to the next level.

But to win Gordon's support will take more than just a great idea; they'll need to prove they possess the raw ingredients

required to succeed – drive, dedication, passion and talent. He will put the selected entrepreneurs through a series of relentless challenges inspired by his highly successful career.

The most impressive entrepreneur will win a life-changing opportunity so if you think YOU have what it takes to impress Gordon Ramsay, go to www.bbc.co.uk/showsandtours/take-part

If you simply want to put your food product in front of 20,000 plus 'foodies' at Shanes Castle simply Email us for your exhibitors pack now at: irishgamefair@btinternet.com or call 028 (from ROI 048) 44839167

Special Offer

Using the promo code
'GAS20' (ROI) or
'GAS20NI' (NI)

Lighten up your Summer and save

**Order online today and
GET €5/£4 OFF**

the incredibly light gaslight cylinder plus
FREE next day delivery using the promo
code '**GAS20**' or '**GAS20NI**'

The incredibly light Gaslight Cylinder

- ✓ **Easy to Carry** Half the weight of a steel cylinder, with in-built handles, so it's very portable.
- ✓ **Never Run out of Gas** Semi-translucent covering allows you to see how much gas you have left, so you never run out.
- ✓ **Never Rusts** Rust-proof fibreglass body, so it won't leak or stain any surfaces.

ROI 041 983 1041 | flogas.ie/shop

NI 028 9073 2611 | flogasni.com/shop



*Next-day delivery applies to orders submitted online before 12 noon, using promo code 'GAS20' (ROI) or 'GAS20NI' (NI). Next-day delivery does not include Donegal. Next-day delivery does not include weekends.



Countryside Alliance



Countryside Alliance Ireland – Operational Changes

In November 2019 Countryside Alliance was presented with a substantial and untenable increase in its members' insurance premium, especially for the Republic of Ireland. Market conditions have changed and many underwriters have withdrawn from Republic of Ireland completely and those who remain are demanding extraordinary premium increases. It is for this reason that we have had to cease delivering membership insurance provision in the Republic of Ireland and consequently are unable to continue operations as they stand for Countryside Alliance Ireland.

We have therefore had to undergo a significant restructuring process and with regret, we closed our office at Courtlough in January and our Northern Ireland office closed on 14th February.

Gary McCartney has been appointed as Regional Director for Northern Ireland and will continue to develop campaigns, lobby political representatives and give full support to our members.

We wish to express sincere gratitude and thanks for the dedication and hard work of Lyall, Ashley and Liz over many years.

Please note that any R of I Countryside Alliance members that renewed in 2019 still have active insurance with Countryside Alliance until their renewal date in 2020.

If you have any queries on the above please contact
membership@caireland.org or
gary@caireland.org

Gary McCartney – Regional Director, Countryside Alliance Ireland

Countryside Alliance is delighted to announce the appointment of Gary McCartney as Regional Director for Northern Ireland. This new post has been created following the restructure of the organisation in Ireland.

Gary joined Countryside Alliance Ireland in March 2017 and quickly became an integral and valuable member of the team. Gary's position has grown during the past three years to encompass his strengths and interpersonal skills and his shooting expertise and experience has been instrumental in assisting him to carry out his role.



Gary McCartney, Regional Director NI

Gary is not a believer in change for change's sake and his focus will remain on representing the interests of our members. He is keen to continue to actively interact with the members and fully welcomes any feedback to help him convey and achieve CAI's aims and objectives.

Although until very recently Stormont was dormant, CAI never stopped representing members' interests at local and national level. As Regional Director Gary will continue to do this.

CAI need to be continually promoting the rural way of life and the value that country sports and those who participate in them add to the environment, society and the economy. This can only be achieved by continued liaison with the public, MLAs, local political representatives and other stakeholders. We need to continue to ensure our members views are understood and respected.

That said, we are aware of a number of future threats to country sports. The Alliance Party at Christmas reiterated their call for a ban on fox hunting. CAI is vigilant and ready to take the lead to defend hunting.

Where possible CAI will continue to engage with other organisations on subjects of mutual interest; it is vital we come together and strengthen our collective voice for the good and benefit of our members and the countryside. However, CAI is quite unique as we

represent the widest array of country sports including mounted hunts something others have quietly stepped away from. All organisations have different agendas and as such we will not always agree on the way forward. In such circumstances we will defer to our own agenda.

Anyone with an interest in the countryside would agree that we have an onus to protect the environment, landscape and rural way of life that we all so enjoy and try to ensure that it is protected for the next generation.

Countryside Alliance is not there just to provide insurance, we are representing you and defending your interests against legislation change. Yes, we do provide competitive insurance packages to our members but we are much more than that. Other organisations may provide your hunt, syndicate or club with insurance but they don't always represent your sport in defending legislative changes or lobbying government on your behalf. So perhaps it's time to take a long-term view

(We had to reduce the full text from CAI due to space constraints but hope to bring you an in-depth interview with Gary in the Summer edition of ICS&CL. Paul Pringle, Editor)

European Firearms Passes - Know the Facts

There have been a number of incidents where people have been caught with firearms visiting or transiting from Northern Ireland to the Republic of Ireland and vice versa on the belief they could do so with only a European Firearms Pass (EFP).

A European Firearms pass allows the following: A person wishing to travel to another Member State with a firearm may do so if he or she is in possession of a European Firearms Pass and, if required, has received prior approval of the Competent Authority of the Member State to be visited.

Both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland require prior approval.

Please note, although the UK left the European Union on 31 January 2020, there will be a period of transition and the following still applies.

Northern Ireland

Question: I'm from the Republic of Ireland can I use my firearms in Northern Ireland with only a EFP?

Answer: No you must have a Northern

Ireland Visitors Permit (NIVP) from the PSNI before you can use your firearms in Northern Ireland.

Question: Can I travel with my firearms from the Republic of Ireland through Northern Ireland even if I'm not shooting with only a EFP?

Answer: No if you wish to travel through Northern Ireland you will need a NIVP from the PSNI.

Republic of Ireland

Question: I'm from Northern Ireland can I use my firearms in the Republic of Ireland with only a EFP?

Answer: No you must get a Republic of Ireland Non Resident permit from the Garda Superintendent of the area you wish to visit.

Question: Can I travel with my firearms from Northern Ireland through the Republic of Ireland even if I'm not shooting with only a EFP?

Answer: No if you intend to transit through the Republic of Ireland you will need to obtain a transit pass from the Department of Justice at St Stephens Green.

Those who do not have the appropriate documents when travelling with firearms in either the Republic of Ireland or Northern Ireland will be subject to the full force of the law.

Operation Silver Fin launches in County Fermanagh

The net is closing in on fish poachers as 'Operation Silver Fin' is launched in County Fermanagh. Police in Fermanagh have teamed up with the Department of Agriculture Environment and Rural Affairs Inland Fisheries, Loughs Agency and An Garda Síochána along with other partners from the Partnership Action Against Wildlife Crime as part of an operation to target illegal fishing.

It focuses on encouraging the public to report suspected fish poaching to the appropriate agency, enforcing fishing regulations and increasing awareness of the legislation surrounding fishing and the importance of protecting fish stocks.

As a pro-active member of the PAW NI Fin sub-group, CAI fully supports Operation Silver and CAI's Gary McCartney, attended the recent launch.

Pictured at the launch of Operation Silverfin.



Shepperton Lake in West Cork goes green

Shepperton Lake, located near Skibbreen in West Cork, will now be eco-friendly following the introduction of measures to reduce the carbon footprint of anglers fishing the popular Shepperton (Shreelane) fishery.

As part of the eco-friendly measures, Inland Fisheries Ireland is removing its four petrol engines from use at Shepperton. Anglers can now hire one of the recently refurbished boats and bring their own battery-powered engines. This follows similar measures introduced at Ballinlough, Leap which has operated

successfully for a number of years. The boat hire at Shepperton Lake, including a one-day fishing permit for up to two anglers, will cost €30.

Sean Long, Director of the South Western River Basin District, said: "This initiative was proposed by the local Inland Fisheries Ireland 'Green Team' as a quick and simple measure to reduce carbon emissions. We are pleased to offer this green solution to anglers at the lake while also maintaining the permit price once again this year."

Inland Fisheries Ireland's 'Green Team' is made up of staff in various locations across the country. It is part of the organisation's efforts to refocus the philosophy of the organisation in line with the critical nature of climate change and the impact it is having on the fisheries resource. The Green Team work to create solutions which will help the organisation achieve its energy reduction target of 33 per cent by 2020 and devise solutions which will support society in reducing its environmental footprint.



Pictured are local Fisheries Officers from Inland Fisheries Ireland, Martin Dennehy and Stephen O'Donoghue with the recently refurbished 14 inch 'Angler's Fancy' boats which are available for hire.

Country Sports Ireland Deer Stalking Training Course receives important recognition

We were delighted to have received confirmation that the Country Sports Ireland Deer Stalking Training Course has been officially approved by Lantra - a leading training awarding body for the land-based/countryside sector.

External accreditation by Lantra is important independent recognition of the quality of training and assessment delivered by Country Sports Ireland and of the knowledge and competence of our instructors.

In the last 2 years the Country Sports Ireland Deer Stalking Training Course has grown significantly in popularity and reputation. Lantra accreditation is further recognition of the quality of training delivered by the Country Sports Ireland Deer Stalking Training Course team and we believe also places the course in a truly



unique position in terms of recognition and quality assurance.

The Country Sports Ireland Deer Stalking Training Course is also accepted by Coillte for hunting under licence on Coillte

properties and also National Parks & Wildlife Service in respect of section 42 license applications.

Details of forthcoming Country Sports Ireland Deer Stalking Courses can be found below.

Country Sports Ireland Trained Hunter Large Wild Game (Deer) meat hygiene course success

The recently launched Country Sports Ireland Trained Hunter Large Wild Game (Deer) meat hygiene course has been an outstanding success. The Country Sports Ireland team of Ronan, David & Daniel successfully delivered 4 excellent courses towards the end of last year which were all fully booked and feedback from learners has been fantastic.

Learners were treated to detailed practical demonstrations of carcass handling and inspection on freshly shot deer carcasses kindly supplied by Premier Game Ltd. The event also included an extremely comprehensive and interesting presentation covering all areas relevant to the course including legislation, deer anatomy, behaviour, gralloching, carcass handling, transportation, storage.

The Country Sports Ireland Trained Hunter Large Wild Game (Deer) meat hygiene course is recognised by the appropriate Competent Authorities (including the Food Safety Authority of Ireland and Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine). This means that successful course participants will be approved to sell deer carcasses to Approved Game Handling Establishments. The Country Sports Ireland Trained Hunter Large Wild Game training course is also externally accredited by Lantra - a leading awarding body for land-based industries. A Lantra awarded a certificate to all those who successfully complete the course.

Special thanks to the Country Sports Ireland team of Ronan, David & Daniel who worked very hard to deliver this top class training event and course sponsors Premier Game Ltd for their support.

Lastly and most importantly thanks to all those learners who enthusiastically participated in recent courses - they were a pleasure to share the event with and passed on some great feedback.

New Country Sports Ireland Website Launched

Country Sports Ireland has taken membership service to new levels with the launch of a 'state of the art' new website that will enable members to renew their membership, register for discounted access to an exciting programme of training courses and events and take advantage of a growing number member



The Country Sports Ireland Trained Hunter Large Wild Game (Deer) game meat hygiene course has been an outstanding success.



The 'Trained Hunter' group

discount schemes in a matter of seconds.

A special member's area has been created – enabling members to create their own account, manage their personal information and access useful documents.

Those people wishing to join Country Sports Ireland can now also do so securely online and in a matter of seconds also and at the same time create their own account which will provide access to all the benefits of membership.

As we continue to grow rapidly, we in Country Sports Ireland are passionate

about providing members and supporters with the very highest levels of service and support. Our new website is available 24/7 and will be an extremely useful resource for members, supporters and many in the local country sports community.

To view the new member's website simply go to www.countrysportsireland.org

Club Membership of Country Sports Ireland

We have had a lot of enquiries recently about the many benefits of membership of Country Sports Ireland for gun clubs, shooting grounds and shooting syndicates.

In addition to outstanding insurance cover for all shooting and game management activities other member benefits include, access to a growing programme of training courses & events, member discount schemes and FREE expert advice and support on a diverse range of country sports matters, including firearms and wildlife legislation. A summary of benefits can be seen on the photo below.

Cost is an exceptionally good value €30 / £20 per member - which we believe represents the very best value available locally.

To discuss the many benefits of Group Membership of Country Sports Ireland - simply send us a message with your contact details or get in touch by phone on 087 6509598 or 07542 111542.

Country Sports Ireland Training Events

With springtime now upon us the Country Sports Ireland training programme is in full swing. Over the next few months we will be delivering high quality, enjoyable and educational training events on a diverse range of shooting sports (see below). Many events are externally accredited – ensuring high standards and accepted by the relevant statutory authorities. Country Sports Ireland training courses are open to everyone so for further information or to book any course visit the 'Training' section of the website www.countrysportsireland.org

6th March

Night Shooting Training Event
Midlands National Shooting Centre of Ireland, Tullamore

7th March

Deer Stalking Training Course
Midlands National Shooting Centre of Ireland, Tullamore

24th March

Night Shooting Training Event
Creggagh Field Target Club, Draperstown

18th April

Trained Hunter Large Wild Game (Deer) meat hygiene course
Cleverly Mill, Castlebaldwin, Co. Sligo

19th April

Deer Stalking Training Course
Lough Bo Shooting Centre

Contact Country Sports Ireland:

Email: ronan@countrysportsireland.org

Web: www.countrysportsireland.org

Phone: 07542 111542 Phone: 087 6509598

Country Sports Ireland provides exceptionally good value membership (including insurance) for gun clubs, shooting grounds and shooting syndicates throughout Ireland.

New evidence of migration of young salmon leaving Ireland

The route taken by young salmon (smolts) leaving the east coast of Ireland has been discovered for the first time. Inland Fisheries Ireland and Northern Ireland's Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute have revealed findings which show young salmon leaving rivers on the eastern coast travelling northwards to leave the Irish Sea, rather than south and west to join salmon on the western coast. The research was carried out as part of the COMPASS project and funded by the EU European Regional Development Fund's Interreg VA programme.

The new evidence was established after researchers tagged salmon smolts with coded transmitting acoustic tags in the Castletown and Boyne rivers in County Louth during the spring of this year. Three of these tagged salmon were picked up on listening devices in the coastal seas as they travelled northwards out of the Irish Sea towards the Atlantic Ocean.

One of the smolts was recorded in Scottish waters, some 80 kilometres north of the Inishowen Peninsula. This smolt had travelled an estimated 250 kilometres in just over a month, one of the longest distances recorded for a salmon tracked at sea en route to its feeding grounds in the North Atlantic. Two more salmon smolts were tracked as far as receivers located off the Northern Ireland coast, further confirming the northward migration of the fish through the Irish Sea.

Until now, it was unknown if juvenile salmon leaving Ireland's east coast rivers headed around the North or South coasts to get to their oceanic feeding grounds. These first three tracked fish took a northward route from rivers on the east coast to exit the Irish Sea. These salmon also moved offshore quickly, behaving very differently from sea trout, which remained closer to their

spawning rivers and swam closer to the coast and river mouths.

The tagging work was carried out by scientists from Inland Fisheries Ireland (Dr James Barry) and AFBI (Dr Richard Kennedy) who tagged and analysed the movements of 130 salmon smolts as they left their rivers of birth in the spring of 2019. This work was supported by a local angling clubs, including The Dundalk and District Brown trout and Salmon Anglers, who helped to install fish traps which enabled the tagging and release of fish. A network of acoustic receivers were moored to the seabed along the coast from Drogheda to the north east coast by researchers from IFI and AFBI, to track the tiny acoustic transmitters in the salmon as they migrated from the rivers to the open ocean.

This research is just one element of the COMPASS (Collaborative Oceanography and Monitoring for Protected Areas and Species) project, a transnational initiative which focuses on the coastal seas between Ireland and western Scotland. The project aims to deliver improved cross border environmental monitoring programmes, including research to support highly mobile protected species such as marine mammals, salmon and sea trout. This particular research package is investigating the success of wild salmon and sea trout as they migrate from river to sea, and examining where they travel to and how many of them survive before returning to Ireland to reproduce.

As salmon populations are in decline across the northern hemisphere, we urgently need to establish their migration journey and identify any issues which may be negatively impacting survival along that route. This research marks an exciting milestone and it will play a critical role in supporting marine conservation efforts.

For more visit www.compass-oceanscience.eu/salmonid-fish



A salmon smolt

Native Irish Dogs Granted Heritage Status

There are nine Native Dogs of Ireland, two Hounds – Irish Wolfhound and Kerry Beagle, three Gundogs – Irish Water Spaniel, Irish Red Setter and Irish Red & White Setter, four Terriers – Irish Terrier, Irish Glen of Imaal Terrier, Irish Soft Coated Wheaten Terrier, Kerry Blue Terrier.

The Irish Kennel Club announced in July 2019 that these 9 Irish Breeds had been granted National Heritage status by the Minister.

Sean Delmar, President IKC said: "This is a wonderful step in the future protection and development of our amazing Irish Breeds and comes after many years of representations by those committed to Irish Breeds."

Opportunities for women to 'Try Fishing' in 2020

Inland Fisheries Ireland will be running a number of events to give women the opportunity to try fishing in 2020. Well renowned angler and one of the world's leading fly casting instructors, Glenda Powell has partnered with Inland Fisheries Ireland to teach the participants around various venues in Ireland from April to September of this year.

The aim of the programme is to give women an opportunity to try fishing in a relaxed and supportive environment with other beginners. Each participant will be concentrated on as an individual and the aim is to develop her own personal requirements during the programme to enable learning. The course will be a mixture of spinning and fly fishing to ensure that each participant gets to experience a variety of fishing methods while figuring out what method works best for them. Participants will be encouraged to progress at their own rate of learning while feeling safe in or around water. Each participant will learn a new skill and be in the outdoors and will hopefully develop an interest to continue with the sport. Those wishing to progress to the next level in learning to fish will be encouraged to sign up to future programmes and also to join local angling clubs.

Each course will consist of a half-day session either in the morning (9.30am – 1.00pm) or afternoon (2pm - 5.30pm) on Saturdays, dates and locations below:

Well known guide and angling instructor Glenda Powell commented: "I have been trying to get women interested in fishing all my life and have ran many free events over the years. I am also involved in ladies fly fishing beginner programmes overseas. I am so glad that Inland Fisheries Ireland has taken this positive step with the Try Fishing programme for women in Ireland this year. It is an honour for me to partner with them on this programme. It has been one of my life long dreams that more women in Ireland would have the opportunity to take up this sport, and for the first time ever hundreds of women will be given the opportunity to try fishing in 2020. I cant wait to start the programme on the 4th April on our water on the River Blackwater and would invite all women to come and give it a go" For more information visit <http://www.glendapowellguiding.com>

River Blackwater-Cork River Moy-Mayo River Shannon-Limerick

4th April 2020	6th June 2020	22nd August 2020
18th April 2020	20th June 2020	29th August 2020
16th May 2020	18th July 2020	5th September 2020
30th May 2020	25th July 2020	12th September 2020



Glenda Powell (centre left) and a keen team is pictured at the 'Try Fishing' launch.

Suzanne Campion, IFI said: "We are delighted to be able to offer this pilot programme to women as an opportunity to not only learn fishing but have the chance to develop a new skill and past time. In today's society, outdoor recreational activities are more important than ever from a health and well-being perspective and in Ireland, we are uniquely placed with the breadth and quality of our fisheries resource which is available to all to enjoy. We want to give these women a unique opportunity to be able to try out this sport in a relaxed and supportive environment among some of our greatest natural resources here in Ireland."

The programme is open to all women aged 18 and over. Booking is essential as there are a limited number of spaces. If you are interested in taking part or would like more information visit www.fisheriesireland.ie/women.

Fisheries Officers from Cork win SEIKO 'Just in Time Rescue Award'



Pictured are Stephen Kiely, Sean Cremin and Tom O'Riordan, Inland Fisheries Ireland Fisheries Officers who received the SEIKO Just in Time Rescue Award at the Water Safety Ireland National Awards Ceremony 2019. The award was presented by Michael Ring TD, Minister for Rural and Community Development. They received the award for their valiant efforts in saving a life when they came across a person in difficulty during a routine fisheries patrol operation.

Clare school reels in top prize in national 'Something Fishy' competition

Doorra National School from Ennis, Co. Clare has been named winner of Inland Fisheries Ireland's national 'Something Fishy' Awards. The students from sixth class were presented with the 'Something Fishy' perpetual trophy by Pat Breen TD, Minister of State for Trade, Employment, Business, EU Digital Single Market and Data Protection at Treacys West County Hotel, Ennis today. During the 2018-2019 academic year, 104 national schools and 12 education centres took part in the fisheries education programme which reached over 2,000 students across the country.

As part of Something Fishy, students learn about fish and the environment, enjoying classroom based activities as well as a practical field trip with Fisheries Officers. The Something Fishy programme is an initiative of Inland Fisheries Ireland, in partnership with Blackrock Education Centre.

Doorra National School received the national accolade after being commended for their Something Fishy blog project which saw them complete artwork on the life cycle of a salmon, report on a field trip they took with local fisheries officers and produce an exercise book. The blog was accessible to their peers and members of the public on Somethingfishy.ie with a view to sharing their learning experiences and to increasing awareness of their fisheries resource in the local community.

The winners were chosen to go forward to represent their region by Clare Education Centre in June. It followed months of engagement by the students in the education programme which saw them work with Inland Fisheries Ireland's Fisheries Officers from the Shannon River Basin District to learn about their local fisheries resource.

Speaking about the 'Something Fishy' awards in Ennis today, Pat Breen TD, Minister of State, said: "I am delighted to be here today to warmly congratulate the students and teachers of



The pupils from sixth class at Doorra National School were pictured with Minister Pat Breen TD, Timmy Dooley TD, their teacher Ross Darmody, Amanda Mooney, Director of the Shannon River Basin District and Dr Ciaran Byrne, CEO of Inland Fisheries Ireland.

Doorra National School in Clare on becoming the 'Something Fishy' National Champions for 2019. This year's award is particularly special as we celebrate the International Year of the Salmon in 2019, an initiative which hopes to raise awareness around the different challenges that face the Salmon species today."

Ross Darmody, teacher of the winning class in Doorra National School said: "We are proud of the students here at Doorra National School for their inspiring enthusiasm to engage with and learn about the fisheries environment and its species. The programme is cross curricular and draws together geography, science and ICT as well as ensuring that the learning is fun for everyone through the interactive online 'Something Fishy' resources. As a school we look forward to working with Inland Fisheries Ireland again in the future to bring this programme to even more students."

The O'Reilly Shrimp

As a token of appreciation to the late angling legend Peter O'Reilly, fly-tyer Jimmy Tyrrell created a fly called the O'Reilly Shrimp in his memory, making two framed copies. The first of these was raffled at the fly fair in Galway and raised €500 for charity.

Peter O'Reilly was a world renowned author of angling books and was also a qualified APGAI Ireland and FFI Master fly-casting instructor. Peter was always very welcoming at the Great Game Fairs of Ireland over the years and held audiences spell bound with his casting demonstrations in the main Arena, and spent time afterwards chatting about fly fishing and fly tying. He also made numerous fondly remembered contributions to this magazine.

At a presentation in Peter's house his wife Rose was presented with the second framed copy and a cheque for €500 to be donated to a charity of her choice. Also present were their son Patrick and lifelong friend, Arthur Greenwood (Secretary, APGAI Ireland) who travelled from Belfast for the occasion and the occasion reported in The Irish Times on Monday 2nd December 2019.



The 'O'Reilly Shrimp' is presented to Rose O'Reilly by Jimmy Tyrrell, alongside son Patrick O'Reilly, and lifelong friend Arthur Greenwood.

New research project to investigate the decline of sea trout in Lough Currane catchment

A comprehensive sea trout assessment and monitoring programme has begun in the Lough Currane catchment in Kerry. The project, called 'Currane STAMP', aims to identify potential factors contributing to the apparent decline of sea trout populations in the area in recent years. The programme follows reports from anglers of reduced catches and is funded by Inland Fisheries Ireland through its Salmon and Sea Trout Rehabilitation, Conservation and Protection Fund.

Sean Canney TD, Minister with responsibility for Inland Fisheries, said: "The Currane system is an internationally renowned angling hotspot for salmon and sea trout and hosts some of the longest lived and largest sea trout found in Ireland. However, recent indications from angler rod catch reports suggest declines in sea trout populations in the system and I support Inland Fisheries Ireland's attempts to get to the bottom of these developments".

The Currane project is one of 25 projects in 16 counties which have been awarded funding by Inland Fisheries Ireland through its National Strategy for Angling Development. The organisation today announced funding of €1 million for fisheries conservation, protection and education initiatives and for projects which will give the public greater access to fishing sites around the country. In total, €242,900 has been awarded to the research project on



the Currane - €55,800 in 2018 and a further €187,000 in this latest funding call. A separate initiative at Scartleigh Weir near Listowel will also receive €6,000 to support the provision of CCTV equipment to monitor illegal poaching activity in the area.

As part of the programme on the Currane, researchers will use a combination of traditional and novel research techniques to examine important aspects of sea trout ecology throughout their life stages.

Habitat surveys will map important spawning and nursery areas while electrofishing (a benign technique used to catch fish by stunning them for a short period of time) will be conducted to assess juvenile fish population trends against previous studies in the area.

As part of a citizen science initiative within the programme, Inland Fisheries Ireland will be enlisting the invaluable knowledge and assistance of local anglers to establish current and historical rod catch trends. Neil O' Shea, a fourth generation Currane ghillie, who is supporting the programme said: "I am looking forward to contributing to the sea trout citizen science component developed by Inland Fisheries Ireland. This project will be important for the sea trout fishery in Currane and will help to answer key questions related to the apparent decline of trout in the area."

C A ANDERSON & COMPANY



64 MARKET STREET OMAGH COUNTY TYRONE

TEL: 028 8224 2311

fishing.shooting@btconnect.com caanderson@btconnect.com

www.stores.ebay.co.uk/c-a-anderson-and-co-tackle-and-guns

Mail order available by post or courier throughout Ireland

Stockist of fishing tackle

GUNS • AMMUNITION • SHOOTING ACCESSORIES

Also camping equipment and fishing license distributor. Main agents for Shakespeare, Daiwa, Sierra, Ron Thompson, Leeda, Greys and Shimano (Reels) Centre Fire Rifles from .204 to .308 Calibre

Thigh Waders

Daiwa and Ocean Chest Waders

Sierra Breathable Chest Waders

Leeda Volaire jackets and waders

Okuma SLV Large Arbor Fly Reel

Grey's Clothing

Range of Optics

Climb8 Angling Clothing

Main Stockists for Sierra, Greys and Abu rods, reels and waders

Large range of quality salmon flies, tied locally and handmade Flying Cs by Joe McDonald and John Martin

Live and frozen bait supplier. Game, Coarse and Sea tackle stocked. Victorinox Swiss Army Knives, Leatherman, Buck Knives, Zippo Lighters, BB Guns etc also stocked.

Selection of new and used shotguns including Browning, Beretta, Lanber, AYA, Baikal etc.

Main stockist of Eley and Game Bore Cartridges. Also Remington and Hornady centre fire ammunition

Selection of new and used .17 and .22 rimfire rifles and .17 and .22 air rifles in stock. Aigle Wellingtons, Pigeon Traps, Hawke and Deben & Weaver Scopes, Realtree clothing and much much more in stock.

SPRING 2020 NARGC REPORT FROM THE PRO'S DESK



Well there it is, another season over and a general election to boot.

We have passed the mildest winter that I can remember and not that I'm blaming the weather but this was one of the poorest sporting seasons on record. Maybe my old bones prefer the comfort of the duvet to crouching in a drain waiting for a flight of duck and I'm told my snooker game has improved over the winter. All of that said, when I did venture out there was much less game about.

True, I did encounter a couple of woodcock but reports were that they had not come west in their usual numbers rather preferring to winter holiday in Scotland and Wales this year. Similarly talking to the ace wildfowlers in my club they commented on the scarcity of migrant species. Pheasant numbers were down despite the usual release quota and in this part of the world visiting winter flocks of woodpigeon were smaller than of late.

So where do I look for explanation? Weather? Farming practices? Loss of habitat? Predation? Pressure of shooting? Urban sprawl? Lack of vermin control?

The list is endless and reading back through it the answer is all of the above and a combination of same.

True, I have seen animals left out on the land all winter this year as grass continued to grow right through this year. Club policy is not to enter lands where beasts are still in the fields and the pheasant is a wily bird that soon learns the sanctuary of cattle along with the pleasures of the feed stations.

Living in a large town I have watched with resignation as the houses popped up like mushrooms along country roads limiting shooting opportunities only to be followed by the tsunami of housing estates, shops and

schools. Looking at the town's development plan I see large tracts of farmland have been zoned as residential and industrial land.

Progress! Yes and an economic boost for the region with a major foreign investment underway.

Jobs, prosperity and the inevitable influx of people needing somewhere to hang their hats. So it goes. We shooters are being squeezed and devil the thing we can do about it.

I have listed vermin control and have some observations on this. Crow and magpie traps are being vandalised with caught birds released. Why? Well our new country residents stroll in the fields with their children and dogs. Fine and

dandy but! They are sometimes offended when they encounter one of our Larsen traps, taking it upon themselves to free the unfortunate birds and vandalising the trap for good measure. Their lovely pet dogs are let romp in the fields. Such fun! They romp and run throughout the year disturbing nesting birds in springtime, chicks in summer and scattering adult and released birds in the autumn. It is all well and good for the Gun club to have rules on the running of hunting dogs in spring and summer, but these leisure users of the countryside ignore club signs and in the process disturb and ruin the breeding season for ground nesting birds.

What of fox control then? Spring fox



NARGC County Officers.



Jim Brennan, Seamus Heraty and PhD. researcher James O'Neill.

drives are restricted as the mushroom invasion has left us with nearly a house in every corner of the fields and dogs barking, guns banging and foxes running into gardens disturb the Sunday morning slumber of the new country residents, horrifying their children and terrifying their pet dogs and cats. Oh yes they have those prolific bird killers as pets to keep the nasty mice down. What matter a few (hundred) robins, sparrows, or finches must pay the price! Fox drives? Just you try it round my country.

Now we come to night shooting. When I was a younger man many farmers and their spouses kept a few hens, ducks and even some kept Guinea fowl, geese or wonder of wonders peacocks. Now these good people appreciated fox control. They knew that mister fox was a night caller and so he was best tackled at night when he was most active. Gun clubs would let these people know that the members would be out in springtime and late summer before pheasants were released. The club secretary could be contacted in the event of a problem. Fox shooting at night is the most effective form of control and requires night lights and in most cases a centrefire rifle.

Lights in the night. The occasional crack of a gunshot. These are enough to have some country dwellers reaching for the mobile phone ringing the Garda and complaining of the disturbance to their sleep when kiddies must be up early for school and they themselves must rise at five am. to commute to work in the city. Blue flashing lights as you exit the field. What are you doing

out at this time of night? Licence check. Ammunition transport check? Would you not shoot somewhere else and not be disturbing these poor people? We know how it goes.

In all of the foregoing I have not considered the emergence of the new alpha predators.

We here on the east coast have seen an explosion in the population of the common (European) buzzard. This brown devil has been joined by a pest from the west our new friend the pine marten.

I have a sneaking suspicion that while the buzzard has broadened its range naturally the marten has had more than a little help from humans with an interest in forestry. The notion that this predator will control or eliminate the grey squirrel is flawed. The squirrel will to a degree adapt, the marten will being an omnivore eat whatever is available (he is particularly fond of partridge) including game and song birds. I have heard it postulated that the marten eats mostly berries and nuts. Berries and nuts all year round, that will be down to climate change then!

While in theory it is possible to get a section 42 licence to control these pests, in practice few are issued outside state departments and the criteria to qualify for same is after the damage has been done. No prevention being better than cure here then. In effect then these predators have a free pass to continue their destruction of game birds and small mammals. My friends in the coursing fraternity tell me of a great fall in the hare population locally. Leverets

and buzzards don't mix.

These poor creatures living in forms above ground do not have the sanctuary of rabbit burrows or hedgerows. Their decline in this last twenty years appears to co-inside with the rise of the buzzard.

With no major change in farming practices in this area over this time can buzzards be party to their decline? I have noticed a decline in small birds of prey, sparrow hawks in particular. Again is this co-incidence? Can they compete with the all-conquering buzzard?

I did some crop protection shooting this winter. The black hoards had descended on a farmer friend's winter barley. Rooks, crows and grey backs happily flocked together working their way methodically along the drills feasting on the sweet new plants as they broke the surface of the soil.

We gave them the usual treatment reserved for these scavengers. I wonder how my vegetarian or vegan friends would fare if we failed to protect crops. Starving vegans! What a horrible thought. No doubt they would take to the fields banging their tambourines to disturb the black menace. Good luck with that say I.

To lift the gloom a bit I will report on the meeting of the Game Development and Predator control officers held recently in the Bloomfield hotel in Mullingar.

This was a busy weekend with a strongly attended cohort from all across the country.

Some of the topics covered were Game Habitat Development and the NARGC grant scheme for same

Elements covered were duck pond creation, improving/creating pheasant and woodcock habitat by scrub or tree planting. Fencing off corners or wet places to provide breeding and sanctuary areas also featured. The NARGC provide booklets and manuals on all of these activities.

Reports from committees, Woodcock first. James O'Neill our sponsored PHD student gave a report on his work to date outlining the lifecycle and habitat requirements of this iconic bird. Counts

undertaken so far indicate a much larger breeding population especially in the midlands than had hitherto been taken to be the case.

Ringling and tracking of our native woodcock will continue as we learn more on the quantity and distribution of the species.

NARGC game related matters included, The Club of The Year Competition, Habitat Grants, Open Days, Pheasant and Mallard subsidies, Game crop grants and ongoing work projects.

From the predator control perspective the agenda covered National predator control competition, Predator control equipment grants, Derogation and licenses(section 36 and section 42) . The Upcoming predator control course (in Donegal scheduled for later in 2020) was discussed.

The Grouse and Grey Partridge sub-committee gave a presentation. The successful reintroduction of our native Grey Partridge is very satisfying with breeding pairs available to clubs that meet the criteria set by the committee.

Year on year the population grows and I will ask Jim Brennan to provide me with a fuller report for a later issue.

On the Grouse front Jim is to visit a project close to Bollybrack. I will report on this at a future date. I have read recently of a hugely successful Grouse project in Antrim. Good to see this in Northern Ireland.

The proposed lead shot restriction reared its ugly head with our Chairman Dan Curley giving a comprehensive report. This is live again as I write with the EU committee on Environment, Public Health and Food Safety having sought a meeting with the commission. Our 'old friends' Green Grace O'Sullivan and Pink Mick Wallace feature in this Green leaning committee. The Committee have placed lead shot on the agenda. No surprises there then. Luckily we still have some real friends in Europe and particular thanks go to Mairead Mc Guinness for her contribution to this session.

We have tough times ahead but we will fight our corner to the fullest extent.

Michael Fenlon gave a report from the Deer Subcommittee. Challenging times here also with no clear steer from Parks and wildlife on licensing requirements. That said, John Butler and Michael have completed work on our NARGC deer-stalking course. We are sure it will exceed the department requirements and it has already been LANTRA approved.

Watch our web page for course dates.

Finally, John Butler circulated the NARGC draft code of practice for night time shooting.

Thanks to Seamus Heraty and Ger Burnes for their presentations and help with this article.

Postscript: We got through this without mentioning the election. Quick summary then: nobody won , everybody lost, no government in sight. As my sister from NI suggests "Maybe they should take three years off with pay and then come to a power sharing arrangement." Now there's a thought!

John Toal (National PRO, NARGC)



The N.A.R.G.C. Members' Compensation Fund

Members' Compensation Fund for Hunters, Clay Shooters, Target Shooters and others who are Members of our affiliated Clubs

The National Association of Regional Game Councils encourages game shooters and clay/target shooters to support the Shooting Lobby by joining a Gun/Game Club, Clay Pigeon Club or Target Sports Club affiliated to the NARGC. With 24,000 Members, you will be joining the most authoritative voice for the sport of shooting in Ireland. You will also enjoy the benefits of your Compensation Fund, which pools the cash contributions of its members. Only Fund Members can benefit from the Compensation Fund. Protection is available for Fund Members up to a ceiling of €10m per incident. The Fund is administered by the Association in the best interests of the Association and its Associate Members.

The Association welcomes the affiliation of new Clubs through its RGC structure.



In addition, with the NARGC you have:

- Full-time staff dedicated to working for shooting interests
- A say in the running of the Association - elections/resolutions
- A Members' Magazine posted free to your home at least once annually
- Habitat and other Grants for your Club - €350,000 granted annually
- Special Funding for Grouse Projects
- Grants for the purchase of Predator Control equipment by Clubs
- Mallard/Pheasant Release subsidies for Clubs and RGC's - currently €4.37 per bird
- Research into Game and other species
- Club of the Year Award

- Game Meat Handling Courses
- Representation otherwise at EU level
- A good working relationship with Farmers
- An Association Shop - books, badges, stickers, ties etc
- Monitoring and input into the drafting of legislation affecting shooting sports
- Inter-Club & Inter-County Annual Clay Shoots - biggest Clay Shoot in Ireland
- Members' access to information/advice on all issues every day
- Proficiency Courses and Safety Seminars for Associate Members
- Constant Government lobbying in Ireland and at EU level

We now offer Fund Membership to Club Members who are under 14 for just €10

For information on the Compensation Fund, call our Fund Office on FREEFONE: 1800 222 444 or telephone our full-time National Fund Administrator on 086 788 8411 (office hours only please)



An award-winning Food Festival right in the heart of 'Ireland's National Game Fair'.

The Irish Game Fair & Fine Food Festival

Shanes Castle, 29th & 30th August 2020



A flavourful foray into the best Irish Artisan food and drink with special guests from further afield, including Game Fair favourite Sillfield Farm, **PLUS**

- Cookery demonstration kitchen
- International country sports
- Action packed arena programme
- Medieval jousting tournament
- Dogs, donkeys, birds of prey
- Living History and much more



A GREAT FAMILY DAY OUT IN THE COUNTRYSIDE



Exhibitor Alert!

This is a local Food Festival with an unrivalled All-Ireland reach
Limited Spaces Still Available. For an application form
Phone 028 4483 9167 Email irishgamefair@btinternet.com

Hunting, Sho



GLASGOW ANGLING CENTRE, along with its instore gun room Glasgow Field Sports, is without doubt a haven for shooters and anglers alike. They stock a wide range of brands and products unrivalled in the industry. All at competitive prices.

Dedicated shooters and anglers travel to Glasgow from all over

the UK and abroad - and it is easy to see why. With almost 30 years in the trade they know exactly what customers want to see.

For the shooters Glasgow Field Sports store located inside GAC, with hunting and shooting equipment and country clothing from top brands like Harkila, Seeland, Jack Pyke, Swarovski and many more, plus a well-stocked gunroom with over 500 new and used Airguns, Shotguns and Rifles for all your hunting and shooting needs.

GAC has hundreds of rods and reels set up and on display for you to touch and try. You can have a go with any fly rod you like on their bespoke casting pool or even the nearby canal basin if you want to try

a salmon fly rod - by far the best way to make sure you have chosen the best tool for your needs, be it from Greys, Orvis, Guideline, Wychwood, Scott, Hardy, Mackenzie, Winston, Loop, Sage or any one of the dozens of top brands in stock. The UK's biggest range of angling apparel and waders line the walls of the clothing section from floor to ceiling, with a selection from Simms, Patagonia, Hodgman, Scierra, Airflo, Vass and many more. A huge selection of fishing flies like no other, from top manufacturers like Fulling Mill, Fario Fly, Atlantic Flies, Craig Barr, Dragon and Caledonian Flies, gives you the perfect opportunity to restock those depleted fly boxes with patterns

*The one stop
solution for all your
hunting, shooting
and fishing needs...*



Unit 1 The Point Retail Park,
29 Saracen Street,
Glasgow, G22 5HT

TEL: 00 44 141 212 8880



Granton Retail Park,
65 West Harbour Rd,
Edinburgh, EH5 1PW

TEL: 00 44 131 202 6351



Visit us on Facebook
[/glasgowanglingcentre](https://www.facebook.com/glasgowanglingcentre)



Follow us on Twitter
[@glasgowangling](https://twitter.com/glasgowangling)



Read our Blog
blog.fishingmegastore.com



Everything you'll ever need or will ever want...



otting, Fishing

for the coming months. A massive range of fly tying gear takes up a big area instore and comprehensive Sea and Coarse fishing departments are bulging with goodies from all the best known brands. GAC has more fishing lures in stock and on display than any tackle shop in Europe and has become a mecca for keen predator anglers in recent years for this very reason, with all the latest and greatest from Savage Gear, Westin, Rapala, Salmo and more. The Glasgow store is also home to Just Fish and Shoot, a fantastic range of fishing and shooting themed gifts, novelties and homewares designed to fill that gap in the market for the man or

woman that has everything – check out their unique range at www.justfish.co.uk or check it out instore.

With a second store recently opened through on the east coast the business is going from strength to strength whilst offering it's services further afield. Edinburgh Angling Centre mirrors the Glasgow store and this too includes a fully stocked gun room and comprehensive range of clothing and equipment for the discerning shooter or angler.

Both stores play host to a variety of events at various times throughout the year. In particular the Open Weekends are well worth a visit. Why not pop along and see for yourself.



CONTACT US TODAY FOR YOUR FREE CATALOGUES

WWW.FISHINGMEGASTORE.COM

Tel: 00 44 141 212 8880

Glasgow Angling Centre produces several comprehensive catalogues throughout the year dedicated to Game, Sea and Predator Fishing, as well as two compendium versions which include a Hunting section and a bespoke Fly Tying section. Giving you tens of thousands of products at your finger tips. To receive any or all of these catalogues contact the mail order department today or request yours through the website.

Low cost delivery to Ireland

Glasgow Angling Centre operates a bustling, multi award winning mail-order department, sending out hundreds of parcels every day to customers all over the world, and giving valuable advice to anglers who aren't within striking distance of the stores.

The company takes pride on realistic delivery costs.

This includes **FREE DELIVERY** to Northern Ireland and the ROI on all orders over £150, with low cost options on smaller items. This busy service is backed up by two huge warehouses, which are both stuffed to the rafters with stock to keep both shop and mail-order customers constantly supplied. GAC really is a one-stop-shop for shooters and anglers!

Seen a better price elsewhere? Our **Price Match Promise** makes sure you don't have to go anywhere else!



The 2020 ALL IRELAND GAME FAIR

Shanes Castle, Antrim

29th & 30th August – be part of the greatest demonstration of support for IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS ever!



After much deliberation we have decided to run one ALL IRELAND GAME FAIR at Shanes Castle in 2020 with a new ROI fair taking place third weekend in August 2021. Just think what great publicity it would be for country sports and the rural way of life if we could add the two crowds together in 2020.



A new venue for our ROI Fair

We have been working on a new venue for the ROI Fair since leaving Birr in 2017. While Lord & Lady Rosse were superb hosts and Birr Castle was one of the prettiest venues in Ireland, it was a far from practical site for us, as organisers, to operate.

In spite of us putting in roadways, with only one major entrance and car parking having to be hired separately and a long way from the main site, it simply was not as organiser or visitor friendly as Shanes Castle.

Our search for a venue such as Shanes, which has three good entrances, good internal roadways and integrated car parking within easy walking distance, took us all over the Irish Midlands and further afield.

Several potential venues fell down on one or other of our criteria and as a 'one

off' while we continued our search and negotiations we accepted an invitation to go 'in behind' the existing Home & Garden Show at Galway Racecourse. We had excellent co-operation from our partners and the racecourse management, however inclement weather meant that this was just a modest success and we revisited one of the venues on our list of possible ROI sites.

We are pleased to report - subject to final negotiations and 'tweaks' - we think we have identified our ROI venue for 2021.

Watch out for more announcements later!

Looking forward to the Game Fair at Shanes Castle

At the same time as considering a new ROI venue we heard the news that the 2020 Countrysports Fair at Scarva

had been cancelled. We heard this news with a certain amount of sadness because as is also happening in the UK, country sports enthusiasts are losing another opportunity to demonstrate their support for our sports.

All event organisers are having a difficult job trying to balance increasing costs with holding trade stand and admission costs static against the backdrop of threats from potentially inclement weather.

In our own case, in the last five years costs have gone up by c33% while we have kept trade stand costs static and in some cases discounted admission charges.

So for 2020 - against this harsh economic background and ever increasing political pressure on our sports - we are determined to mount ONE SHOWCASE EVENT for IRISH



Bringing NI legends and history to life, Fair Director Albert Titterington and very sporting mayor Councillor Paul Michael with artist John R Moore and his painting of the Massereene Hound.

COUNTRY SPORTS with the largest attendance ever to demonstrate to press, public and politicians that there is huge support for Irish country sports and the rural way of life.

We have put in place the following:

- * new attractions in all areas,
- * several new exhibitors and more coming in daily (all with at least one bargain offer),
- * great competitions with the best ever prize fund
- * great clay shooting prizes, for gundogs – top spaniel & top retriever will each win £1,000, a Barbour Coat and an oil painting of their dog by acclaimed Scottish artist and sculptor Louise Jarvis <http://louisejarvis.co.uk>
- * and our own artist John R. Moore will be providing specially remarked prints of his legends paintings of Mick the Miller /Master McGrath and the Massereene Hound to add to great cash prizes for the other dog events. Both artists will also have a good range of their superb work on display.
- * We have also put in place a special

magazine subscription/ticket offer- for just £25/€25 you get four Irish Country Sports and Country Life magazines posted out to you, PLUS two tickets to the fair see: <http://irishgamefair.com/attractions.asp>.

TourismNI's 'Embrace a Giant Spirit' campaign

<https://www.embraceagiantspirit.com/>

To help showcase the attractions of Northern Ireland, which are all within an hour's drive of Shanes Castle & Antrim, we have negotiated special accommodation rates in hotels, B&Bs etc where you can enjoy a short break around visiting the fair. For hotels this starts at



£70 per room for two people B&B (dinner from £12) and even less for quality B&B and there are also caravan and camping sites available.

THE FUTURE OF IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS IS NOW LARGELY - UP TO YOU!

The Great Game Fairs of Ireland team are all committed to promoting and defending country sports and the rural way of life - through publishing Ireland's only Irish hunting, shooting and fishing magazine (sadly others are no longer on the bookshelves)

And VITALLY this year, through Ireland's only Game Fair or major public country sports event.

We have 'done our bit' for Irish country sports by making the magazine available to the widest possible audience FREE to READ on www.countrysportsandcountrylife.com and sending it to all TDs and MLAs. We have funded a FREE PROUD of IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS car sticker and we are providing a SHOWCASE event for Irish country sports and the rural way of life at the Irish Game Fair, Shanes Castle, Antrim on the 27th & 28th June.

If like us you really are PROUD of IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS please be there to be part of the biggest demonstration of support for them EVER.

BE PART OF THE BIGGEST - AND ONLY - GAME FAIR IN IRELAND THIS YEAR!

See the 2019 fair video 'Looking back at 2019 and forward to 2020' – why not be there for the next video? www.vimeo.com/389920988

WE ARE PROUD OF

IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS

www.irishgamefair.com.
www.irishcountrysportsandcountrylife.com



One of the thrills of outdoor events at Shanes Castle Estate is simply being here. It's a stunning place you can't visit every day. If you've come this far, get into the 'Giant Spirit' by staying over and seeing around. This year's two big events at the Estate, The Irish Game Fair and the Shanes Castle Steam Rally are teaming up to bring you great ideas for a Shanes Castle breakaway. There's lots to discover...

Antrim adventures

Field to garden

At the Steam Rally and Irish Game Fair, you're in the big fields of the Shanes Castle Estate, but, just back along the road into Antrim, you can contrast that with exquisite, award-winning gardens. At Castle Gardens and Clotworthy House you are in the midst of 400 years of garden creation – a living museum that brings you through layer upon layer of design features and planting added over the centuries, including magnificent 17th-century Anglo Dutch style canals, ponds and avenues that are unique in Northern Ireland. www.visitantrimandnewtownabbey.com



Shop...

Between us, we offer great shopping at Shanes. Bring home the tastes of the Irish Game Fair's Food Festival, the best country clothing, even rods and guns. See artisans ply their crafts at both events and roll up your sleeves to drive a bargain at the autojumble market for all things steam, vintage and just plain fascinating, only to be had at the Steam Rally. In the mood for more retail therapy? A three-mile drive takes you to Junction One retail and leisure park. Shop brands like Tom Tailor, Trespass, Pavers, Golf Nation, Quiz and Next clearance. Tired shopping? Take in a movie while you're there.



Steam walk

Walk the viaduct bridge in Randalstown and let your imagination re-create the glory days of steam. Charles Lanyon designed this feat of engineering in 1856 so trains could cross the River Maine on their way from Cookstown to Derry~Londonderry.



Irish Game Fair and
Fine Food Festival

Saturday 29th
and Sunday 30th
August 2020

Northern
Ireland



Embrace a
Giant Spirit

Shanes Castle May Day Steam Rally and The Irish Game Fair are sponsored

Theatre night

Come up to the Steam Rally the evening before and get yourself in the right vibe for the country feel and fun of the weekend ahead. As luck would have it, The Patsy Cline show, featuring 'Voice of Ireland' star Georgina Richmond, is playing at The Theatre on the Mill. You know you'll love that! The show starts at 7.45pm and admission is £19. Theatre at the Mill
www.theatreatthemill.com



Stay...

Holiday Inn Express, Antrim

028 9442 5500

www.hiexantrim.co.uk

Dunsilly Hotel, Antrim

028 9446 2929

www.dunsillyhotel.com

Ballyrobin Country Lodge, Crumlin

028 9442 2211

www.ballyrobincountrylodge.com

Hilton Templepatrick

028 9443 5500

www.hilton.com/templepatrick

Chimney Corner, Templepatrick

028 9084 4925

www.chimneycorner.co.uk

Dunadry Hotel, Templepatrick

028 9443 4343

www.dunadry.com

Corrs Corner Hotel, Newtownabbey

028 9084 9221

www.corrscorner.com

Maldron Hotel, International Airport

028 9445 7000

www.maldronhotelbelfastinternational.com

Glendona House, Crumlin

028 9442 2283

www.glendona.com

Stables Guest House, Antrim

028 9448 5318

Caldhame House, Nutts Corner

028 9442 3099

www.caldhamelodge.co.uk

Keef Halla Country House, Nutts Corner

028 9082 5491

www.keefhalla.com

Shanes Castle Steam Rally Camp Site

Open to visitors to the Steam Rally

www.shanescastlesteamrally.co.uk

Sixmilewater Caravan Park

Lough Road Antrim

028 9448 1307

Loughshore Caravan Park

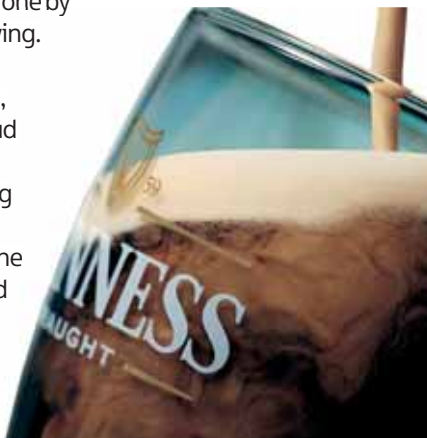
Jordanstown

028 9034 0137

Pintsize town and country

Leaving Shanes Castle at the Randalstown exit, there's no doubt it's easier to go left, so just turn that corner on to the town's main street and pop in to a gem of a pub. O'Kanes Bar actually is the 'Giant Spirit' of the Irish pub. Mahogany shelving, real memorabilia and a truly excellent pint of Guinness await. You might just catch of 'trad night' where the musicians come in one by one and the Irish music session gets into swing.

Two miles out of Antrim towards Ballymena, McLarnon's Ramble Inn has a long and proud tradition of welcoming visitors. Originally established in 1852 as a coaching inn serving travellers on route to the Antrim coast and glens, The McLarnon family have taken on the mission to ensure all comers are well fed and watered. The menu is extensive, featuring favourites old and new, from pan fried liver and bacon to Thai salted chilli chicken, steaks, of course, and vegetarian options.



Dogs go free

Give your dog a great escape after a day on the lead with a free run in Randalstown Forest. You're actually still in the Shanes Castle Estate, historically speaking. The Estate sold the forest in 1934 but it still houses a herd of deer (enclosed), harking back to its former role. Walks are well marked and the entrance is on the Staffordstown Road out of Randalstown.



by Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council and Tourism Northern Ireland

SHANES CASTLE MAY DAY
STEAM RALLY

Saturday 9th and
Sunday 10th May 2020



In the heart of Northern Ireland is the mighty Lough Neagh, where the wild Dollaghan trout feed over winter in preparation for their migration up the Six Mile River. Derek Bell Jr tells us of his experiences and how to fish this glorious water

It's always an advantage when your local river is on your doorstep, when you know every pool with detailed knowledge, where the best lies are and where a Dollaghan will take the fly within a given pool. Growing up along the banks of the Six Mile River and tributaries has certainly given me a wealth of knowledge to hone my angling skills. Knowing when and where to catch the magical Dollaghan, iconic brown trout which migrate from Lough Neagh into the feeder streams through the summer and autumn months.

You can imagine my great enthusiasm and excitement when my local angling club Antrim & District Angling Association announced I was to

act as a registered guide on the Six Mile Water. Without hesitation I'd naturally applied for the position, I believed I was ready to pass on all of the accumulated knowledge I'd gathered over the years. After going through the selection process I was finally accepted to be a guide for the Six Mile River.

A few years have passed since I became a club guide and many clients from as far as the USA and all walks of life have come and gone. Each client will have different levels of skill and experience, most had a basic skill level. Even so, no matter what level of experience a client is at in his angling career it's my job to put them over fish and to give them the best experience possible in the conditions and time available.

Preparatory work is vital

It's not just a matter of the client turning up to the river and just starting to fish, there's preparatory work to be done first to ensure the best angling experience possible for a client. Usually

I will start with a little bit of background on the level of experience, few will have ever fished a river at night with snags and obstructions that are obvious during daylight hours, but under nightfall become a whole new environment that's a totally new experience in itself. Reconnaissance by me beforehand is vital, and a chat with the old hands who haunt the river on a regular basis gives a heads up on how any section is fishing, and I'll daylight walk along the river checking all the pools for possible fish present. It's always good to check each pool, especially after a big flood. Changes can happen and the last thing you want when you turn up at night to fish a good holding pool is for a tree to be bang in the middle. A safety assessment is vital to match the angler's ability and level of fitness as rivers can be dangerous places for the unwary at the best of times.

It's always a good idea to check stiles and walkways for loose footing, bank

PARK STAY FLY



2 Minute Walk From Belfast International Airport

- Spacious family rooms available
- Great value park, stay & fly packages
- Complimentary WiFi

FROM

£99

With up to
7 days parking
included

ENQUIRE TODAY

+44 28 9445 7000

reservations.belfast@maldronhotels.com

maldronhotelbelfastinternational.com

maldron
HOTEL
BELFAST INTERNATIONAL
AIRPORT

*Enjoy a Warm Welcome at
McLarnon's*



The Ramble Inn

**Traditional Pub • Restaurant • Banqueting
Suite • Live Music Venue**

*Catering for all Family Special Occasions
Serving food all day, every day*

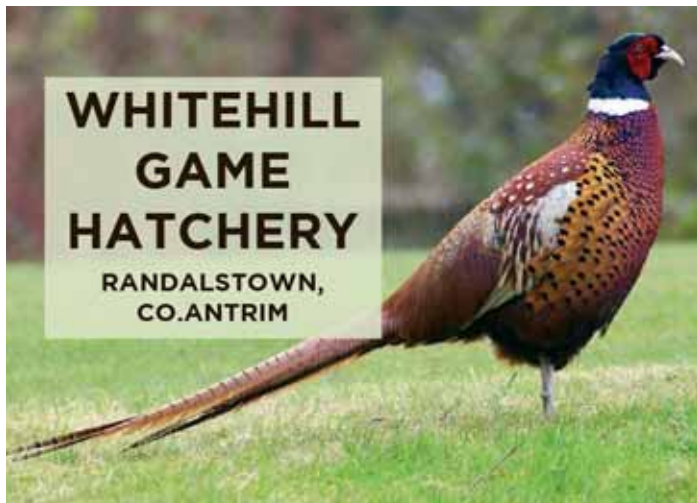
236 Lisnavenagh Road,
Ballymena/Antrim Dual Carriageway

Tel: (028) 9442 8888

www.mclarnonsrambleinn.com

Email: info@mclarnonsrambleinn.com

**WHITEHILL
GAME
HATCHERY**
RANDALSTOWN,
CO. ANTRIM



SALE OF

Day old Pheasants & Partridge

Seven week old Pheasant Poults

Kansas Cross & Ringneck

Quality Assured

Twelve week old Partridge (red leg)

BOOK NOW FOR 2020

Tel: 07787560527 / 07799397845

Email: whitehillgamehatchery@hotmail.com



**THE
JUNCTION**
retail and leisure park

The Holiday Inn Express Antrim is a stylish modern hotel
located in The Junction Retail & Leisure Park just 20 minutes
from Belfast city. The perfect base to explore all that
Northern Ireland has to offer.

Room rates from

£65 B&B

Please call reservations on 02894425500 or email
reservations@hlexantrim.co.uk



stability and livestock present in an ever changing environment as the season progresses. If water levels are at a suitable height (the lower the better for night fishing) a check will be kept on weather patterns, the last thing you want is a sudden flash flood.

Locating the Dollaghan really depends on the time of the season and conditions. Through the summer months they'll be running into the river at night and early morning. Some folk think Dollaghan need high water before they will run - not true at all - I've seen Dollaghan run when the river is at its lowest with their backs literally out of the water. In the summer months I usually just concentrate my efforts on the lower deeper stretches of the river, but as we move into autumn the big fish move throughout the system.

Understanding the movements of these migratory trout is something of an enigma and recent scientific studies of genetics using DNA and the most recent implanting of acoustic tags to monitor movements is starting to throw up some startling results. Pollution is the biggest single threat to the river and while in 2008 the system was virtually wiped out, a dramatic recovery has taken place. Working as member of the local rivers Trust as an AMI kick sampler has added to the knowledge of what's going on throughout the system season by

season above and below the surface identifying possible pollution threats, but also spotting new fish lies and movements throughout the system. Eyes, ears and feet on the ground of the river continually improve my knowledge and hopefully the client's experience. 2019 was an exceptional year for the Six Mile Water with numerous specimen trout being recorded of 5lb plus with the coming 2020 season expected to surpass all expectations.

Just a note on the fishing equipment to use or for anyone interested in a day's guided trip on the Six Mile River. I can highly recommend the LTS Nitro 10ft 8 weight which I have been using throughout the 2019 season. It's a fast action rod, not too stiff and handles all applications well from floating to sunk line work. The rod action helps set the hook and reacts well to lifting a sunk line as and when required. A large arbour reel with reliable drag loaded with plenty of backing is useful as large Dollaghan when hooked have a habit of big runs downstream. I've witnessed fish running back over weirs and under bridges and followed many of those fish as they head for the sanctuary of deeper waters - a daunting task after nightfall if unfamiliar with the terrain.

Fly lines are straight forward, a floating, intermediate and full sink will

cover all eventualities. My recommendations for flies fall into the following categories: gold headed nymphs during the day, with traditional hair wing salmon flies and any of the Irish Shrimp patterns after dark. Leaders choose at your peril: Dollaghan in excess of 10 lb are regularly caught and the river environment is full of snags and obstructions, so it's usual to lose several flies in a session. After dark you can afford to fish much heavier leader; summer and autumn can be productive using a floating line with a 'Hover Tip' such as an Airflow leader

The secret to constant catches is to locate the fish, use the right size of fly and fish the depth where the fish are. Many anglers think the fish are hard on the bottom and whilst that is true for most of the time many fish will be caught mid-water or on the surface depending on the conditions.

If you have found this article useful and are interested in fishing the Six Mile Water for the Iconic Dollaghan then please do not hesitate to get in touch and I will be glad to help.

Please see my Facebook page www.facebook.com/derekbelljnr/ or you can catch 'Uploads from Derek Bell jnr' on YouTube or you can Email me for more information to derekbell321@hotmail.com Tight lines for the 2020 season!



Another fine fish is slipped back by Derek Blue Jnr.

SHANES CASTLE MAY DAY STEAM RALLY

SATURDAY 9th MAY & SUNDAY 10th MAY 2020
OPEN 10.00am - 5.00pm DAILY

- Steam and Vintage Tractor Working Demonstrations - including threshing, timber cutting and stone breaking
- Vintage Tractors, Commercials and Military Vehicles, Stationary Engines and Yesteryear, Cars & Motorcycles
- Autojumble, Trade Stands, Craft Marquee and live Rural Craft Displays
- Arena Events, Steam Rides and Fairground
- Live Country Music including Hugo Duncan and Friends on Sunday
- Catering - Fast Food and Bar Facilities
- Public Caravan & Camping Site



NOTICE TO EXHIBITORS

The organisers can only accept exhibitors who have completed and returned an Entry Form before the closing date of

TUESDAY 14th APRIL 2020

Unfortunately we will not be able to accept any exhibitors who turn up on the day without having entered and received the relevant Entry Pass.

Entry forms can be downloaded from:

www.shanescastlesteamrally.co.uk

or email walteramcneill@hotmail.com or ian@travanprecision.com

Sponsored by Tourism NI and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council

Mc CLOY'S

COUNTRY ATTIRE



BROWNING PRO SERIES



B725 PRO SPORT



B725 PRO MASTER



B725 PRO TRAP

VIEW ONLINE

WEBSITE UPDATED DAILY

WWW.MCCLOY'S.COM

028 7965 0641

10 CREAGH ROAD, TOOMEBRIDGE, CO. ANTRIM, BT41 3SE

M^c CLOYS
— COUNTRY ATTIRE —



DAYSTATE AIR RIFLES



DAYSTATE RED WOLF



DAYSTATE WOLVERINE R



DAYSTATE HUNTSMAN REGAL

VIEW ONLINE

WEBSITE UPDATED DAILY

WWW.MCCLOYS.COM

028 7965 0641

10 CREAGH ROAD, TOOMEBRIDGE, CO. ANTRIM, BT41 3SE



Big Days and Small Days

Guns and beaters in the snow at the syndicate shoot.

With the end of the shooting season approaching as I write this, I am already looking forward to Beaters' Day: the day when the beaters and the pickers-up get their chance to shoot. It isn't the only time I go shooting of course, but Beaters' Day is the one day in the season when I know that I will have the chance to shoot – or perhaps I had better say 'shoot at' – quite a lot of pheasants.

As a Gun in a small walk and stand syndicate I go shooting quite regularly. We release a few hundred pheasants and partridges on a hill farm and shoot from September through January. If the birds fly well and the Guns hold straight we may end the day with thirty or so head which equals a brace apiece for the Guns. Later in the season we might be down to single figures if the pheasants start wandering and it is not uncommon to come home from the shoot with the same number of unfired cartridges as

when I set out.

Obviously, on the commercial shoot where I go beating and loading during the season, the numbers of pheasants and partridges released are rather higher than at our little DIY syndicate. Come Beaters' Day and you are pretty much guaranteed to get through several boxes of shells despite being limited to cocks only. Even at the tail end of January the birds are there in considerable numbers and you go to your peg wondering how well you might shoot rather than whether you will get to fire a shot at all. It makes for a very pleasant change. That said, there is no direct correlation between my enjoyment of the day and the number of cartridges I fire.

In the early part of the season I am often asked to load instead of beating. It is not uncommon for a Gun to fire well over a hundred shots on each drive: more than I would normally get through in a whole season. Loading is nearly as

much fun as if you were doing the shooting yourself, especially if 'your' Gun is a pleasant companion and a half-decent shot. You might think though, that seeing shooting on such a scale would leave you feeling a bit left out when you are back at the syndicate drives and only firing half a dozen shots all day. Well, it doesn't: or it doesn't for me anyway.

I was loading one day when 'my' Gun was back-gunning. He fired ninety-three cartridges – I counted them as I picked up the empty shells afterwards – and I would bet good money that if he were here right now he would only be able to remember five or six of the pheasants he killed – if that. The birds were coming thick and fast, he was shooting and I was stuffing in cartridges as quickly as possible, and in retrospect the whole drive was a bit of a blur.

Now take the other day on the syndicate shoot. We did six drives: three



Picking up dogs eager to get to work.

shooting and three beating for each team. On our first standing drive I killed a really good high crossing cock pheasant and missed a hen that looked easier but obviously wasn't. The second drive was less productive in that I didn't actually see a pheasant let alone fire a shot, then on the third drive I had just one chance and dropped the only pheasant that came anywhere near my peg. Not a very exciting day you might think, but you would be wrong. It was a great day: good company, reasonable

weather (i.e. not raining), I killed two good pheasants for four shots and went home thoroughly satisfied with my day's shooting. If I had drawn a different peg I might have had more shooting – one of the Guns had twelve shots – but equally, one of the other Guns only fired his gun once.

A shooting day is so much more than just shooting

But none of us had any complaints. A shooting day is so much more than just

waving a gun about and killing a few, or even a lot, of partridges and pheasants. You get to spend a day out in the fresh air (and the air in Scotland during the winter can be very fresh indeed) and you get some healthy exercise. If you are beating on alternate drives you will get rather more exercise than if you are just shooting and employing the services of a loader as well, but there will still be a certain amount of walking in store for you. There is always something to see whether you are beating or shooting: the buzzard circling overhead in expectation that there will be a free lunch if the pickers-up miss a bird or two and there is often a red kite with the same idea in mind.

It is always a pleasure to see roe or fallow deer coming through the line ahead of the beaters and the occasional fox slipping away from where it has been lying up under a bramble bush. Woodcock flitter silently through the bare branches of the birch trees and a pigeon twisting well above the Guns usually manages to survive several ounces of lead flung in its direction. And of course, there will be the pheasants and perhaps partridges: anywhere from one



Drinks between drives for a shooting party on a big day.



Beaters gathering at the end of a drive on the big shoot.

to twenty at the syndicate shoot rising to several hundred: maybe even several thousand on a big drive at the start of the season on the commercial estates.

By the time Beaters' Day comes at the end of January the number of birds in the coverts will inevitably have fallen well below the mass flushes of October and November, but there will still be a lot more than would ever be seen at the little syndicate shoot. And yes: it is a treat once in each season to find myself fumbling for cartridges as the next half dozen pheasants are gliding over even before the last one has hit the ground. It is fun to stand on every drive instead of spending half the day in the beating line. It is good at the end of the day to see the game cart well laden with cock pheasants and almost inevitably two or three hen birds that no one will admit to shooting. Let me be perfectly frank and say that I can quite see why people with much deeper pockets than mine will pay several thousand pounds for a single day's pheasant shooting.

But since my budget doesn't run to that sort of shooting I am perfectly happy to spend my Saturdays mixing beating and shooting on alternative drives, to be delighted if I draw a lucky peg and end the day with five or six pheasants shot, but still quite content to go home without firing the gun at all provided the syndicate have had a good day overall. Maybe next week it will be my turn to fire a dozen or so shots while someone else has drawn the short straw. It all evens out over the season and maybe those days when the gun stays clean that make Beaters' Day - the one

day when it is practically guaranteed to come home with powder residue in both barrels – such a treat to finish off the season.

Anyway: I am looking forward to it and hoping that this season I will shoot a little better than I did last year. And all the years before that....



The game cart beginning to fill up nicely.



Their turn to beat on the syndicate shoot.



URBALSHINNY SPORTING LODGE

REGISTERED FIREARMS DEALER
CLAY & GAME SHOOTING



TIKKA
SECOND TO NONE



Tikka T3X LITE PACKAGE

BURRIS FOUR X SCOPE, STEEL MOUNTS, BIPOD & STALON W110 MOD

PACKAGE PRICE £1685.00

SAVING £435.00



TIKKA
SECOND TO NONE



Tikka T3X CERAKOTE PACKAGE

ZEISS V4 3-12X44 SCOPE, STEEL MOUNTS, BIPOD & STALON W110 MOD

PACKAGE PRICE £2180.00

SAVING £420.00



MAUSER M18 STALKING PACKAGE

HAWKE VANTAGE 30 SCOPE, STEEL MOUNTS, BIPOD & STALON W110 MOD

PACKAGE PRICE £1240.00

SAVING £200.00



MAUSER M12 IMPACT PACKAGE

ZEISS V4 3-12X44 SCOPE, STEEL MOUNTS, BIPOD & STALON W110 MOD

PACKAGE PRICE £2040.00

SAVING £480.00

Blaser



TIKKA



LYALVALE
EXPRESS
Make sure of it...

Benelli



BERETTA



CZ



RUGER®

MAIN AGENT FOR SAKO, TIKKA & BLASER RIFLES

15A URBALSHINNY ROAD OMAGH CO TYRONE BT79 0TP

TELEPHONE 0044 28 8075 8395

www.urbalshinnysportinglodge.co.uk



Nile Buffalo

We were hunting Nile buffalo in the shadow of Mount Elgon.

Having stealthily crawled to within 30 yards of the group, our faint scent was carried on swirling midday winds to the herd which subsequently revealed itself to be far bigger than we had thought. No less than 130 Nile buffalo hurtled off with drama and speed, mercifully in the other direction to us. This seismic act signalled the game was up for the morning. It was getting on for 12pm and the heat was visible, emanating off the ground in waves.

We'd all but turned back to head for camp when I heard a sharp inhalation from Gareth. "Stop" he whispered, as he slowly crouched down, indicating I should do the same. "Under those trees. Two bulls." I followed Gareth's lead as he made his way, quick and low, from tree to tree, to get close enough for a look. Would they be the right age? Would we get a shot? My adrenaline was creeping up again, while the humidity and temperature was making me wheeze. We paused under a thornbush tree where we finally had a decent view of their bulk, unobstructed by long grass

from midway up.

This hunt, this place, was a major dream come true, for we were hunting Nile buffalo in the shadow of Mount Elgon, one of East Africa's great mountains. This was the Karamoja region of Uganda where my boyhood hero, Walter Dalrymple Maitland Bell, had gained his moniker of 'Karamoja Bell'. I have read and re-read his adventures, for what young hunter wouldn't be inspired by this Scottish adventurer who was soldier, fighter pilot, sailor, writer, painter and big-game hunter? W. D. M. Bell's writings have had a lasting effect on me and are a huge contributing factor to why I do what I do. So to be hunting dangerous game on the hallowed ground that he likely walked and hunted (he said he walked an average of 73 miles for every elephant he shot) was inspiring and intimidating all at once.

I'd been hunting plains game during my stay, but while I'd hunted Cape buffalo in other African countries, Nile buffalo was something I hadn't yet had the chance to pursue. While Bell almost

certainly would have used a .275 Rigby, famously preferring smaller calibres to hunt with, this is no longer allowed as it is just too risky for dangerous game. So a .416 Rigby Big Game rifle was chosen, a rifle I knew and trusted having used it on Cape buffalo before. I knew too, from my lessons a few years ago with 'The Doctor' (Kevin Doctari Robertson), that a shot at buffalo is not to be taken lightly. In his words: "It starts a war, someone or something is going to die as soon as that first shot goes off". The pressure was on. We'd had several near chances over the past week at single buffalo in thick stuff, but as so often happens with a hunting trip, a suitable old bull – our main objective – had remained just out of reach.

For a number of days I hunted with PH Gareth Lecluse in the PiaNupe Wildlife Reserve, where Karimojong Overland Safaris (KOS) had gained the concession for sport hunting just seven years ago with express permission from the President of Uganda. Subsequently, thanks to sport hunting, the area has undergone a remarkable transformation



Two bulls stopped under the trees.

and is a great showcase for the argument that hunting can and does help restore and preserve wildlife. Our camp was rustic but comfortable, and the perfect jumping off point for hunting all manner of plains game, some of which – notably the South Sudan Roan – is unique to the area and cannot be legally hunted anywhere else in the world.

We had a close encounter two day's previously, tracking a large herd by a river and closing in well, however we were unable to make that final advance to identify a good old bull before they blew out. The problem with big herds is that there are always outliers and so many eyes, ears and noses to pick up predators. A huge herd had been spotted feeding at night in the shadow out Mount Kadam in the Debasien range, an area Bell refers to in his books.

I checked I had spare ammunition on my belt

Starting at first light we bounced our way across the open country in the vehicle to get close enough for tracking. No one said much over the roar of the engine, the tension tangible – hope, nerves and expectations all bound up in

this expedition. Gareth skidded to a halt just as the light was starting to break. “On foot now. Check everything,” he said as I got out, my teeth feeling like they’d been rattled loose from the ride. I loaded the rifle with three 400 grain Hornady Dangerous Game Solid cartridges then a soft or ‘DGX’ of the same weight on top. I checked I had spare ammunition on my belt – carry as

much as you can is the mantra I know works for buffalo.

After grabbing the sticks from the vehicle the three of us set off at a steady pace. “They’re moving. We’re lucky it rained last night, it has given us brilliant tracks,” he explained. I followed behind him, looking as he did at the ground to see the marks animals had left everywhere around us. It takes someone



Our rustic camp.



The ground was definitely not for the faint hearted.

with huge experience and knowledge to be able to make sense of spoor from a herd which seemed to lead in every direction. We didn't hang about, Gareth walking at a good pace to catch up to the herd while it was still cool.

The country we were in was very open and cover was very sparse – while the long grass wasn't enough to offer cover it also meant it would be hard to spot animals until you were almost on top of them. Worse still, getting a clear, clean shot is definitely less straightforward. Dotted in the long grass are the thornbush trees which cast a little shade, and as we neared the area the herd was in, we started moving between these and using them for cover. Moving quickly and silently we had closed in on the herd. "We're now about 800 yards away from them," whispered Gareth. "We need, somehow, to close that distance." He paused while deciding how to proceed.

There was a breeze – not much, but just enough to ruin this if we didn't take precautions. We would have to loop around the herd tripling our approach

distance, but it meant we'd be in with a chance. We set off moving carefully, now in the stop-start, slow-fast movement of a final approach familiar to anyone who hunts. Trying to keep my breathing steady and deep, not to let my adrenalin, nerves and excitement take over, I focused on following exactly in Gareth's footsteps.

We'd managed our loop and now, unbelievably, were downwind of the herd and within spitting distance of being in range. Just 40 yards or so would do it. Gareth turned to me and indicated to get low. "Bum shuffle," he said in a hushed voice. I laid the rifle across my lap, and copied his movements, hoiking myself forward with my legs and hands. We started closing the distance. Thirty yards. Twenty. Gareth paused for a beat, scanning the ground ahead of us before moving forwards again. I felt the vibrations before I heard the herd. They had bolted. Whether there was an outlier close than we'd realised or, maybe, they were spooked by us or something else, I don't know, but our chance was dashed.

The adrenalin that had been coursing through my veins vanished, and I felt exhausted, drained and disappointed. We stood, watching the huge herd heading off away from us. They weren't stampeding, but they were moving too fast for us to catch up to them.

Two bulls, mature, 400 yards

As we turned to make our way back to the vehicle, Gareth looked every bit as disappointed as I felt. We started to walk, but within two steps, Gareth dropped, and indicated for me to do the same. Slowly, cautiously, he grabbed his binoculars and scanned the ground to one side. "Under that tree. Two bulls, mature, 400 yards," he whispered, pointing. I could just about see them. For some reason, these two hadn't moved off with the rest of the herd. In double quick time, we closed in on them. There was not a second to lose for at any moment they could decide to join the rest of the animals.

We closed in enough to give me a shot with the express sights of the Rigby. One bull was facing us, the other



The area has undergone a remarkable transformation.

faced away. “Take the one facing us,” Gareth instructed. I steadied myself, trying to drown out the thudding of my heart, trying to still the shaking of my hands. I was attempting this 100-yard shot with open sights – a very different business to optics. Breathing deeply a few times and gently squeezing did the trick and the boom of the rifle took me by surprise.

I worked the bolt and reloaded. The two bulls moved off, not fast, but enough to make it a bit trickier. My bull was in the lead, quartering away. My training with The Doctor took over and Gareth told me to take him again. I fired for a second time, putting another fatal shot with a solid through the length of the bull from haunch through to front

left scapular.

The two bulls moved forward again, slower this time. After 50 or so yards, they stopped under the shade of a tree. My bull dropped to the ground, the other one milling around restlessly not giving me a chance to put in an insurance shot. We also didn’t want to get any closer – not only could this situation fast become dangerous as we had a wounded and a very alive bull obviously agitated by the previous two minutes of battle, but we could provoke a charge.

We waited, hoping to hear that death bellow and hoping that the other bull would move off. The second bull still stood over the wounded bull, we could do nothing but bide our time. “Now,” Gareth said, as the other bull moved

away slightly. I fired one more shot.

That did it, and after a few minutes Gareth decided we could move the other bull on safely. We approached slowly, and with a few shouts and whoops the other bull trotted off.

The buffalo lay dead conveniently for the skinners and trackers in the shadow of a tree. Views of Mount Elgon to one side and Mount Kadam behind reminded me of Karamojo Bell and his tales of hunting on these very grounds. As a hunter, every animal I pursue is a privilege, but to do so on these hallowed grounds was something that I had long dreamed of and I hope remains possible for generations to come. To visit: ugandaprohunts.com (Story & Photographs : Simon K. Barr)

The Nile Buffalo

Distinguished from its close relative, the Cape buffalo, by the fact that its horns rarely reach below its jaw and that the horns are more commonly separated at the base. No less dangerous, the Nile buffalo (*Syncerus caffer aequinoctialis*) is slightly lighter in colour and weight than the Cape buffalo. Distributed across Uganda, Ethiopia, Eastern Chad, South Sudan, Somalia and Cameroon, Nile buffalo tend to move out of the dense jungle to the savanna regions when the rains come (March to November). Females first calve at four or five years old and then usually once every two years. Herds commonly consist of a few hundred though can congregate in their thousands. While males spend much of their time in bachelor groups, old bulls often prefer to be on their own.

Kit Box

Rigby Big Game ‘Vintage Edition’ Rifle in .416 Rigby

Rigby ‘Jungle Jim’ Canvas Courteney Boots

www.johnrigbyandco.com

Hornady DGX 400-grain ammunition

www.hornady.com

Leica Ultravid HD ‘Safari Edition’ 8x42 Binoculars

www.leica-sportoptics.com

ART & ANTIQUES

Make no mistake about it, last year was an exceptional one for Irish art sales and one need look no further than the results achieved by Dublin based WHYTE's to find confirmation of that. And who knows but somewhere during the year we have just started we will again break new records, uncover many valuable 'gems', not only in hidden art treasures but also in the field of ceramics, sculpture or pottery.

Anyway back to WHYTE'S which sold almost £10m euro worth of Irish art in their sales rooms last year. Quite an achievement when you consider that Irish art sales topped 20m euros last year and here was one auction house taking almost half of it. Their most successful sale, however, was the event, organised in association with CHRISTIE'S where works from the Ernie O'Malley Collection grossed €5.5m, the highest result for an art auction in Ireland for thirteen years. The event also helped establish two new



'A passage is required' by Jack B. Yeats' went for €115,000 (Whyte's)

world record prices for Irish artists and as all the lots on offer went to new homes it was really a 'Whyte glove sale'.

The Ernie O'Malley Collection comprising 100 lots, and early sketches by Yeats and work by the artists Mainie Jellett, Evie Hone, Louis le Brocquy, Colin Middleton, Maurice MacGonigal,

May Guinness and Norah McGuinness among others, saw the auction form an anthology of Irish art from the early 1900s to the 1950s.

Ernie O'Malley was a leading revolutionary in Ireland from 1916-22 who went on to publish two books detailing his experiences. The sale and international exhibitions provided an



Jack B. Yeats 'The Quay Worker's Home' sold for €68,000 (Whyte's)

opportunity to discover his private passion for art and the relationships he developed with artists he encountered in America and Ireland.

The highlights were: Jack B. Yeats' painting *Reverie*, €1.4 million, a new world record for the artist; Jack B. Yeats *Evening in Spring*, €1.3 million; Jack B. Yeats *The Enfolding Night*, €520,000; Jack B. Yeats *Death For The Only One*, €470,000; Jack B. Yeats *The Fighting Dawn*, €320,000; Jack B. Yeats sketchbook broken into 33 single lots, sold from €700 to €14,000 each, totalling nearly €78,000.

Other notable prices were achieved for: Mainie Jellett's *The Land Éire* at €140,000, a new world record for the artist; Colin Middleton, *Saint John Retrospect* €45,000; Louis le Brocqy, *Tinker Diviner*, €36,000.

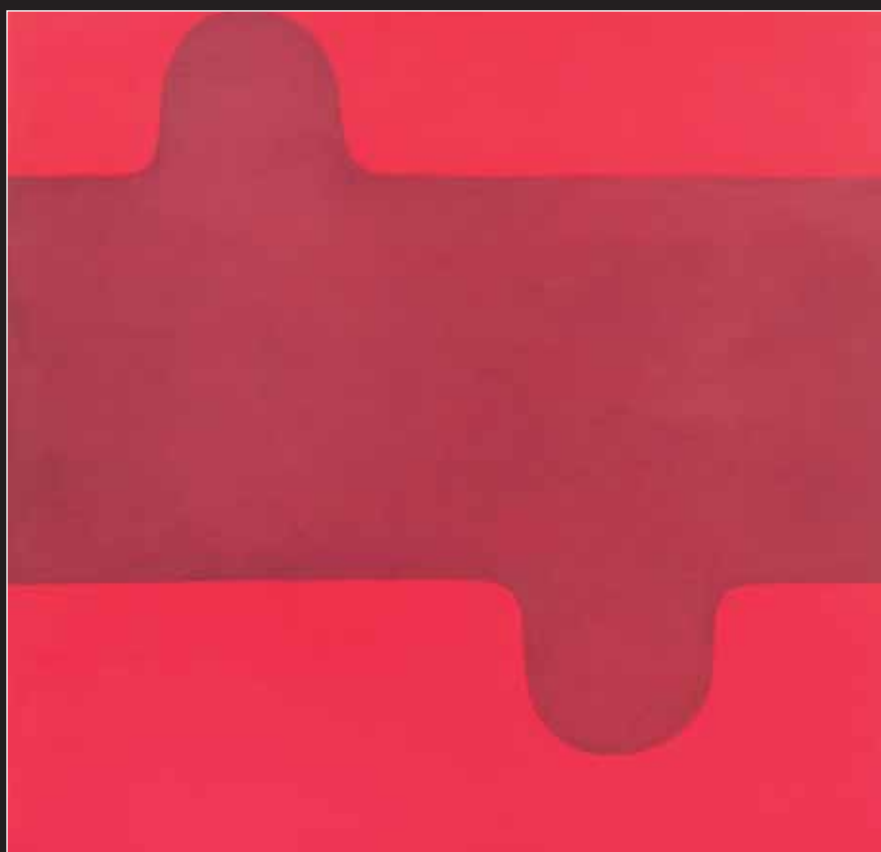
Prices were astonishing

Some astonishing prices were paid earlier in the year for extraordinary examples by Ireland's most sought after artists with €210,000 paid for a sizeable (31½ by 31½in) oil painting by Louis le Brocqy of Samuel Beckett dating to 1980 on 16 September (lot 65). This was €10,000 more than was paid for an even larger oil (46 by 35in.) of the same subject a year earlier.

Whyte's spring auction on 4 March 2019 saw competitive bidding on oils by Jack Yeats with €150,000 paid for *Justice*, 1946 (lot 22) and €115,000 for *A Passage is Required*, 1953. The former came from a private collection of an estate in Canada, was fresh to the market and reached the upper estimate. The latter had failed to sell in a London house when offered in 2000 and sold with Whyte's at €15,000 above the low estimate. In the same March sale €66,000 was achieved for *A Kerry Bog*, 1934-1935 by Paul Henry and €54,000 for James Humbert Craig's oil painting for his most famous poster *Flax Growing, Northern Ireland*, 1927 commissioned by the Empire Marketing Board and the Ulster Ministry of Commerce.

The summer sale on 27 May 2019 continued the trend for aggressive bidding on the top names with €100,000 crossing hands for another Paul Henry masterpiece – also painted in the mid to late nineteen thirties - *Western Landscape*, c.1935-40 (lot 16). Further works by Sir John Lavery (*Mary in Black*, c.1904, lot 26) and – again – Jack Butler Yeats a modest 9 by 14in oil with an extensive exhibition history (*The Quay*

Worker's Home, 1927) commanded €75,000 and €68,000 respectively. Meanwhile, the hammer fell at mid-range estimate on a desirable still life - *Flowers In A Vase*, *Still Life*, lot 35a by William John Leech



€150,000 for a William Scott oil on canvas (Adams)

(Below) William Ballagh's portrait of J.P. Donleavy went for €30,000 (Adams)



– at €60,000. This work had been bought by Whyte’s client in London in May 2002 (during the boom) for £35,000 GBP.

According to Whyte’s it was a year in which Irish Female artists enjoyed particular success and were championed by aggressive bidders in the salerooms. In addition to the world record price paid for the Mainie Jellett from the O’Malley sale already mentioned, some encouraging spikes could be seen for other artists earlier in the year. May Guinness’ Woman with Red Hair (16/09/19, lot 48) soared above the pre-sale guide of €6,000-€8,000 with a staggering hammer price of €34,000 paid, another auction record for that artist. On the back of a record price in 2018 for her Self Portrait, c.1914 (Whyte’s, 26/11/2018, lot 22)

Margaret Clarke (née Crilley, wife of stained-glass artist Harry Clarke) achieved her second highest result at auction with the Double Portrait of Two Girls (4/03/19, lot 13, hammer €24,000). A beautiful work in marble, Head, 1969, by Gerda Frömel fetched €9,000 (25/11/19, lot 68) just shy of a new auction record for her work.

A steady increase in results for works on paper by Mary Swanzy was also notice during the year with studies, guided from €600 fetching at least €1,000 and frequently more. The increase in awareness and interest in acquiring works by Irish female artists could perhaps be attributed to the thoughtful programming by IMMA and the National Gallery among others.

Spring sale brings € half million

Whyte’s annual “Eclectic Collector” sale in the spring brought in about €500,000. The sale included an original final Draft of the Belfast (Good Friday) Agreement signed by most of the leading participants, which made €28,000. A rifle used in the 1916 Rising made €10,500 and a 1980s Rocket launcher of a type used in The Troubles sold for €10,000 to a Belfast museum and attracted some controversy. A 1943

Central Bank Irish twenty pounds note sold for €10,500 while a rare 1985 twenty pence coin made €5,400.

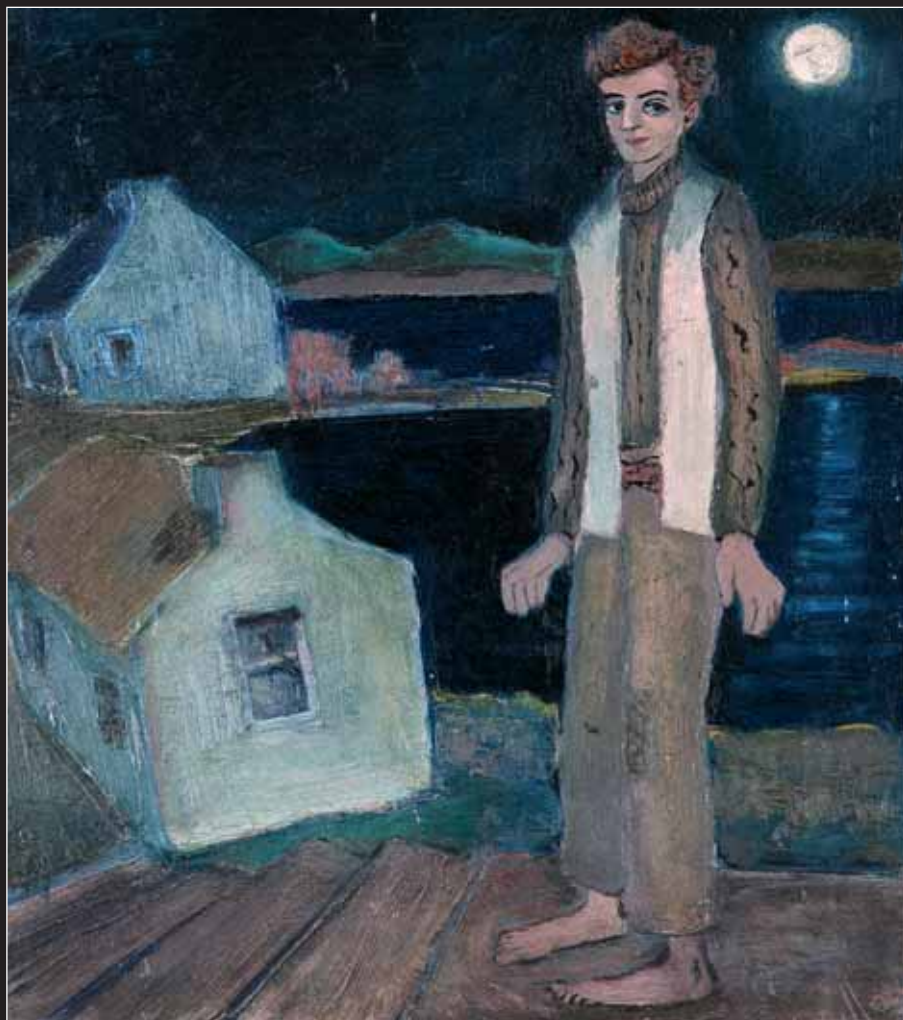
Of course the most unusual sale of the year had to be Whyte’s dispersal of Seamus Kearns’s Picture Postcard Collection in January. With over 100,000 cards, mainly dating from circa 1900 to circa 1950, the collection was expected to gross around €60,000 to €80,00, but it made around €150,000 including buyer’s premium. Every lot sold, making it another “white glove” sale. What a year!

Dublin based Adams’ Irish art sales were rounded off with a magnificent €150,000 price for a William Scott oil on canvas followed by Paul Henry’s ‘Cottages by a lake’ an oil at €90,000 and another fine Henry, ‘Cottages by Water’ at €70,000. A William Ballagh portrait of JP Donleavy, an oil on canvas went at €30,000, while a Gerard Dillon oil, ‘Moonstruck youth’ made €28,000 and a Basil Blackshaw oil, ‘Horses Exercising’ realised €22,000.

In their ‘At Home’ sale, ADAMS sold a portrait attributed to Francis Bindon at €7,700, a fine pair of flat cut urns and covers, Waterford at €6,000 and a French gilt-wood and marble topped console table, 19th century, at €5,000.

Books continue to draw attention and strong prices and a signed first edition of ULYSSES made €85,000 for Fonsie Mealy, who also sold a first, unsigned edition of Ulysses for €12,000. A very rare signed edition of Toome by Seamus Heaney, limited to 15 copies made €11,000. Yes, there is still treasure and value to be found on someone’s bookshelf.

This Gerard Dillon oil, ‘Moonstruck youth’ made €28,000 (Adams)



Country Life and Air Rifles

Most of today's shooting folk probably grew up with air rifles. As a youngster at school, practically every boy in my class owned one. Air guns - rifles or pistols - could be bought in sweet shops, hardware stores or gun shops. Firearms certificates were unheard of until 1964. The most common brands around were Diana and Gecado, mainly in .177calibre. We called them simply "pellet guns".

The cheapest form of pellet available was a hollow cone-shaped shell universally referred to as slugs. Heavier skirted Diabolo pellets that are common today were expensive and beyond most schoolboys' meagre funds. Back then we wouldn't have known that air guns had existed since the 1500s when they were first used for military and hunting purposes.

The late Stephen E. Ambrose, probably best known as author of *Band of Brothers* (which evolved into the acclaimed TV series) describes a .46 calibre air rifle capable of firing 22 shots (balls) per minute in his book *Undaunted Courage* which covers the 1803 Lewis and Clark mission to explore and open up America's wild frontier.

In the early 1900s air rifles were designed and manufactured specifically for young children – years ago I test fired a .177 rifle hand-made in Czechoslovakia in 1933. It was light; with a timber stock not far removed from orange-box material, low powered,



The Norica .22 Air Rifle.

had basic iron sights and functioned perfectly. The spring-powered guns of old have long been superseded by sophisticated models using compressed gas and CO2 cylinders for propulsion. Even more sophisticated versions including competition models are fitted with detachable air cylinders refillable from a master tank. The modern air-gunner is spoilt for choice.

An air rifle is almost a necessity for homes in rural Ireland

Vermin and other pests are endemic and in many instances use of a cartridge firearm is not always feasible or safe. We live in a cereal growing area where the acreage being planted has steadily increased over the years. So too did the necessity for an air rifle. Why? Rats! The rodent population had multiplied dramatically. They became of even higher profile on roads, fields and began regular forays to the wild-bird feeders in our garden. Initially a .22LR rifle with low velocity ammunition played a role in controlling their numbers – that is until the management spotted fresh tiny

holes in the bird house! The .22 had to be retired; by the way, its use was absolutely legal with a safe backstop, proper distance from a public road, no immediate neighbours etc. Poison was not an option given the amount of wild species that frequent the garden, hence the need to acquire an air rifle - something I had not owned since childhood.

Following the usual research a Spanish-made Norica Spider GRS model in .22 calibre powered by a Gas RAM system ticked all the boxes. In time a firearm's certificate was secured, pellets bought and the rifle correctly zeroed for an assault on the rodent population. Currently I shoot them whenever they appear near bird feeders or anywhere else around the property.

This rifle is far removed from the spring cocking models of yesteryear. It's cocked similarly with gas being compressed in a sealed cylinder instead of the traditional spring, comes with synthetic stock, fibre-optic sights and can easily be fitted with a 'scope. The safety catch is within the trigger guard, as is the rifle's only drawback – an



0.22 pellets used in the air rifle.

Swinging Bird target along with golf balls used for target practice.





The rifle can be used for culling Mink.

extremely heavy trigger-pull that cannot be adjusted. However the gun proved ideally suitable for the purpose for which it was required. Manufacturers don't state pellets' weight on the tin and weighing a handful was necessary to ascertain an overall average weight of 14.5 grains. A muzzle velocity check using .22 Diabolo pellets recorded 1065 feet per second when tested over a chronograph. That's just a few FPS short of the speed of sound although such a light projectile wouldn't have the ballistic properties of a sub-sonic 40 grain .22bullet. However it performs more than adequately on garden vermin.

The air rifle produced quick one-shot kills with the aforementioned pellets. It's quite suitable to use around the place despite its trigger-pull - the sight's zero can instantly be checked with a few shots from 25 metres at a metal target permanently in situ; the swinging bird or even a few old golf balls! Unfortunately too many rodents are still around - at harvest time they become extraordinarily cheeky showing little fear of humans, as in not moving away when people approach.

Close contact is not a good idea given that they may carry Weil's disease. Despite the toll taken there's still little apparent decrease in sightings. Apparently a "rat warning" is on the cards for the coming months due to

several wet winters. The earth they normally burrow into when producing young has become water-logged so they'll be on the lookout for alternative places to breed - barns, outhouses, garages, attics, etc.

The garden sees visits now from many other species

Apart from songbirds, the garden can be home or hunting ground for numerous other wild species. Feral cats patrol the place on and off; a cock pheasant struts around on most spring and summer days, loudly objecting if a motor mower starts up. Grey Herons nest annually around a nearby pond where there's an abundance of feeding. They can be seen frequently, gliding with wings spread in flaps-down mode along their flight path above the garden to a heronry in the marsh. Fascinating! Some years ago a small number of mink were to be found in that marshy area and they have since been successfully dealt with. Sparrow hawks occasionally indulge in diving sorties around the bird-feeders seeking easy meals. Pigeons live in trees far from the house while the inevitable magpies make a nuisance of themselves in spring when they seek out nests to raid and eggs to steal.

The temptation is to interfere where magpies are concerned, but nature has to take its course and all wild birds in Ireland are protected by the Wildlife Act. A permit can be obtained by game clubs and farmers for control purposes - hardly applicable in this instance. Then there's the little matter of it being illegal to shoot any bird in Ireland with a rifle! In recent years grey squirrels also became an unwelcome presence and were shot on sight. To date they are still in the general area to a lesser degree. The native red squirrel is definitely making a comeback. It's likely that the Wildlife people's bounty on greys has had some success.

Last spring saw extraordinary new visitors arriving - a pair of Woodpeckers taking up residence nearby, hammering out their nest in the tree furthest from the house! Using the bird feeders (peanuts) they fed 5 chicks between late June and August literally within a few metres of a window. It was an absolute privilege to witness, especially as this was the first time we had ever actually seen a Woodpecker.

Photography was quite difficult because any movement whatever spooked them. Birdwatch Ireland was informed and it now has another confirmed Woodpecker nest added to the list - these birds are making a modest, steady comeback in Ireland. By August's end with the young fully fledged, all departed apparently including the adult male and female. In late October as this column is being written, the adults have reappeared, taking up residence in the same tree, knocking away and visiting the feeders - assuming it is the previous pair returning? Woodpeckers don't hibernate, spending autumn and winter gathering food - grubs, nuts etc, so an interesting few months are on the way. As always the air rifle will be on standby for pest control!

Two of the Woodpeckers, female and chick, on the bird-house.



Paul Pringle says:

'Let's Hear It' for Insta-Mold NI

At shoots, chatting with the other Guns was really hit and miss, a bit like my shooting perhaps! I could only really talk to the person next to me at lunch and being part of a group conversation was all but impossible.

Any shooters out there recognise this situation? A bit of hearing loss brought about by years of shooting with muzzle blasts being the culprit. My ear next to the blast of the gun barrels was the worst affected. But I was very determined not to let the situation get worse and four years ago, I was fitted for in-ear hearing protection by David Gamble of Insta-Mold. It worked very well indeed but how much better it would have been if I had hearing protection fitted earlier! But better late than never.

Chatting to David, he told me that people are beginning to recognise the need to protect their hearing in today's noisy world - farmers, engineers, people in construction, factories and more, not just shooters. With over 6 years of professional experience David can tailor his products to any particular needs a client might have. He added: "we even get customers who are at their wits end with their partner's snoring and can provide sleep plugs to help."

David Gamble said: "Hearing loss is often gradual, and at Insta-Mold NI we aim to remove the risk of hearing damage which can have a detrimental effect on a person's family and social life.

"Our staff at Insta-Mold NI are fully trained and certified by the British Society of Audiology in Otoscopy and Impression taking. This professional training is vital, as taking an in-ear impression which matches exactly someone's specific inner ear is an extremely delicate and precise process.

"We offer two main products: Insta-Mold protectors, made of medical grade floatable silicone, Full Shell or discrete Completely In-Canal Moulds, both can be fitted with filters to allow the wearer to maintain ambient awareness. These are available in a range of styles and colours, which can be tailored to the wearer's personality and needs.

David added: "CENS Proflex digital feature state-of-the-art digital technology with a push button volume control and much more. Alternatively, ProFlex Passive Earplugs combine the ProFlex multi-softness earpiece with a filtered passive module. A real price incentive is the fact that these



David Gamble, Insta-Mold NI

earplugs can be upgraded by adding the electronic modules at a later date. It's designed to be flexible to suit individual needs."

As a shooter I can vouch personally for David Gamble's hearing protection. It works and works very well. Four years ago, I used Insta-Mold passive hearing protectors and they were comfortable and effective. Last year, I decided to try Cens active protection and can honestly say it's a revelation. So comfortable I hardly know I'm wearing them. Turning up the volume is simply amazing. I can hear all the sounds of the shoot easily and yet none of the dangerous loud bangs. If my hearing aids are in the car, I keep the Cens in to help me hear the craic at lunchtime - for me they really

are that good! So why not give David a call - I'm certainly glad that I did!

For more information contact David Gamble at:
info@instamold-ni.co.uk or +44(0)7720890010

InstaMold_{NI}
CUSTOM MADE HEARING PROTECTION

Are you Wearing Protection?

... Because Every Ear is Different



Tel: 07720 890010
www.instamold-ni.co.uk
info@instamold-ni.co.uk

By Simon Everett

In Search of Wild Lakeland Trout



The Author in the Lake District.

There is nothing like getting away from it all, right out into the back of beyond and catching truly wild brown trout that haven't changed genetically since the last ice age. I love going on my little motorbike, which can get me down lanes, or up tracks where it is impossible to park a car. A small motorbike can be squeezed out of the way in a space the size of a sheep. The Lake District in Cumbria has some wonderful fishing in spectacular scenery for indigenous brown trout that are some of the most colourful found anywhere.

Violent geological events created these rugged, majestic mountains, which were then worked by the massive ice sheets of the glaciers formed during the last ice age to leave behind what we know as the waters and tarns of the Lake District. Quite apart from the touristy lakes, there are scores of others, less well known, less visited because they require effort to access yet hold some remarkable, jewel like gems of trout.

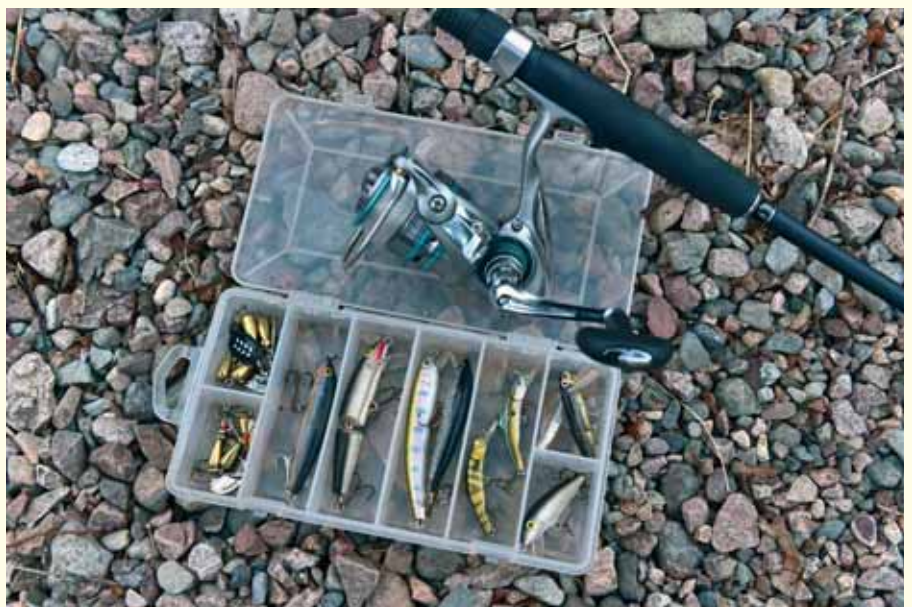
I took a trip up to Wast Water where

there is a fabulous Youth Hostel Association hostel right on the water's edge. The trout that inhabit these very sparse, nutrient starved waters have to be tough to survive and they are constantly hungry as a result. Wast Water is the deepest lake in England, plunging to a depth of 300 feet within a few yards of the shoreline in places. Consequently the trout are very

localised and they take a lot of searching for. Any trout caught in this 4 mile long lake is hard won, and so much more worthy as a result.

Wind direction is critical to success

The mouths of the becks, where they run down from the mountain and empty the runoff into this vast collection tank,



Travel light and stay mobile.



Playing a Lakeland brown trout.

are worth some time, as are any of the more boulder strewn shores near areas of interesting vegetation. This is where the trout will find windborne terrestrials, blown onto the water and providing much needed protein. As a result, the wind direction is critical to success, so often the wind is blowing directly up the lake and offers no clues whatsoever. Catching trout in these conditions requires legwork, and plenty of it. Unlike the better fed lakes, it wouldn't be unusual to cover a mile of shoreline without any sign of a fish. As a result, catching one makes it all that much more worthwhile.

I had perfect conditions forecast for my 150 mile ride up to the Lakes and I booked my bed and set off before dawn so as to be on the shoreline around the time most sane people would be having their breakfast. My route required navigating the tortuous routes through the mountain passes of Wrynose and Hardknott, then through Eskdale and on up to the head of Wast Water and the

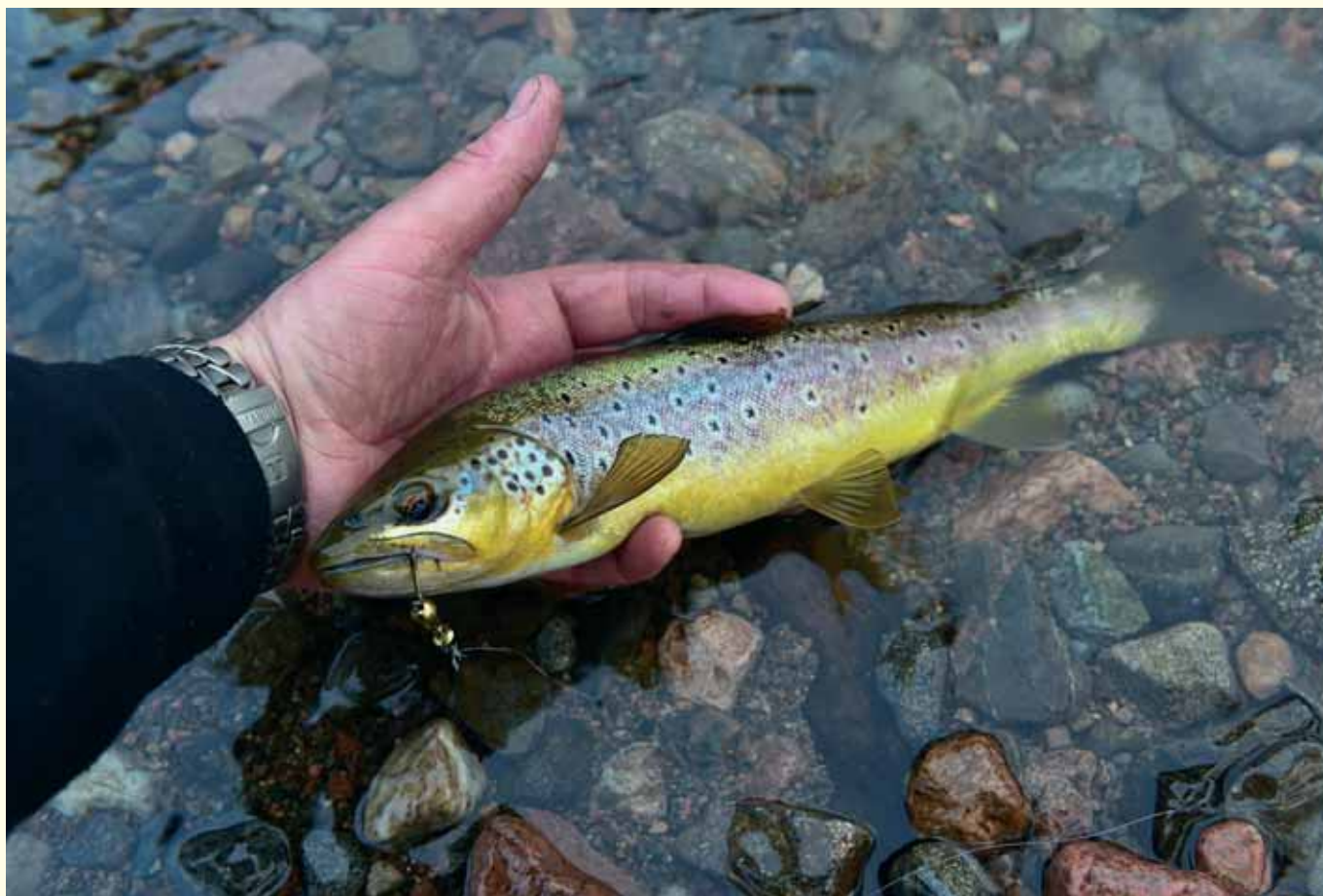
pub. Just the ride up through this stunning scenery is worth the trip, let alone the fishing at the end of it.

The middle of the day doesn't offer much hope and your most realistic chance of a trout in these poor, rocky waters is at either end of the day. This makes a trip for a Lakeland trout an

ideal getaway for the whole family. Spend the day doing some sightseeing and exploring, sample the local ales and reserve a couple of hours at each end of the day to have a go for the trout. Because I set off early my ride through the passes was a very lonely affair, hardly a soul was out yet. There was



My first brownie of the trip comes in.



A second brown trout for Simon, with colours the equal of the first.

snow on the tops but as the sun rose the temperature began to rise and it was melting away by midday. I had plenty of time to do some reconnaissance and make a plan for the latter end of the day, when I would make a major attempt to catch my trout.

Simple fishing with inexpensive tackle is effective and enjoyable!

You don't need anything special for this type of fishing. Certainly the fly fishing purists will turn up their noses, but I use whatever tactic I need in the circumstances. On my bike I take a lightweight HTO spinning, or lure, rod matched to a Daiwa Procast 2500 size spinning reel loaded with 6lb monofilament line and a 6g Abu Droppen spinner tied directly to the end. I had a selection of trout sized lures but the Droppen gave me the greatest casting range and most options. This is simple fishing with inexpensive tackle, but it is effective and more importantly, enjoyable!

I kept low because the water is so

unbelievably clear that the trout can see any movement at huge range. Stay off the skyline, keep something solid behind you and keep a low profile to maximise your chances. If you present an upright silhouette, don't be surprised if the trout stay out of range. Likewise, noise is a factor I like to avoid. The less indication of my presence the better, just the tiny 'plop' as the spinner lands is all I want the trout to know of me being there. If you are lucky you will see fish moving, which solves the problem of locating them, otherwise you just have to prospect by fan casting and covering the water. Every 8 or 10 casts, move 10 yards and cast again. Brown trout are fairly territorial, so if you don't get a reaction after covering the water, move and try again.

The sun was just dipping behind the hill when I felt something bump my lure on the retrieve. There was a light breeze aiding my casting, so I cast again in the same direction, but this time I managed an extra 5 yards and gave the lure a count of five before starting the retrieve. After a few turns the trout hit hard, the

rod slammed round and the reel slipped a little line with the ferocity of the take. I kept pressure on and wound gently to maintain contact while the trout bore deep. These wild, Lakeland trout fight well above their weight. After a minute or so the most glorious coloured trout was sliding through the water at my feet. Turquoise tinged flanks gleamed and contrasted against the golden yellow head and belly, it has to be the prettiest trout I have ever caught and not a bad size either, about 12 or 14 inches long.

After a quick picture I shook the hook out and the magnificent fish shot off, back to the deeper water. I took a moment to reflect upon the capture and the whole of the day. Minutes later I had a repeat, with a second trout that matched the first for colouration, but with a bigger head, came to hand. I couldn't believe my luck or the sheer beauty of these fish, which was apt for the surroundings in which they live. I don't think I have had a more enjoyable fishing trip for several years. The memories of this visit will take some erasing.

A Winter's Project

It all started back in the early 80s, when a friend of mine invited me for a weekend of may fly fishing on Lough Arrow. His father you see had a caravan along the shore of the lough in Co. Roscommon beside twenty other caravans of all shapes and sizes.

These were parked along the road side in front of the late Tommy Flynn's house that overlooked the Lough. Tommy Flynn was born and reared on Lough Arrow. From an early age Tommy fished the lough, he knew it inside out and gillied for the well to do in his early years.

Back then there were no engines on the boats, so Tommy would tell us how he rowed from one end of the lough to the other, over early mornings and late nights, because for his wealthy clients a day's fishing meant a full day's fishing. There would be a break and then if the evening was suitable for gnat fishing, he would be back out and all for a half a crown.

In later years, Tommy would hire boats out and I still remember the first time I saw a double ended boat on the lough. I had asked him why the boats were built the way they were, he said that when he was out on the lake he needed a boat that was light and easy to row, sat low in the water and drifted slow. This way if a trout rose at either end of the boat, especially in a flat calm, he could push it back or row it forward and never had to turn the boat around, which made less disturbance and with less chance of putting the trout down.

Tommy had seven or eight of these boats built by local boat builder Tommy Conlon but as time moved on, outboard motors were increasing in popularity and fibre glass boats had started to make an appearance so most of Tommy's boats lay in the grass until sadly they just rotted away.

At the time, the potential of these doubled bowed boats was not really thought about, as anglers wanted bigger

and broader boats with higher freeboard big engines. Then the electric motors became the norm and with no need to row any more, the skills of old boatmen of yesteryear sadly started disappearing. These were men who knew how to handle a boat in a big wave.

When the outboard engine took over, you could drive around the best drifts in one day; all you needed was a bit of cloud cover, a good wave, three good flies and some free rising trout. Life was great, the world became a small place and every lough in Ireland became accessible.

Over the years I still yearned for a double bowed boat. Twenty years later while gnat fishing one evening on my local Lough Erne, the weather for most of the Mayfly had been very bright

and warm with little wind thus leaving it difficult to get near the trout as they became continuously more boat shy. No matter how carefully you tried to slip in on them just using the oars, they stayed out of range until the light was well gone and then they dropped their guard. You still might have got a few trout but the bigger fish stayed clear. Even kneeling down in the 19ft boat to keep a low profile made no difference.

The project begins

How do you build a wooden boat? For starters set up a strong back, just a length of 6 x3 plank on its edge, next the keel is the main backbone of the boat that sits on top of the 6 x3 and held in place with wedges from the sides of the strong back supported by stands about 20 inches of the floor, then fix the stem post and the transom to the keel.

Now I'm not a professional boat builder, so I'm not going to try and tell



The project starts to take shape.

you how to build a boat in detail, far from it. If you have a mad notion like myself to build a boat a good book to get is John Leather clinker boat building or go to YouTube and look at Marcus Lewis Boat builder then you can pull your hair out for the next couple of months trying to figure it all out.

I was talking to a boat builder from Cavan who said there's only one way to learn and that's to build one and he's right. I worked most evenings from six to 10 and any other day I could get, it gets a hold on you when you see it starting to take shape. But after a while you soon get the hang of it. Because the planks have to be cut in pairs so the sides come up the same, you mark the planks cut them plane the half laps front and back, drill the nail holes and nail the planks. This repeats itself until all the planks are fitted, then the ribs are steamed nailed in place. Gunwhales next then the seats or thwarts.



Just one of the fish which have come aboard.

The winter just flew and I have the boat that I wanted, the way I wanted it. It's a one man boat, you could fish two out of no bother, but I have it set up that there is no seat between the engine and the middle seat, so I can move freely from the engine without having to step over another seat to get to where I'll be fishing from.

I placed the seat dead centre in the boat at the point of balance, so I can trim the boat when I pack the gear for a day's fishing. In the days before engines, the old gillies would trim the boat when the two guests were seated one in front and one at the back, by placing flat rocks in the front or back to level it. The gillie would be seated in the middle and the boat was easily rowed and drifted straight down the drift and not crab to the transom. When they were out all day rowing in the wind they needed all the help they could get and a boat not trimmed was a total nightmare to handle.

I put a coat of Epoxy on the inside

and several coats of impregnation oil on the outside this is what the manufactures recommended and it means at the end of the year you don't have to sand it down. It doesn't peel or blister and another couple of coats and the boat is ready for the next season. I think the beauty of wooden boats with all

the copper nails and different woods is lost when they get painted. With modern day wood preservative and impregnation oils they don't need stripped any more.

This type of boat won't suit everyone

Of all the wooden boats that I repaired over the years, seldom would you see a seat rot in the middle, they all rotted at the sides where the end of the seat and the knees met the planks, at the sides water got trapped. I drill 2 holes at the end of the plank between the knees and any water can get away and it dries out. This type of boat won't suit everyone as no two people are built the same, or fish the same way. You can still pull wet flies in a good wave and the boat handles well, and with my 8hp 2stroke yam it flies over the waves. It's surprising how close the trout come to the side of the boat to take the top dropper fishing traditional short line

wets, but where the boat really comes into its own is light winds and flat calm conditions.

I know a lot of anglers use electric motors now and don't use oars and I can't blame them because most oars are heavy as they are made to suit all boats yet don't suit many. An oar has to be balanced and made to suit your boat, sit with the blade half in the water, and stay in place. When you reach around for the oar when drifting it should be at the same level as your hand, the thickest part of the oar, the loom, should be from the oarlock or thole pin and stop just before the hand grip. The hand grip should have a slight taper to the palm of your hand to stop blisters. You shouldn't have to push down on an oar to lift it out of the water to start the stroke, you should hardly feel the oar in your hand if it's balanced properly and made to suit your boat. A round oar in a rowlock is the worst as it rolls around and slides up the oar lock. The ones with the thole pins not much better.

I made a set of oars for my wooden boat using a simple setup, a pin through the broad part of the oar is a permanent fixture, when rowing there's no movement or rattling about and the oar sits at hand level. The feedback I got from customers I made sets for said they were a great job. Everything I need for a day's fishing is stored in a compartment I make at the front of the boat. I can't stand a load of gear laying around a boat, so I keep everything as simple as I possibly can.



The finished article.

LEATHER AND COUNTRY CASUALS

Top Quality and Value at McBride's, the Leather Specialists



Ladies and Gents Leather Full Length Coates, Jackets, Trousers, Skirts and Sheepskin Jackets - great range of colours, styles and sizes.

Outdoor Wear by Toggi, Sherwood Forest, Jack Murphy, Target Dry 3/4 Length and Full Length Raincoates, Hoggs of Fife, Joe Browns, and Pia Rossini

Leather Handbags, Hats, Sheepskin Rugs, Ladies and Gents Fashions & Casual Wear

McBride Fashions

LEATHER & OUTDOOR WEAR SPECIALISTS

Temple Shopping Centre, 88 Carryduff Road, Temple

Tel: 028 9263 8767 | www.mcbridefashions.com

Open: Monday - Saturday 9.30am - 5.30pm



LGM

Kubota **Professional** **TORO**

5A Island Road Lower, Ballycarry
Carrickfergus, Co Antrim, BT38 9HB
Email: sales@lairdgrassmachinery.co.uk
Website: www.lairdgrassmachinery.co.uk
Tel. 02893 382982

PACDOG

Dog Control Experts

Dog Training Systems Pet Fence Anti Bark Collars

ecma
EUROPEAN CONSUMER MARKETING ASSOCIATION

Low Call: 1890 361361
Tel: 059 97 24690
www.pacdog.ie

PAC
Dog Control System Experts

Connect with us:

pacdogcollars

KELMARSKY GUNDOGS

AT STUD

International Field Trial Winner

KELMARSKY CROW

**BIG Strong
Hard Going
YOUNG Dog.
Producing
large litters.**

Hips 3/4, Elbows
0, EYES CLEAR,
PRA CLEAR,
CNM CLEAR,
SD2 CLEAR,
EIC CLEAR.
CARRIES YELLOW.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT SEAN KEARNEY
Tel" 00447711 626355. Email: seakearney@gmail.com

Plastic fantastic?



This plastic netting could have been in the sea for decades.

If you want to get funny looks, try saying 'plastic fantastic' to a school class, especially when you are giving a talk on the marine environment. You would think that I had suddenly grown two heads and thought I must be mad to think plastic is great. I should explain. I was actually showing them a plate of baleen at the time and explaining that it was the plastic of its time as it could be moulded into many different things, but as it's made of the same stuff as your fingernails it rots away, unlike plastic.

Plastic is great, it's the most widely used material in the world. Just look around you if you disagree. These days a lot of clothes are made from some sort of plastic. Your fleece could have existed in a previous life as many drinks bottles. The problems with plastics are that when they have ended their life as a yogurt pot, crisp packet, or shotgun cartridge they don't just rot away in a few weeks or months.

The problem is that we don't know how to dispose of these used things yet. Only certain plastics can be recycled at

the moment and there are many different types in use. Only about 30% of plastics can be recycled and even of these, less than 10% is. Most is sent to landfill where it will remain for perhaps hundreds of years. Even some of the plastics that we collect and put in the recycling bin can end up in landfill as many types require specialised centres to make recycling feasible. If a recycling facility is not available the plastics are simply shipped off possibly to some third world country (out of sight out of mind) or to a recycling plant in another country.

Internationally this has caused great problems. China used to take a lot of the western world's used plastics but stopped recently. Now, many third world countries are being inundated with plastic waste. Some, such as Indonesia are experiencing great problems when these plastics are illegally burned. Burning plastics releases many toxic compounds such as PCBs, dioxins and many other nasty things which can cause long-term damage to the environment and public health.

In the oceans plastics are everywhere, even in the depths of the Marianas trench. There are two main sources of plastic waste in the sea. The raw material of products which are shipped all around the world as 'nurdles' small plastic pellets and used plastics, either dumped or lost at sea. Studies have stated that land based plastics discharged from rivers or wastewater comprise the majority of marine plastic.

Many people think that dumped fishing gear is the biggest source, but no fisherman dumps gear into the sea. They may be the largest, most obvious pieces found washed up. A trawl net costs a lot of money and losing one is a disaster. If the bottom of the net is torn on a snag the catch is lost and the fuel used to catch it is wasted also. All efforts are made to recover the net, even part of it. Because trawl nets are made up of panels of netting, these can be replaced or repaired. Ropes and pots are the same, no fisherman wants to lose gear.

I was recently in the bridge house of a modern trawler and could see the large chart plotters and also the monitors

showing 3D images of the seabed. These are used to locate fish but also to avoid snags which may catch nets. In the past nets and parts of nets were lost at sea. These are still out there unfortunately but recent incentives, such as the fishing for litter' campaign, mean that the facilities will be in place for any plastics caught in nets while fishing. The industry realises the importance of bringing this litter in and are doing their bit. But it then has to be dismantled and sorted. We need to get it out of the sea where it will erode and breakdown into micro-plastics, which fish and filter feeders such as clams and oysters ingest

Plastics risk in food

I chair the Marine Plastics Focus Group of the North Western Waters Advisory Council (NWWAC) and must stress that I am expressing my own views in this article, and the NWWAC website has its comments on this issue. The science on micro-plastics is unclear and more studies need to be carried out, but understand that once shellfish have undergone depuration (a legal requirement for sale) and fish are gutted, the most of the micro-plastics in them are removed. This was taken further by a professor from the University of West Scotland who found that little is known about the direct effect of micro-plastics on human health....available information does not provide sufficient information to characterise potential toxicity in



All sorts of plastic rubbish is commonplace on beaches.

humans. Basically, all the speakers agreed that not enough is known yet to say that micro-plastics are harmful and more robust science needs to be done on this subject. I did worry about eating mussels until I learned that while cooking and eating them you possibly inhale more macro-plastics than are in the mussels and we do know that micro-plastics pass through you. I'm not saying that there is no risk, but we do not know enough about them yet.

Angling line can cause problems too and there are a number of line recycling initiatives ongoing but I suggest any angler with an ounce of sense will roll

up any excess or tangled line and cut it before disposing of it properly in a bin. I was horrified to find a Black Guillemot hanging by its feet from a local pier entangled in monofilament line chucked off the pier by a thoughtless angler. I had a group of schoolchildren with me on a wildlife walk at the time and we were able to watch the bird fly off once we freed it. Be aware of waste.

Monofilament is possibly the cheapest form of netting, is almost invisible in seawater and is the cause of a much dangerous waste which entangles marine mammals, fish and turtles. It is used extensively in gill nets and drift nets. Not just marine mammals but crabs and any seabed scavengers are at risk. Marine animals must take whatever food they can as it is scarce at sea and is particularly true for pelagic seabirds. Nurdles are plastic beads about the size of a grape seed which float on the surface once spilled at sea and seabirds mistake them for food items. They may pass through or become lodged in the bird's stomach or gizzard where they take the place of food. Having no nutritional value the bird thinks it's full so does not eat, and dies of starvation. Vast amounts of these nurdles are lost at sea each year and



These items could be easily ingested.

most beaches have some washed up.

So what can we do about Marine Plastics? Is it possible to make more fishing gear out of recyclable plastic? But what happens to it then? More work needed. Being careful with waste is very important and something we can all do. Clean Coasts have a great campaign called 'Think before you flush' as a great deal of plastic goes down the toilet every day. It should go in the bin. Our beaches are covered with wet wipes, cotton bud sticks and sanitary products that have been through wastewater treatment plants. When a dead whale turns up and the autopsy reveals that its stomach was full of plastic there is great deal of short-lived concern. Balloons and plastic bags resemble jellyfish in the sea and do kill whales and turtles on a regular basis.

We can all make a difference. Only the 'three Ps' in the toilet please, Pee, Poo and Paper and nothing else. In parts of Scandinavia over seventy percent of drinks bottles are recycled. A bottle deposit return scheme works well to encourage people to not consider plastic



Tangled plastic is a real danger.

bottles as waste. Another option is to reuse the energy in plastics by burning them and they can be safely incinerated to use the heat to produce electricity if the correct scrubbers are in place to remove the harmful emissions. This technology does exist at the moment. But this must be properly monitored and enforced. Plastic is great but it does not just go away. Even biodegradable plastics need the correct conditions to degrade, but they usually end up with the general waste and go to landfill.

Even bioplastics have this trouble.

A number of initiatives exist to gather used plastics such as plastic wrap from silage bales, then make plastic "boards" or fake wood from this. Local authorities can then make fencing and picnic tables that require little or no maintenance and last for years. It should be kept in mind that plastics have contributed greatly to modern surgery, when the Americans replaced silk with nylon in the 1940s it signalled the start of the use of synthetic fibers (polymers) in surgeries.

Houwers
TAXIDERM Y

TURNING GREAT MEMORIES INTO EXTRAORDINARY WORKS OF ART

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT US TODAY:

HOUWERS TAXIDERM Y
2 BALLYCROCHAN AVENUE
BANGOR, CO. DOWN, BT19 7LA
TELEPHONE: 028 9145 7944
WEBSITE: WWW.TAXIDERM YNI.COM

YOUR CHOICE FOR:

- AWARD WINNING TAXIDERM Y
- PROFESSIONAL QUALITY AT AFFORDABLE PRICES
- OPEN AND FRIENDLY CUSTOMER SERVICE
- COMMISSIONS AND RESTORATIONS
- QUALITY SPECIMENS FOR SALE
- FULLY D.O.E REGISTERED

WITH RETURN CUSTOMERS FROM ALL OVER THE EU YOU CAN COMMISSION WITH CONFIDENCE. SIMPLY UNMATCHED IN PRICE, QUALITY AND TURNAROUND!



Department of
**Agriculture, Environment
and Rural Affairs**
www.daera-ni.gov.uk



Angling

in Northern
Ireland

Many DAERA
fisheries accessible
to anglers with
disabilities.



What's stopping you?

T: 0300 200 7860 | www.nidirect.gov.uk/angling

Inland Fisheries Ireland looks back on The International Year of the Salmon and places an emphasis on conserving our natural fisheries resource



lascach Intíre Éireann
Inland Fisheries Ireland

Last year was the International Year of the Salmon (IYS), a world-wide initiative of the North Atlantic Salmon Organisation (NASCO) and the North Pacific Anadromous Fish Commission (NPAFC). The initiative hopes to raise awareness around the different challenges facing salmon today with a view to creating a framework for international outreach and research. Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) hosted various events and initiatives during 2019 to promote the message behind IYS and to start a national conversation among anglers and the public around what can be done to support salmon populations

It was launched in December, 2018 by Minister Sean Canney, the

minister with responsibility for inland fisheries who unveiled one of a new fleet of 12 RIBs (Rigid Inflatable Boats). The RIBs are an important part of Inland Fisheries Ireland's fisheries protection particularly during the salmon migration along the coast.

During the International Year of the Salmon Inland Fisheries Ireland promoted sustainable angling by utilising Catch and Release initiatives. The first initiative was the #CPRsavesfish Pins Programme, the design and production of the pins were managed during 2019 and the programme will now commence in 2020. Pins will be sent to all anglers who released salmon during 2019 as indicated in their angler logbook

returns. As pins are available they will continue to be issued in 2020 to any new anglers releasing a salmon. Anglers who participate in the Catch and Release of salmon and who send in their catch details will now receive a merit #CPRsavesfish pin.

On the 6th and 7th of July, 2019 Inland Fisheries Ireland initiated a Catch and Release weekend which took place during the busiest fishing weekend of the year. Anglers who participated in catch and release over the weekend were invited to submit their catch details via an online form to earn a #CPRsavesFish merit pin.

Research initiatives

As part of the International Year of the Salmon, Inland Fisheries Ireland took part in various research initiatives. In February IFI hosted leading salmon scientists from Denmark, Spain, Sweden, UK and Ireland at an important meeting in Dublin. The scientists discussed some of their new findings from the international SMOLTRACK project, the results of which reveal factors in the known decline of salmon stocks. SMOLTRACK is an EU-wide project coordinated by NASCO.

On a localised level Inland Fisheries Ireland launched the National Salmon Scale Project which invited anglers to become citizen



Minister Sean Canney unveils one of the new fishery protection RIBs.



National Salmon Scale Project contributes to international efforts to conserve wild salmon.

scientists and support salmon and sea trout research. The aim of the projects is to collect vital information through scales taken from salmon and sea trout which are caught in Irish rivers and lakes which will contribute to international efforts to conserve wild salmon. The project was extremely successful in 2019 with over 570 scale envelopes received from anglers from 20 rivers to date. The initiative was such a success that it will be carried into 2020 and beyond.

A breakthrough in November revealed exciting findings following salmon research conducted during the International Year of the Salmon. Inland Fisheries Ireland and Northern Ireland's Agri-Food and Biosciences Institute carried out the research as part of the COMPASS project and funded by the EU European Regional Development Fund's Interreg VA programme. The new research revealed how young salmon leaving rivers on the eastern coast travel northwards to leave the Irish Sea, rather than south and west to join salmon on the western coast. The research will play a vital role in marine conservation efforts in the future.

Engaging the public

Inland Fisheries Ireland held a number of events and initiatives for children during the International Year of the Salmon. The aim of these events was to help engage the public around salmon conservation and the fisheries resource. IFI partnered with children's author Shane Casey. Shane wrote a dyslexia-friendly children's book containing three stories with one of the stories focusing on the adventures of a young salmon as he explores the Atlantic Ocean. IFI

used the book as an educational tool for their Education and Outreach workshops.

As part of educating the general public on the International Year of the Salmon, Inland Fisheries Ireland partnered with the Museum of Ireland Natural History for a range of events. The first was a one day event called 'Fishy Fun' on the 20th of July 2019, it was an educational and interactive day. On the day a colouring competition called 'The Salmon of Colour' was also distributed for children to partake in individually or as a group. In August there was 'A Salmon's Tale' open day, where families could 'fish' for clues in the river of knowledge.

Outreach

Last October, Inland Fisheries Ireland secured a stand within the Government of Ireland village at the National Ploughing championships. The stand was themed in IYS branding to help deliver the messaging behind IYS and included a family friendly fun zone. The public were invited to learn about the fisheries resource through a range of interactive activities and a live fish display.



Fishy Fun at the Natural History Museum.

International funding call

NASCO announced a funding call of €150,000 internationally in October 2019 to promote the International Year of the Salmon. Inland Fisheries Ireland, as the competent authority for freshwater fish (including wild salmon) in Ireland, administered the funding call and hosted the application process on its website. Thirty two applications for funding were received from seven countries from both sides of the Atlantic. There were eight successful applications in 2019. IFI will now be working with successful applicants to deliver their projects and will also administer the claim process. Finalised claims will then be forwarded to NASCO for payment.

First salmon of 2020

Inland Fisheries Ireland are delighted to announce the first catch and release salmon of 2020 has been caught on the River Drowes in Co. Leitrim. Nash Mc Daid, of Ballybofey, Donegal landed the first catch and release salmon at the



Nash McDaid with the first catch and release salmon of 2020.

“point of the meadow” on the River Drowes at 2.45pm, Friday the 14th of February. The salmon, which weighed approximately 12 pounds, was caught on a Red Flying C before being released into the water.

Inland Fisheries Ireland awarded €250 prize money to the angler for the first catch and release salmon of the New Year. The prize was only eligible for the release of the first salmon which was handled correctly and verified by Fisheries Officers.

This year the first salmon caught was in Waterville in Kerry on January 25th. In 2019, the first salmon was recorded on the Lackagh River in Donegal on the 1st of January and in 2018, the first salmon was recorded on the River Drowes in Leitrim on the 30th of January.

Dr Ciaran Byrne, CEO of Inland Fisheries Ireland said: “I would like to congratulate Nash Mc Daid, on the first catch and release salmon of 2020. I would urge anglers to step up their conservation efforts and engage in catch & release angling in 2020. Last year we celebrated the International Year of the Salmon and its main aim was to raise awareness of some of the challenges facing salmon stocks across the Northern hemisphere.

Salmon populations have plummeted in recent years with the number of salmon returning to Irish shores decreasing by over 70 per cent, which is very concerning. I would like to take this opportunity to encourage all anglers in 2020 to ensure their own personal contribution to the conservation of salmon by practising catch and release fishing. Inland Fisheries Ireland will continue to support salmon conservation through research, protection, habitat conservation and development of our precious resource.”

New funding round for community groups and angling clubs

As part of habitat conservation and the protection of our natural resource Inland Fisheries Ireland has opened a new funding round which is available to community groups and angling clubs across the country. The funding will be awarded to fisheries conservation projects and development projects with over €1.3 million in funds available. Applications are invited from angling clubs, local development associations, tidy towns and others who may be looking to carry out relevant projects. The 2020 funding call consists of three schemes: The Capital Grants Scheme 2020 (€240,000), The Midlands Fisheries Fund (€50,000) and The Salmon and Sea Trout Rehabilitation, Conservation and Protection Fund (€1 Million).

Suzanne Campion, Head of Business Development at Inland Fisheries Ireland said: “We are committed to realising the potential of the fisheries resource from a social and economic perspective but also to protecting and conserving it for future generations to enjoy. Interested groups are invited to get in touch with us for further information with guidance available throughout the application process.”

For more information about the 2020 Funding Call, to download an information booklet and to submit an expression of interest, please visit www.fisheriesireland.ie/funding. All applicants must apply through an ‘Expression of Interest’ form to progress to full application. Full applications may be submitted until the closing date for applications on the 25th of February 2020.

The Smartwave AV3500



The Smartwave AV3500 has impressive deck space lending it to many applications. This craft is well suited as a tender, fishing or duck shooting platform, for rescue work or as a tough

commercial boat. In short the AV3500 will excel in every application. The AV3500 is designed for maximum space, stability and low planning speed.

Specifications

Length 3.5m (11.5ft)
External beam 1.7m (5.6ft)
Hull Weight 100kg (220lbs)

Horsepower 25Hp
Deadrise 13deg
Hull thickness 8mm
Warranty 5 years
Max No People 4
Max Payload 340 Kg

Standard Accessories

Stern grab rails
Anchor cleat & locker
Bow storage area with padded seat
Rear seats
Central bench seat
Bow seat
Fuel storage
2 x fishing rod holders
Diving platforms
Oar Storage Well

RLS Boats

stockists of Smartwave and Mac Boats
throughout Ireland

Contact: River Lake and Sea,

58 Coleraine Road, Portrush BT56 8HN

E: info@riverlakesea.com www.riverlakesea.com

Tel: +44 (0) 77 25-144 784 or +44 (0) 28 708 250 67

**5 Year
Warranty**

www.glendapowellguiding.com
Guided Fishing & Tuition



www.blackwatersalmonfishery.com

Prime Salmon Fishing on the famous Munster Blackwater River in Ireland



RESOLUTIONS

Mayflies at Lough Sheelin.

Right now storm Brendan is howling outside in the sullen half light of dusk, sleet lashes the window panes and the weather vane swings crazily with each gust. It's hard to imagine that in a few months the dark olives will be hatching and trout will once again be nudging the rivers surface sending rings across the pools. The Christmas holidays are behind us, and with memories of New Years Festivities still fresh in the mind, it's a time for reflection, a time to think about the season past and the new season ahead.

This is a time to take stock, decide our priorities, perhaps discovering sport on intimate rivers and streams, the local still-waters or the huge, iconic limestone loughs, in Ireland. We are so fortunate to have access to so much water, often for free or a nominal fee. The last days of the shooting season are passing and this is the best time to get pristine mallard, teal and pheasant

plumage so each bird is viewed as more than a good meal. It's time to dig out the fishing rods, grease the reels, replace the lines and dress some flies.

Like many anglers I had a reasonably good season last year. Some nice river trout on olives, a pristine spring salmon, great fishing on the Hawthorne flies, lough fishing on the mayfly and fantastic dollaghan angling on my local river. Weather conditions were favourable for much of the time, great days were had on the big loughs and some stunning fish were caught, photographed and released to feature in the spawning activities at the end of the season, passing on their genes to future generations.

At last anglers are learning to nurture the stocks as no spawning stream on any of the big loughs is anywhere near capacity, every hen fish is valuable. I helped an angler from Armagh birth his boat on Sheelin a few years back and as

I pulled it up the beach, the boat tilted and out of a concealed drawer fell several beautiful trout, two of them very large hen fish. As the embarrassed angler tried to explain that large fish are bad for a fishery, I'm thinking how can any hen fish be bad for a fishery if it contributes to the spawning population? Has anyone complained that there are too many fish in the lough, why not let the fishery achieve its full potential by releasing these hen fish? There's no problem taking the odd smaller trout for the pan, but the big hen fish are the backbone of any fishery.

Habitat improvements on the local river are bearing fruits and last year we had great hatches of blue winged olives which gave great daytime and evening angling on the dry flies, I experienced my first nights of fishing the sherry spinner and it was great to see the clouds of flies dancing over the runs in the evening, something I'd only ever



Conservation measures produce magnificent trout while killing big hen fish reduces the potential of a fishery.

read about in Frank Sawyer's amazing 'Keeper of the Stream.' The duns hatched prolifically from trailing fronds of river water crowfoot and parts of the river which were barren because they weren't accessible for habitat enhancement now hold good numbers of fish because the newly planted crowfoot provides shelter, oxygen and food.

There were moderate hatches of dark olives and good hatches of sedges and little spur-wings (little sky blue). Many anglers would take this for granted, but when your river has been ravaged by dredging and pollution any success is sweet and the sight of hatching flies and rising fish was a joy to behold. The trout may not have been big, but we always had the dollaghan and I was fortunate to catch a 4lb specimen on a size 16 olive emerger in June during a hatch of blue winged olives. My ambition would be to see a hatch of iron blue duns if the water quality could be improved enough and I'd love to see the trout picking off the tiny dark duns on a spring afternoon. My first resolution is to continue pollution monitoring, kick sampling, fencing buffer zones and planting trees in them.

Something else I had fun with from July last year was catching trout and

dollaghan on a skated sedge. You don't hook every fish but the technique can certainly draw up fish to the surface and a little elk hair sedge with plenty of CDC tied under the wing has worked some magic. The technique is also useful for fishing under bushes where conventional dry fly can't be free drifted. Simply cast above the overhanging bushes and let the fly drift down under the foliage then let it skate attractively out and across the stream. I felt my little 9ft. Guideline Fario may have been a bit short for this so I've invested in a 10ft Fario (4wt) and intend to give the technique another go, although I'll have to wait until July when the sedges once again take to the air and the trout come up to ambush the flies as they scuttle across the surface in warm summers evenings, that's another resolution.

Of course no angling article would be complete without a mention of mayfly time and every angler would have a resolution to spend more time out on the fantastic limestone loughs. I would like to try to start the mayfly season a little earlier, as I tend to miss the wet fly angling at the start of mayfly time due to work commitments, and by the time I get to the water it's half over and the

loughs are overrun with boats as well.

For years I've been an addict of Wulff type dry flies but last year I had success with sparser, older patterns so I intend to go back to my Mosely Mays, Sam Anderson Lough Erne Spents, French Partridge etc. So that's my mayfly resolution. I was fortunate to experience some good rises to mayfly last year and would like to think that it's a result of habitat enhancements and conservation measures over the years, unfortunately there are still a minority who continue to kill everything they catch and this selfish attitude robs the other anglers of their sport and prevents our loughs achieving their true potential.

Someone posted dozens of pictures up on Facebook last year which disturbed me greatly, as there were gentlemen posing with numerous huge out of season trout and salmon kelt, (clearly these baitfishing characters were targeting spawning tributaries of big loughs and rivers), bathfuls of bream, bin liners full of beautiful rudd and perch, lines of huge dead pike etc. The post was taken down but the point was made. Fisheries authorities can't control all the poaching, so if we want to protect our fisheries we'll have to do



Catch, photograph & release allows fish like this to populate the spawning redds come autumn.

it ourselves. Clubs will have to patrol fisheries during the closed season and I know that occasionally I bump into dodgy characters whilst on my cormorant patrols and it may not do any harm for the local thugs to know there's a bailiff on the river.

A friend who has fished coarse fish around Limerick for many years is distraught by lack of fish and has witnessed fertiliser bags full of roach, rudd and bream being carried from rivers and lakes with no fishery protection in sight. With these ruthless

commercial poaching fraternity operating, destroying Ireland's angling heritage, everyone will have to be vigilant and game anglers will have to support the IFI officers in any way possible, we should resolve to stop these thugs.

Sometimes I feel we in Ireland take a lot for granted. We should recognise what a great resource and angling tradition we have and try to nurture and protect our sport, so my last resolution is to do my best to appreciate my days on the water. I can't wait to be drifting along, sun on my back, flies drifting

overhead in the breeze, scent of the hawthorn blossom and birdsong in the air. A bulge in a wave and the rhythmic cast drops the flies to one side then the line tightening and the lovely jag, jag of the take, golden flanks flashing in the tea coloured water, pure magic! Then of course steaks on the griddle cooked over glowing embers on the sandy shore, smokey tea from the Kelly Kettle, banter and great company, and a toast to those who have gone before. Tight lines everyone, best of luck and enjoy the new season.



Golden flanks had flashed in the tea coloured water and now it was being slipped back.

Federation of Irish Salmon & Sea Trout Anglers

Conaidhm na Slat Iascairí Bradáin agus Breac Geal

VISIT US AT www.fissta.com



F.I.S.S.T.A.

FISSTA 2020 PLAN FOR SALMON CONSERVATION

Further to a recent AGM, it was agreed to canvass all political parties with our own manifesto for the new government to consider under the following five headings. We thank all candidates, many who are now elected, for their support and encouragement when we lobbied them in recent times. We look forward to progressing the FISSTA Plan with whoever is charged with the responsibility for our wild salmon and sea-trout in the near future.

PROTECTION OF OUR WILD ATLANTIC SALMON IN NORTH ATLANTIC THE FEEDING GROUNDS

Our most urgent priority is to ensure our salmon continue to be protected in the North Atlantic feeding grounds so that they return to our natal rivers to spawn. To maintain this agreement which NASF & ASF have negotiated to the benefit of every salmon nation we have to contribute our fair share from the anglers Wild Salmon Conservation Fund which the state administer on

behalf of the salmon habitat.

We need a new Minister to live up to our international responsibility and grant funds to keep these agreements in place and protect these salmon in our feeding grounds.

IN THE NATAL RIVERS

Over 120 of our 145 wild salmon rivers are now closed to the taking of a salmon under the angling regulations and this continued pattern of river closures is unacceptable to our Federation. Closing river communities and economies down for unjustified reasons of the IFI is self-harming to our fisheries and unacceptable to us.

We need a new Minister to implement our visionary plan to return our salmon stocks to abundant levels.

SALMON FARMING IN IRELAND

We do not accept the policy of previous governments to support the licensing of open sea net-cage salmon farming, as the practice is unsustainable.

We need a new Minister to regulate the salmon farming industry as Norway has done under their Norske Industri plan that ends pollution, sealice and protects our wild stocks.

END GWEEBARRA & OTHER RIVER TAKEOVERS BY IFI

We have campaigned to IFI and a



Slieve League anglers can advise any newcomer on how to fish the Glen River Junction Pool.



The Bridge over the River Swilly at Glenswilly Co Donegal.

range of Ministers over a number of years to assist us in progressing angling tourism and fishery protection by cooperating with the vast wealth of experience in our clubs instead of the present hostile environment we now work in daily. It costs Ireland's economy dearly as we believe we can double our contribution to €2billion if we were operating on a partnership basis with the department.

We need a new Minister to end the IFI policy of apparently hostile take overs of our waters.

RESTORE NIFF MEETINGS – MINISTER TO OVERSEE IFI PROGRESS.

The public utterances of department officials have indicated that salmon conservation is not achievable and that the state is wasting funding on such futile plans.

We need a new Minister to recruit new policy believers and resume under the 2010 Act the now defunct National Inland Fisheries Forum meetings so that progress be made on many issues of urgency. Eg Ministerial appointments to state boards.

REVIEW SCOTTISH STRUCTURE FOR ALL ISLAND ANGLING PLAN

The decline in salmon angling is

mainly due to the decline in stocks but lessons can be learned from our competitors in Scotland who have maintained a strong angling tourism industry due to the much smarter management of their sport and regulations. Now that the Stormont Assembly has resumed operations, the opportunity now exists for North/South institutions to progress plans for a better future for all involved in salmon angling.

We need a new Minister to intervene with a plan to promote and manage our business and sport.

NEW NORTH AND SOUTH ADMINISTRATIONS BRING HOPE TO FOR WILD SALMON STOCKS

On behalf of our newly elected National Executive Council, may I wish all readers and club members a very happy and successful 2020 season. We hope many of our club secretaries will forgive our delay in sending registration letters out, but for the first time ever we have found it difficult to get a renewal offer from any insurers for 2020. The entire angling insurance industry is experiencing uncertainty, and while Brexit has not helped, we were fortunate to have negotiated a new policy package that continues to include the best range we have negotiated down the years,

such as personal liability cover that we must have for our day to day needs.

This coming year will bring more changes that will impact on our angling and waters, so it is vital that we all play our part together and that increased members are registered and that the necessary insurance cover is in place to protect all officers and club members for the season onwards. Our AGM was held in the Shamrock Lodge Hotel in Athlone on November where a long agenda on our future challenges were discussed in detail. It was a good meeting with all convinced we must do even more to protect our sport and our stocks. But our work starts all over again briefing a new Government to help us in our vision for wild salmon stocks and some serious management change of our resource, by convincing Inland Fisheries Ireland to aim for much higher goals based on our five point plan as was generally approved at our AGM.

We have already lobbied candidates and will use this plan to lobby hard any new Minister to up the IFI game and fight harder for our fisheries by halting the river closing plans that continues each season. FISSTA will continue to campaign to open these rivers once again, if only to confront the upsurge in poaching. Along with these major issues, the protection of our stocks have taken a huge hit in their migration out of our lice infested bays, in the feeding grounds and on their return to our natal rivers. On all three areas of the habitat there has been only hand wringing by the state claiming these are climatic problems and outside our territorial limits to take any action. You may remember what we said after the passing of Orri Vigfusson back in July 2017. It left our Federation and colleagues in NASF in a very uncertain position for our salmon. There was much speculation on whether the Faroes agreement that protects our Irish salmon in their feeding grounds could be renewed. We needed urgent cash for this cause but our Minister Kyne TD and later Minister Sean Canney TD

refused our request to date. But thankfully, a good contract was agreed on our behalf by ASF and NASF in 2018 and renewed once again on May 20th last. We are indebted and acknowledge their generosity of ponying up the cash in the meantime, as we are long established colleagues and fellow NGO's at NASCO since 1991. Any new Minister will be advised against any change by IFI and they will also continue their court case against anglers on the Gweebarra River which they are using our funds to pursue. We realise that should we lose, our clubs may find that another thirty-five rivers will be open to seizure by the state.

We will keep fighting to protect our angling rights and fishing. It is your support as always that will determine our success on all your issues for 2020. Wishing our readers and all club members every success for this season.

LEGAL CASE ON THE GWEEBARRA RIVER DRAGS ON, WHILE ANGLING STAGNATES

On December 12th last, the Donegal Game Angling Federation once again made the long journey to the Four Courts in Dublin in defence of angling rights on the Gweebarra Fishery. It was part of a long process that we have challenged since 2006 and while we were hopeful of an early resolution to the case, the judgement, as expected, went the way of our opponents, namely the Inland Fisheries Ireland on this occasion.

The matter had been heard in October 2018 but Ms. Justice Teresa Pilkington took 13 months to give this judgment. Inland Fisheries Ireland won this bout mainly because Judge Pilkington would not allow the documentary evidence of our three fishermen to be admitted into evidence. This judgment is a temporary set back, but our eyes are still firmly on the prize. We are indeed fortunate in that our diligent legal team under Cormac O' Dualachain SC and instructed by Sean Boner Solicitor from Dungloe to whom



FISSTA Clubs organise their 'Spring Clean Up' of their rivers to remove rubbish such as this plastic wrapping and other rubbish.

we owe a great debt of gratitude, are vastly experienced in this type of fishery titled law. We consider that their documentary evidence is still incontrovertible and the IFI should be aware of this since we made them aware of the 1913 Report of an Inquiry into Fisheries in Glenties Courthouse in 1911 when all of this was made very clear indeed. These setbacks only delay our day of justice. This case, first 'spawned' in 2003 by the then Northern Regional Fisheries Board has stagnated angling tourism development and left relations between the fishery staff and anglers in a confrontational position ever since. While IFI staff on the ground here in Donegal have an important job to do in protecting fish stocks in our rivers, the real cooperation and normality will only return when this case is concluded and development returns to the local anglers on their rivers. The case was adjourned on December 10th and resumed in January when it was agreed to open again on February 21st 2020 in Dublin once again and from where we will be happy

to report the outcome in due course.

LIST OF AGM PRESENTATIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

Rivers - 120 of 145 closed to taking a salmon

Wild Salmon in Atlantic – NASF and NASCO 2019

Salmon National – IFI disputes – rivers closed for 2020

TEAM IFI / DEPT – no belief in conservation for salmon

Dams – Shannon. Lee and Erne target under ESB Plan

Salmon farms and sea-lice - parc na mara GBASC

Jens Christian Holst Hypothesis on mackerel

Service to our clubs – improvement of insurance, administration assistance of grants – plan for club to get a quota – licence reduction campaign to stop penalising the angler

Development of 5 Point Plan for 2020

Strategy of 2020 - Do we participate or withdraw from state cooperation on FDC, Ministerial meetings?

Hunting Roundup



Huntsman Barry Jones and Whipper In Robert Campbell with the North Down Foxhounds at Carrickmannon.

Killultagh Hunt

I began my season at the opening meet of the Killultagh Hunt at their Dundrod, Co Antrim, kennels which went ahead in dry weather after torrential rain.

Huntsman Patrick Headdon had his daughter Katie whipping-in Philip Swann was field master and the day was overseen by Geoffrey Porter MFH. The 11½ couple mixed pack were all seasoned hounds as Patrick told me that when he canvassed the meet, the previous day, he was surprised by the numbers of stock out.

The first draw, at the old kennels grounds at Harry Carson's was blank. Hounds had better luck at Dermot McDonald's on St Clare's Lane where one customer went afoot towards Tullyrusk before circling back pursued by hounds, who were in very good voice. They pushed him past Rachel Leader's before our quarry swung left handed into Knockcairn town-land where hounds were stopped, due to cattle.

A series of draws at Tullyrusk and Old Fort Road all proved blank. Patrick Headdon persisted through Carol Bell's and into Susan Smiley's where a brace went afoot. Hounds had a short, fast hunt on the first customer before losing him in very deep cover.

Hounds took on the second fox, now off Tullyrusk Road, but scent was now rising high and the huntsman stopped them to allow everyone to get back to

the meet before light began to fade. This had been a good hound day and a good pipe opener.

Newry Hunt

The Drumbanagher kennels of the Newry Hunt hosted their opening meet and sole master Mrs J Close was on hand to greet everyone and send them on their way after some refreshing hospitality.

Huntsman Mark McIlroy had on a 16½ couple mixed pack and was assisted by James Hammond. A twenty strong mounted field, including the new joint masters of the East Down Foxhounds Pat Turley and Donna Quail, was under joint field masters Brian Johnston and Garry Lowry.

The first draw, at Lisummon Tunnel, put one customer afoot to presage a fast hunt right around Lisummon, which

ended with the fox going to ground off the Newry to Jerrettspass Road. Mark McIlroy then drew Searce and a short hunt ensued before this fox went to ground in Lisummon Fort.

At a draw at Finch's pond we saw a fox come out of the pond then literally dive straight back into it and right among the hounds, but they could make nothing of it and this good sized customer simply disappeared from view.

Hounds then drew the mouth of the old tunnel but it was blank so the huntsman tried his luck off the main Newry to Armagh Road with no happier result. Mark McIlroy then blew for home so we could return to the meet before light faded.

Iveagh Foxhounds

Landowner John Savage welcomed the Iveagh Foxhounds to Katesbridge,



Huntsman Declan Feeney with the East Down Foxhounds at Dromara.



Huntsman Andy Jopson with the County Down hounds at Rallagh, outside Ballynahinch.

Co Down, on an intermittently wet day. Newly appointed huntsman Jack Harris had on a 16½ couple mixed pack and had Dylan Ross whipping-in while joint masters Alexander Mills and Sarah Dawson had some twenty of a mounted field to oversee.

A series of draws across John Savage's land proved blank but a move to Uel Wallace's saw a big fox, with a white tip to his brush, go afoot. Hounds pushed him hard to Ardrin then on as far as Wallace's Bog, at the railway bridge, in consistently good voice. They pushed him to Campbell's Hill before losing him.

Hounds then drew Blue Hill Road and put one fox afoot. This fox crossed the road and took hounds on a fast, circular tour of Ballysheil town-land before they lost him in deteriorating scenting conditions. The huntsman had spent a considerable amount of time on his feet with mixed results and, when he blew for home in late afternoon he

and his hounds were thoroughly entitled to feel tired but satisfied with their efforts.

East Down Foxhounds

As I drove to Cluntagh, outside Crossgar, for the East Down Foxhounds' meet rain was threatening and by the time huntsman Declan Feeney was moving off it was raining and did so fairly constantly for the rest of the day.

Declan had his son, Conor (18), whipping-in and he was proudly wearing a swallow tailed hunting coat of 1938 vintage. Declan's 19½ couple mixed pack looked fit and ready for action.

James Armstrong MFH had a dozen hardy souls in the mounted field and the first draw, at David McClurg's on Ballywillin Road, disappointingly proved blank. The huntsman moved to Armstrong's further down that road but this also proved blank.

A return to McClurg's, however, proved fruitful as one pilot went afoot to give a good, sharp hunt during which hounds were in good voice. However, this customer went through McClurg's and was lost at The Forest despite the best efforts of huntsman and hounds.

A further series of draws around McClurg's also proved blank and a move on to Armstrong's land, on Beechview Road, brought no better luck so home was blown in fast fading light to enable everyone to return to the meet in now heavy rain.

Tynan & Armagh Foxhounds Charity Children's Meet 2020 - report by Andrew Phillips

Tynan and Armagh Foxhounds held their Annual Charity Event, the New Year's Day Children's Meet in Richhill. The event saw a great turn out of horses and ponies with over 90 participants.

Stewards and Chaperones carried out a fine job ensuring all were safely returned to their parents and Tynan and Armagh Foxhounds would like to thank the landowners by whose kind permission this meet was possible as well as Richhill Presbyterian Church for allowing use of their car park. Many thanks must also go to all our brave participants.

The event generated £1650.00, which was donated to Friends of the Cancer Centre, Belfast in memory of Susan Thompson and the cheque was presented just before the off from the Phillips' family home, where the following hunt took place.

Huntsman Keith McCall had on twelve and a half couple ably assisted by the Whippers-In Philip Singleton and Samuel Phillips. The Joint Master, Brian Dougan, along with Field Master Andrew Phillips had charge of a field of 26.

The first draw was in Walker's covert which proved blank, the field then continued to Stevenson's planting which again was blank. The field continued to Jenkinson's Bog, which raised a fox, following a sharp hunt he was put to



The cheque presentation to Friends of the Cancer Centre



The Phillips family
ground in Pearson's land.

The hunt then proceeded to the host's land, where they crossed over to Hamilton's land which produced a hunt that saw quarry proceed over Hamilton's, Black's, Loney's and then was put to ground in McCall's farm.

The hunt drew coverts at both Johnston's and Jackson's where a fox was afoot and proceeded over Carson's and Moffat's and was then given best over Allen's farm. Keith McCall, Huntsman, then blew for home around 4.30pm and members retired to the

host's home to enjoy the heat from the fire and great hospitality supplied by the ladies of the hunt. (Photographs of the Children's Meet and Cheque Presentation by kind permission of Mark McCall Photography markjsmccall.com)



Amber Lucas in action.



(Above) Beth Wishart at the drop fence.

(Below) Katie Robinson.



Bethany Smith and Sadie McMahon.



(Above) Alex Phillips at the last fence.

(Below) The field returning home.



Stanislaus Lynch - a man of many talents

At the end of February 2019 a large crowd came together at the County Museum in Ballyjamesduff, County Cavan to remember a wellknown local man who wrote a great deal about the chase, in books of top class prose and in many evocative poems.

Stanislaus Lynch was a Ballyjamesduff native and a man of many talents. He lived from 1907 to 1983 and received much acclaim for his books and poetry about hunting. He also holds the unusual achievement of being awarded two Olympic medals for Epic Literature (which was one of a number of Arts Categories held during the Olympics from 1912 to 1952). The Olympic judging panel recognised that Stanislaus was an expert stylist in the English language. Following his Olympic achievements, Easons in Dublin and Gimbel bookstore in New York held week-long window displays which were dedicated to Stanislaus and his Olympic achievements.

The speeches in the County Museum began with Councillor Madeline Argue, Chairperson of Cavan County Council, who was followed by Museum Curator Savina Donohoe, and Stanislaus Lynch's wife Margaret. There were stories, readings of poetry and a lovely rendition of "Come back Paddy Reilly to Ballyjamesduff", by Hugh Leonard (who has been hunting for over 70 seasons).

Other speakers for the occasion included the former Chairman of Horse Sport Ireland, Professor Patrick Wall, and the equestrian photojournalist and author Noel Mullins who published Lynch's last book "In Search of the Kerry Beagle", which had been in Lynch's study since he passed away in 1983.

It was because of local farmer Paul Keogan that the County Museum



"In an Irish lane" - Tom Carr illustration from "A Hunting Man's Rambles"

celebration was held. Paul spoke during the celebration, as did John Bonham who told the audience that Lynch's fantastic writings kept his father's spirits up when he was a German prisoner of war. The Irish Farmers Journal equestrian

journalist Michael Slavin drew people's attention to some of Lynch's writings and pointed out what made them so special. The final act of the evening was the playing of a recording of Stanislaus reading one of his poems.

Lynch wrote six prose and poetry books about equestrianism and the countryside which were published in Ireland, Britain and the USA. The books were illustrated by a number of gifted equestrian artists including Tom Carr, Michael Lyne and Olive Whitmore. Practically all his books are now out of print, but you can get second hand copies online. "In Search of the Kerry Beagle", which he wrote some 70 years ago, was re-published in 2017. His poems have also been incorporated into the anthologies "A Thousand Years of Irish Poetry", "The Fox-Hunter's Bedside Book" and "Concord of Harps".

I recently got "A Hunting Man's Rambles" online. This was published by Lynch in 1951 and illustrated by Tom Carr. It's been a fantastic read, bringing me back to my own days when I used to hunt every Saturday with mounted packs around the midlands. As you read you realise that what people have said is indeed true – that Lynch was an excellent prose stylist. He's very good at describing the sights and sounds of a day out hunting; at describing the feelings, the sensations.

The silence was broken by the crackle of undergrowth

The book opens with a lovely description of Cub Hunting in Glen of the Downs in County Wicklow, which features memorable passages such as this: "Now and then the silence was broken by the crackle of undergrowth as hounds pressed onwards in search of their quarry; or when the huntsman sounded his horn or spoke to let them know his location. The hounds, normally an exceptionally eager pack, were curiously listless. Their behaviour lent confirmation to a suspicion that had been growing upon me as I felt the warm rays of the sun on my face. Yes, the morning was far too warm for any sensible fox to waste in the cool woods. Mr Reynard was, in all probability, enjoying a sun bath on the top of some bank or stretched full length in the heather on some open hillside."

Lynch was also a correspondent for

The Irish Field. He was a broadcaster and commentator on the Dublin Horse Show for many years. He featured on literary programmes on both RTE and the BBC. He bred Irish Draught horses and Connemara Ponies and exported large consignments of Connemara Ponies to the US. He presented a Connemara pony to film director Walt Disney when Disney was filming "Darby O'Gill and the Little People" in Ireland. He ran two riding schools in Castleknock and Mosney, and was an Inspector of

Riding Establishments for the Irish Tourist Board. He delivered papers to a UNESCO Conference in Paris in 1966 about the subjects of "The Part of the Irish Farmer in Equestrian Tourism" and "The Use of Rural Space." In 1952 he photographed the Russian Train in Finland whose windows were covered in steel shutters as it approached the Russian Fortress near Hango, which gave rise to the term, "Iron Curtain".

Following the evening of celebration an exhibition of Stanislaus' work



"A crash at our elbows" (Stan Lynch book illustration)

remained on display in the Cavan County Museum for several weeks.

This was a special evening which drew attention to a special writer, whose books are not as well known as they should be. Following the recent death of a hunting friend, a member of the local hunt read out one of Lynch's poems to remind us of why we love hunting and why our dead friend loved hunting. As we listened to the recital, we realised there was considerable power in Lynch's verses which eloquently described the excitement and the beauty of the hunt.

At the end of the first chapter of "A Hunting Man's Rambles", Lynch tells the reader what format his book will take: "Now that I have begun, I will behave exactly as a Rambler behaves. I will wander as the mood takes me up and down Ireland, not tying myself to any strict timetable or itinerary, going where I like, how I like, and when I like."

Black meltons, rain-coats, furs and tweeds, all shed their tears on the floor

His second chapter is devoted to County Cork, a county which, he says,

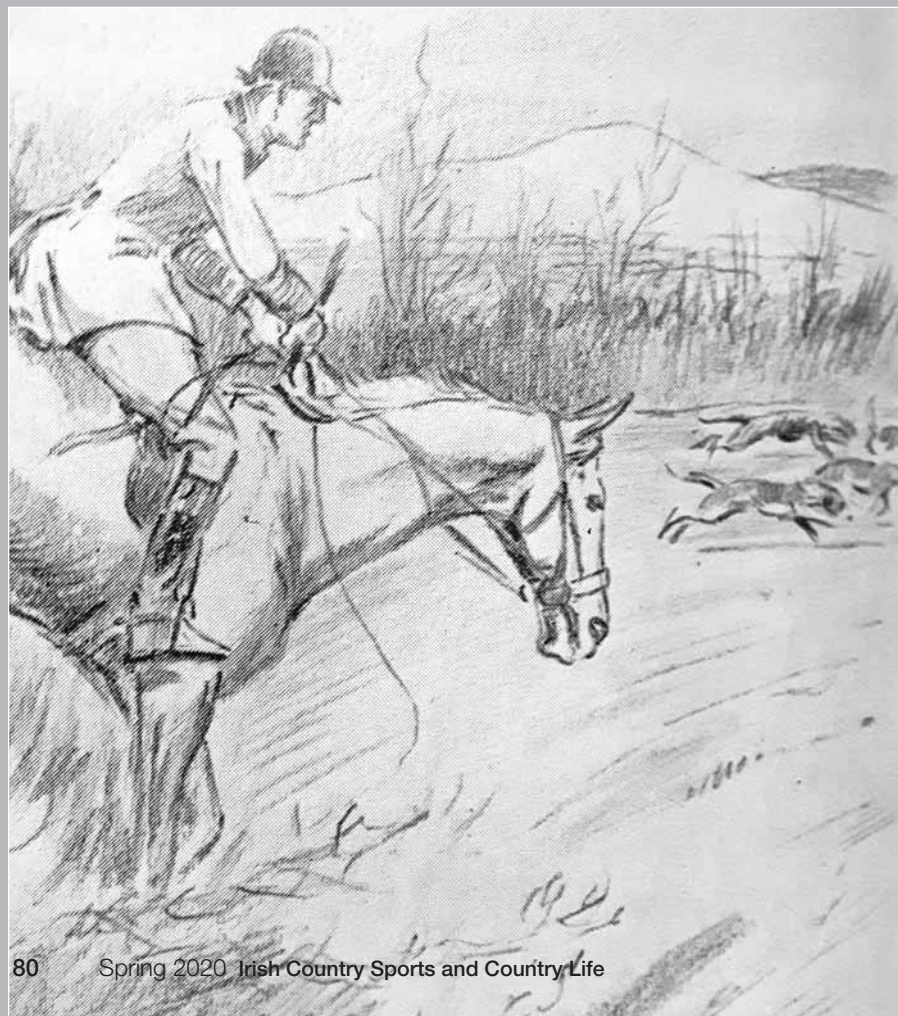
has more packs of hounds than any other county; a description which still holds true today. Arriving at a meet of the United Hunt Club in Watergrasshill, he enters the pub before mounting his horse, and memorably describes the scene: "I only got as far as the hallway, for the entire premises were packed to capacity by people in rain-sodden apparel. Scarlet coats, black meltons, rain-coats, furs and tweeds, all shed their tears on the floor of the hostelry. Velvet hunting caps, silk toppers, bowlers, felts and tweeds added minor tributaries to the flood. It was the Hunt Ball Meet of the United Hunt Club, and there was a big crowd of visitors. Everything pointed to a really exciting day's sport, except the weather; and perhaps it would add to the excitement when take-offs at fences became suddenly treacherous."

The day's hunt is in bitter cold and driving rain. A fox is found in their first covert, which is a few acres of gorse on a hill: "...a hound is speaking already! Eighty horses and eighty riders begin to forget about the bitter cold and the lashing rain. Hounds are moving up covert, and horses edge towards a gate.

In a few moments a Tally-ho! rouses the storm-torn countryside and we plunge through that gateway. The fox has broken at the upper end, and when we arrive there the last of the tail hounds are scampering to the notes of the Gone Away!, frantically endeavouring to make up for a belated start. Now I meet my first bank. My first fence in County Cork. It's stone-faced, it's high, and it's narrow. I don't know how my horse will behave, but I have not much time for such thoughts. All along its length riders are belting into it. They pop up and off it in an instant, and while I am wondering what is going to happen in my case, I have done the same. My horse seems to gobble up such narrow raspers....Riders are carving their own lines across country and are rattling along, three fields abreast. The pace is absolutely breathtaking. No one asks for privileges; no one gets them. Fence after fence is rushing to meet us. One part of a bank is as good as another and it is every man for himself....Fences may appal us, loose horses may threaten us, a crash at our elbow may warn us to beware a similar fate, but we only grin the more grimly, take a better hold of the slippery reins, tell the next fence to go to blazes, and retain our position...Three horses are creating merry bedlam right beside me. Two more join them at the next big bank...."

At the end of this chase they gather at another gorse covert and Lynch describes one of his fellow riders: "He was plastered with mud from head to foot. His bowler hat must have made a hole as big as a shell crater in some field, for it was bashed almost out of recognition; but there was a determined set about it that captured my heart. Mud was streaming down his face and dropping in big blobs on a cravat that was as sodden as a dishcloth. His packet of cigarettes was little more than a packet of wet tobacco pulp. Yet I have rarely seen sheer happiness depicted so vividly on any man's face."

This illustration is called "The sweet cry of hounds"



Obituary

The late Stephen Powell - a gentleman and lover of the countryside

I knew the late Stephen Powell very well, as I joined him for days of beagling in the midlands on many occasions over the years.

Stephen passed away on the 17th of January 2020 at the age of 89 and a Thanksgiving Service was held in his remembrance in St Brendan's Church, Birr, which was attended by a lot of people from the hunting, birdwatching and farming world.

His daughter, Caroline, told the congregation that her father loved the countryside. He knew from an early age, she said, that he wanted to live and work in the countryside. "Dad, when he left school, decided he wanted to become a farmer and, with this in mind, he began studying agriculture in Trinity College Dublin."

In 1961 he met and fell in love with June and the couple moved to Birr where they initially rented a flat in the charming and historic central square in the elegant Georgian town in South Offaly. Stephen found employment in a large barley malting factory called Williams Waller in nearby Banagher. Sadly, this factory has long since closed. "After working in Williams Waller for a few years," said Caroline, "Dad finally fulfilled his dream of establishing his own farm and becoming a farmer."

Stephen thrived in his new role as a farmer. It was a job which he proved to be very good at, and he became skilled in the management of sheep, of which he kept a good number. His farm was a few miles from Birr in the townland of Clonbeale. Here he and June lived for many years, in an attractive house in the midst of a well-managed farm. Caroline recalled some charity work which he was involved in. "I remember him gathering goats all around the country to give to Bóthar to send to Africa. "Dad was a very loving father and he was very proud and supportive of his children."

She said it was emotional to see so many people at the Thanksgiving Service including many of his hunting friends. Stephen hunted for many years on horseback with the

East Galway Foxhounds and was Fieldmaster for a while. "I used to often go hunting with him," recalled Caroline, "and we had fantastic fun galloping across the fields of East Galway and enjoying the sociability of the occasion." She said hunting was, and still is, an important social occasion in the lives of farmers. Stephen also took part in a number of Point to Points, winning five of them on the same, outstanding mare.

After many years of following foxhounds on horseback, Stephen, like so many of us, decided it was best to hang up his spurs and take to shank's mare. From then on he followed the beagles most Sundays during the season and was a regular with the Balgarrett Foot Beagles until they disbanded a couple of years ago. He remained sprightly into his eighties and never lagged behind the other foot followers or took to his car to keep up. I remember a hunt a few years ago when I was puffing up a hill and Stephen, jogging, overtook me!

Speaking at the Thanksgiving Service Reverend Janet White Spinner said Stephen was popular because he was a gentleman. This is a noun which is often used but not always true. In Stephen's case it was definitely true. I never saw him lose his temper or become short with someone, even when he had good cause to.

"I first met Stephen," said Reverend



The late Stephen Powell (right) is pictured here with Kieran Lambert.

White Spinner, "when we were both growing vegetables for the same factory. When I decided to get into sheepkeeping Stephen gave me a lot of good advice. Thanks to him I also knew what to do when keeping goats. Stephen was very knowledgeable about many things, but he always wore his knowledge lightly and never made anyone feel stupid.

"The great outdoors meant so much to Stephen. He was also a member of the Offaly Field Club and loved birdwatching. I envied him his ability to differentiate between the different birdsongs. Birdsong is the most beautiful sound there is. It comes straight from God. One is nearer God's heart when one is in the garden, or in a wood, or by a stream, or in a field. For many, that is the reason why we love the great outdoors so much."

The Old Irish Blessing was read out during the Service: "May the road rise to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face; the rains fall soft upon your fields and until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand."

By Derek Fanning
ROI Editor

DOG SHOW CALENDAR

2020 SEASON

compiled by Margaret McStay

Sunday 29th March	Irish Association of Working Dogs Club Dog Show & Race Day
Saturday 4th April	Downpatrick Terrier, Lurcher, & Whippet Club Dog Show & Race Day
Sunday 5th April	Killure Working Terrier, Lurcher & Whippet Club, Co Waterford
Sunday 12th April	Sporting Whippet Club NI Whippet Dog Show & Raceday, Co Antrim
Sunday 19th April	Laois Lurcher, Terrier & Whippet Club Dog Show & Race Day, Co Laois
Sunday 26th April	Co Antrim Lurcher, Whippet, & Terrier Club, Dog Show & Race Day, Ballymena, Co Antrim
Sunday 26th April	Avondhu Fox Hounds Dog Show, Fermoy
Sunday 3rd May	Rockview Harriers Annual Working Terrier, Lurcher & Hound Dog Show, Danesfort, Co Kilkenny.
Sunday 3rd May	Sporting Whippet Club NI Whippet Dog Show & Raceday, Co Antrim
Sunday 10th May	Dublin Working Terrier Club Dog Show & Race Day
Sunday 17th May	Kildare Working Terrier, Lurcher And Whippet Club Dog Show & Race Day, Co Kildare
Sunday 17th May	NILRC Lurcher, Terrier & Whippet Club Dog Show & Race Day, Ballymena, Co Antrim
Sunday 24th May	Florence Court Dog Show & Race Day, Florence Court, Co Fermanagh
Sunday 31st May	West Wexford Harriers Dog Show, Cassagh, Co Wexford
Saturday 6th June	Man O' War Dog Show & Raceday, Keady Road, Co Armagh.
Sunday 7th June	Muwc Whippet Club Dog Show & Race Day
Sunday 14th June	Sporting Whippet Club NI Whippet Dog Show & Raceday, Co Antrim
Sunday 21st June	North Tipperary Hound And Dog Show, Lisbonny, Nenagh , Co Tipperary
Sunday 5th July	Kiltrough Terrier, Lurcher And Whippet Club Dog Show & Raceday, Co Louth
Sunday 19th July	Braid Valley Lurcher, Terrier & Whippet Club Dog Show & Race Day, Ballymena , Co Antrim.
Saturday 25th July	Sporting Whippet Club NI Whippet Dog Show & Raceday, Co Antrim
Sunday 26th July	MUWC Whippet Club Dog Show & Race Day
Sunday 2nd August	NW Lurcher, Terrier & Whippet Club
Sunday 9th August	The Mid And East Antrim Terrier, Lurcher & Whippet Show
Sunday 16th August	Nilrc Championship Dog Show & Raceday, Ballymena, Co Antrim
Sunday 23rd August	Sporting Whippet Club NI Whippet Dog Show & Raceday, Co Antrim

SATURDAY 29TH AUGUST 2020 IRISH GAME AND COUNTRY FAIR, SHANES CASTLE, CO ANTRIM
32nd ALL IRELAND CHAMPIONSHIPS Racing plus Master McGrath and Mick the Miller racing

SUNDAY 30TH AUGUST 2020 IRISH GAME AND COUNTRY FAIR, SHANES CASTLE, CO ANTRIM
32nd ALL IRELAND CHAMPIONSHIPS Show and Five Nations Championships Also Ferret Racing & Showing

Sunday 30th August	Irish Association Of Working Dogs Club Championship Show, Irish Midlands
Sunday 13th September	Sporting Whippet Club NI Whippet Club Dog Show & Raceday, Co Antrim

NB. In these dreadful & heavily restricted times we want to make the Game Fair really special with the best quality dogs on display. So All Terrier, Lurcher and Whippet Champions at any show taking place after June 2019 automatically qualifies for the Five Nations Terrier, Whippet and Lurcher Championship Finals at Irish Game Fair as do last years qualifiers who actually took part To claim your qualification email Albert at irishcountrylifestyle@btinternet.com.

This show will offer you the unique chance to be A FOUR TIME CHAMPION - An All Ireland Champion at Ireland's most prestigious championships -the 32nd ALL IRELAND CHAMPIONSHIPS, the Champion Terrier, Lurcher & Whippet go forward to the FIVE NATIONS CHAMPIONSHIPS and this year the Five Nations Terrier, Whippet & Lurcher Champions will be judged under three judges for the new title of SUPREME FIVE NATIONS CHAMPION. The FN terrier & lurcher champions qualify for the Countryman's Weekly Champion of Champions Final, to be held at Our Countryside Rocks, Weston Park, Shropshire on September 19th and 20th, 2020

Terrier, Lurcher & Whippet Show Roundup

**Mid and East Antrim Club Dog Show,
Ballee Playing Fields, Ballymena,
8th December 2019**

Showing dogs is a very traditional and sporting activity for many dog owners, and this Sunday was no different in the canine world. Despite the terrible weather conditions, with continuous wind and rain all day, the great men, women, and children of the canine community came out in strength for a great days showing and festivities at the Mid and East Antrim Christmas dog show.

This annual occasion is a special family get together for all like minded enthusiasts, and is a welcome break for the male species to get away from the trials and tribulations of Christmas shopping leading up to the festive season. A great sporting day out was had by all and I look forward to more of the same in 2020.

Overall Results

Children's Handling Class: Brooke Rafferty: Cayce O Hagan: Lexi-Rose Maguire

Whippet Champion: Colin Tucker with Cooper

Terrier Champion: Aimee Higginson with Taz

Lurcher Champion: Errol Gardiner with Silious

Overall Pup: Harry Roache with Zula

Overall Champion & Best in Show: Colin Tucker with Cooper; Amie Higginson with Taz



Children's Handling Class: Brooke Rafferty, Cayce O'Hagan & Lexie Rose Maguire.



Amiee Higginson and her Champion Terrier.



Overall Champion and Best in Show: Colin Tucker & daughter Megan with Overall Champion Cooper & Reserve Amie Higginson with Taz.



Errol Gardiner with Silious & Lurcher Judge Stephen McGonigle.



Pup Harry Roache with Champion Pup Zula.

New Lurcher Racing & Showing Classification and Rules Irish Game Fair, Shanes Castle, Antrim 29/30 August 2020

Racing Saturday 29th August

The Master McGrath becomes a 'Winner takes All' c24 dog Open Sweepstake

This race is now open to any lurcher that has won an elite race in Ireland and an Open race in the UK. Entries in advance costing £10 which qualifies the owner for a free ticket to the Fair. Last year's Winner & Runner Up get a FREE entry. Places in the race will be granted on a 'first come first served basis.' All entry fees will be put into the prize for the winner which will be made up to a minimum of £500. The Winner also receives a framed Limited Edition print of Master McGrath & Mick the Miller specially remarked by the artist with a drawing of Shanes Castle & Master McGrath (worth c £350) in a specially created 'grand game fair' frame.

The Mick the Miller Race for Hair Dogs is open to entries on the Day

Prizemoney will be £200 to the winner The Winner also receives a framed Limited Edition print of Master McGrath & Mick the Miller specially remarked by the artist with a drawing of Shanes Castle & Mick The Miller (worth c £350). Entry fee £4.

32nd Annual All Ireland Championship Races

Under 22" Elite All Ireland Champion Race £50 to the Winner; Under 24" Elite All Ireland Champion Race £50 to the Winner; Over 24" Elite All Ireland Champion Race £50 to the Winner PLUS All Ireland Traditional Lurcher Championships Over and Under 23"; Heavy Bull Lurcher Championship; Open Whippet Championship Race; And Open Terrier Racing Championship



The original painting of Master McGrath & Mick the Miller with the artist John R. Moore.

All Ireland Championship Showing Sunday 30th August All Ireland Champion Classes will be posted on www.irishgamefair.com

Five Nations Championships for Whippets, Terriers & Lurchers

We have new transitional arrangements for these championship in order to have the very best dogs competing in Ireland's top terrier, whippet and lurcher event.

We have widened the qualification to include show champions at all shows in Ireland or the UK from June 2019 but owners must claim their qualification by email to irishcountrylifestyle@btinternet.com

detailing where they won, date and organiser. Dogs that qualified for 2019 and took part are also eligible to take part.

Please Note:

We have had a system in place for some years whereby anyone actually present at the fair can make an objection to the winner by making a formal objection and putting down a deposit of €50/£50. This will be returned if the objection is upheld. If the challenge fails the money will be donated to charity. This will be the ONLY system of dispute that will be considered and no debate will be entered into over the results AFTER the Fair.

IKC Spaniel Championship 2019



Jamie Clegg MD, Feedwell Dogfoods with Championship Winner, Ed McAuley and Int FTCh Gardenrath Cheyenne.

With day breaking, the Competitors and Officials approached Dundarave House in Bushmills, Co Antrim for the 44th running of the IKC Spaniel Championship, which proved to be a fascinating two days of dog work sponsored by FEEDWELL DOGFOODS from Castlewellan, Co Down.

Ed McAuley from Balbriggan, Co Dublin lifted the Joe McGrath Trophy for the second time having won it in 2016 with FTCh Lisgarvagh Jet. This time, FTCh Gardenrath Cheyenne having just gained her title in the UK with Andrew Platt had two clean runs that caught the eye of the Judges. A Gavin Tegetmeier bred bitch sired by Clodahill Jake to Lisgarvagh Azur became an Int Ftch at the tender age of 30 months.

Dr Peter and Nuailin Fitzgerald, the generous hosts, provided an excellent and exciting venue for the Championship on the Dundarave Estate. Ian Chapman, Estate Manager together

with his Keepers Alan Greer and Robert McBurney provided a steady flow of game throughout the two days. The trial was virtually all held in woodland with varying degrees of bramble ground cover with large patches of snowberry. Some dogs were luckier than others, as banks of briar with grass interspersed created a challenge and tested the courage of some.

The Guns for the Championship were Gordon Blakeney, John Groves, Fintan Kelly and Damian Newman. They shot extremely well in difficult situations and were safe at all times.

A four judge system was employed for the first time by the IKC. The Judges who worked in pairs were John Keeshan from Tipperary and Stuart Morgan from Wales who took the left hand side. Aiden Patterson from Lurgan and Will Clulee from England took the right-hand side.

After introductions the Championship started in woodland at the front of Dundarave House with ground cover of snowberry, which

Feedwell®

allowed the birds to run on but was difficult for the handlers to stay in touch with their dogs.

DAY 1

First brace in who had long energy sapping runs was Ronan Gorman with his two year old dog Bishwell Barrett of Commonshall and Simon Dixon with Dawsonlee Carlos. Simon from Cumbria ran four dogs none of them making it through to day two. Of the thirty-six starters only 20 were called back for a second run.

Last year's winner FTCh Sliabh Cushla did not defend her title but Louis Rice had two others qualified Sliabh Bomber and Sliabh Aoife neither making it to the podium. Richie Power's Acragar Tess and Declan Bowman's Woodvale Son of a Gun were also non starters.



Third place went to Raymond Wilson, Second to Mick Walsh, while Championship Winner was awarded to Ed McAuley & Eamonn Taaffe, fourth.

The first dog to stake a claim was Mick Walsh's FTCh Hollydrive Defoe who did some power hunting along the driveway, with a good find on a hen bird and an equally good unaided retrieve.

On the opposite side was Mayo man Shane Gainley with his new Champion Garrisoncullin Holly was setting land speed records in some laurels with a multiple flush. She was moved for the retrieve and this took the gloss of her run.

Pat Brennan's FTCh Clodahill Quiv had a workmanlike first run that got her back to Day two and then shone with some technical retrieves around a release pen.

Ivan Wilson from Gortin, with FTCh Spireview Dale was impressive with a couple of good marked retrieves. The Rabby Patterson bred Nosrettap Amber handled by Mick Walsh got what you would just not want in cover for an

eighteen month old's first Championship and he wisely called her ashore.

Raymond Wilson's Int FTCh Meadowbeat Neala who was third last year at the same venue had an impressive first run and finished third again and also collected the Carthageinne Trophy for the best retrieve of the Championship.

FTCh Hollydrive Pretty Polly put in one of the hunting displays in heavy cover of the Championship and there cannot have been much between her and the winner. Many spectators had her as the clear winner but she was to finish second.

Capt Kelly's FTCh Sliabh Rosie came into the Championship recovering from injury and was pulled up after fifty metres. Eamonn Taaffe's veteran Int FTCh Hollydrive Bert had two solid runs that got him a creditable fourth place.



Ivan McAlister, Secretary IKC Spaniel Championship committee about to announce the Awards.



Jamie Clegg, MD Feedwell Dogfoods giving a brief speech at the closing ceremony.

DAY 2

We moved ground for the second day which was more even. All dogs got

similar ground with low bramble in open woodland Runs were short with minor indiscretions paying a high price.

Gary Wilson from Enniskillen with his black and white dog Sliabh Henry was one of the stand out dogs with a fine



Judges (l/r) John Keeshan, Will Clulee, Aidan Patterson & Stuart Morgan.



Guns (l/r) Damian Newman, Gordon Blakeney, Fintan Kelly & John Groves.

hunting display and good retrieving.

Books were made up by the Judges in record time and with a large pond nearby the mandatory water test was uneventful. All dogs receiving an award at the Championship must go to water under IKC rules. Then it was back to Dundarave House for mince pies and the presentation in the Main Hall. Mr Jamie Clegg spoke on behalf of the main sponsors FEEDWELL DOGFOODS and the presentation was completed by Championship Secretary Ivan McAlister.

RESULTS

1st Ed McAuley's FTCh Gardenrath Cheyenne

2nd Mick Walsh's Int FTCh Hollydrive Pretty Polly

3rd Raymond Wilson's Int FTCh Meadowbeat Neala of Greenbush

4th Eamonn Taaffe's Int FTCh Hollydrive Bert

Diploma of Honour

Ronan Gorman's Bishwell Barrett of Commonshall

Steve Blackwell's Int FTCh Luthmor Draco

Mick Walsh's FTCh Hollydrive Defoe

Pat Brennan's FTCh Clodahill Quiv

Gary Wilson's Sliabh Henry

Louis Rice's Sliabh Aoife

William Edgar's FTCh Greenbrush Iced

Shane Gainley's FTCh Garrisoncullin Tio

Ronan Gorman's Coalin's Sunrise of Killyvocca

Best Retrieve Raymond Wilson's Int FTCh Meadowbeat Neala

Guns Choice: Shane Gainley's FTCh Garrisoncullin Holly

Spaniel of the Year: Shane Gainley's FTCh Garrisoncullin Holly

Dundarave Gamekeepers (l/r) Robert McBurney, Ian Chapman (Estate Manager) & Alan Greer.



Congratulations to winners exclusively fed on Feedwell



John Barr Jr with FT Ch Shimnavale Jasmine of Drumnamoe Winner 2018 IKC Retriever Championship



Raymond Wilson with Int FT Ch Meadowbeat Neala of Greenbush 3rd in the IKC Spaniel Championship & 2nd in the GB KC Spaniel Championships



Ed McCauley with FT Ch Gardenrath Cheyenne Winner of the IKC Spaniel Championship

- Quality Nutrition for Working Dogs
- Made in County Down
- Natural Omega 3 and 6 Oils
- No Artificial Colours or Preservatives
- Sold throughout Ireland



Sales enquiries – jeff@feedwell.com Tel: 07740579198/0862582662

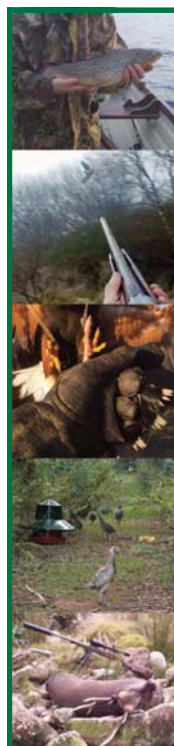
W: www.feedwell.com E: info@feedwell.com  /Feedwell1962

Feedwell Animal Foods Ltd, The Old Mill, Annsborough, Castlewellan, Co Down. BT31 9NH

Retriever Working Tests Calendar 2020

Dates and venues correct at the time of going to press

Date	Venue	Organisers	Contact	Telephone
19 May	Rademon	UGL	Timmy Woods	07860241617
23 May	Scarva House	NIGF&SS	Philip Turner	028 9261 1845
30 May	Rann Game Shoot	Craigavon Gundog Club	Noel Doran	028 3832 5272
6 June	TBC	UGL	Timmy Woods	0786024161
13 June	Gilford	Craigavon Gundog Club	Noel Doran	028 3832 5272
20 June	TBC	Lab Club of NI	Daniel McKelvey	07714720055
21 June	Glennoo	Lab Club of Ireland	Declan Boyle	07590611947
4 July	Glenarm	Ulster Select Final	Jim Buchanan	07745088266
18 July	Shanes Castle	NAGC	Liam Dolan	07921314897
25 July	Scarva	NIGFSS	Philip Turner	028 9261 1845
1 August	Gosford	Craigavon Gundog Club	Noel Doran	028 3822 5272
8 August	Larchfield	URC	G Murdoch	07768670022
22 August	Murley Mountain Wind Farm BT78 2HD	Fermanagh Gundog Club	Sara Neogard Blakeney	00353877833698
29 August	Irish Game Fair Shanes Castle	RED Mills Spaniel Tests & Cocker Tests	Ken Lindsay	Top Spaniel wins £1,000 plus Barbour Coat.
30 August	Irish Game Fair Shanes Castle	Feedwell Prelim, Novice & Open Retriever Tests	Albert Titterington	Top Retriever wins £1,000 plus Barbour Coat.



Country Sports Ireland Individual Membership £30/€40



For information on Group Membership please contact us using details below

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

Mobile:

Email:

Please return complete form to: Membership Department, Country Sports Ireland 56 Lisnagrot Road, Kilrea, Co. Derry, BT51 5SF
For further information: t. 087 6509598. t. 07542 111542

Join online at www.countrysportsireland.org



087 6509598 07542 111542

Pointers & Setters Autumn Review

Some of the competitors at the Irish Snipe Championship in the Midlands.

(Photo Raymond Monroe)

‘Winter is an etching, spring a watercolour, summer an oil painting, and autumn a mosaic of them all’ wrote Stanley Horowitz and Autumn 2019 will be remembered for inclement weather conditions with seemingly constant rain bringing flooding. But despite the inhospitality of the weather, thankfully no trials were cancelled.

The European red setter trials on snipe were held on 16th and 17th October in Mountbellew in the county of Galway and these were held under

FCI rules meaning CACITs could be awarded to the winning dogs. The first day of the festival, before the main event, there were wins for J.F. Meret’s Jade de la Previere (CACIT) and Bill Connolly’s Sheantullagh Cormac (Res. CACIT). In the run off J.F. Meret’s dog prevailed and he was awarded the CACIT.

The championship is structured with two separate trials each day with separate judges with the winner of each trial competing in a run off or “barrage” to win the days CACIT. If dogs did not

receive an excellent award, they cannot compete for the CACIT.

The first day of the European Championship the winner of stake one was Ray O’Dwyer’s Sheantullagh Bolt (CACIT) and the winner of Stake two was J.F. Meret’s Jade de la Previere (Reserve CACIT). Day 2 there were wins for J.F. Meret’s Jessie de l’Anse De Ty Roux (Res CACIT) in Stake one and Paraig Kiely’s FTCh Ballinahemmy Rose in Stake two.

The European Champion on snipe for 2019 is awarded on a cumulative points basis over the two days and the winner was announced as J.F. Meret’s Jessie de l’Anse De Ty Roux handled by Philippe Guittard with reserve champion to Pat Reape’s FTCh Ballinahemmy Mike.

The next day on Friday 18th October, the Irish derby stake hosted by the Irish Red Setter club was held in Connemara officiated by judges Raymond O’Dwyer (Sheantullagh) and Jim Sheridan (Craigrua). The first round was run in solo while consecutive rounds were run in brace. Unusually the stake reflected just one breed - the Irish Red Setter.

There was an incredibly high standard of dog work and it was easy to forget this was a puppy stake albeit with championship points on offer. After three rounds the judges awarded Ken Watterson (Isle of Man) winner with



*Pat Reape was Reserve Champion at the European Championships on snipe with FTCh Ballinahemmy Mike.
(Photo Raymond Monroe)*



Ken Watterson's Cronk Mooar Ola won the Irish Derby in 2019.

(Photo Raymond Monroe)

Cronk Mooar Ola on a wisp of snipe achieving an excellent award, Hugh Brady's Ballydavid The Morrigan set a brace of grouse also received an excellent award and third was Ken Watterson with Cronk Mooar Ness set a snipe received a very good award. What an excellent and memorable achievement for Ken with two awards in such a prestigious stake.

The next day was the Red setter confined in Kilchreest under judges Bill Connolly (Ballyellen) and Colin Forde (Bownard). Apologies if I am leaving out more award winners but I believe first place was Ray O'Dwyer's Sheantullagh Bolt on snipe. On the same day was the English setter breed stake which took place in the Dublin Mountains.

The winner was Eugene Moriarty's Moonhall Ahiga. Second place was Gerald Devine's Gortinreagh Jack Duggan and third was Billy Grace's FTCh Capparoe Jata. Congratulations to Eugene for his first trial win with his excellently trained dog.

The English setter beet trials on 21st and 22 September in Tinryland, county Carlow were memorable events for Billy Grace. In the breed stake he was first and second with FTCh Capparoe Aife and FTCh Capparoe Jata while in the open stake FTCh Capparoe Jata was

victorious ahead of Kerry's Rathmore man Donal O'Leary's English setter FTCh Cindy's Pick up and Maeve Waters Irish setter Blackstairs Misty in third.

On a cold but dry Saturday 26th October, Connaught field trials returned to Mountbellew under the judges Pat

Dooley (Wildfield) and Larry Quinn. There was a good entry and five brace were recalled to improve their chances in the second round. After a tension filled wait, the winner was announced as Paraig Kiely's Gordon setter Birchvalley Rusty Tipped. A superb win for Paraig after a great year. Second was Hugh Brady's Malstabodarna Embla and third was Wicklow man Brian MacDiarmada's Oileannoir Tinnie.

On the same day was the Ulster Red Setter breed stakes in Slieveanorra, county Antrim under judges Dessie Linton and Ray Monroe. Winner was Mark Adams FTCh Hunshigo Donard while also having second place with his FTCh Ballydavid Spitfire. Third was Andy Law's Shanrycon Diamond and reserve to Bill Connolly's Sheantullagh Djouce.

The next day Sunday 27th October the Irish red and white setter stake held its open stake to a full card of thirty dogs. A really difficult scenting condition as a bitter north wind blew across the hill yielded another win for Mark Adams' Hunshigo Donard with



Eugene Moriarty with Moonhall Ahiga.

(Photo Raymond Monroe)



Paraig Kiely's Birchvalley Rusty Tipped won the Connaught Field trial club stake in October.
(Photo Hugh Brady)

second place to Jim Sheridan's FTCh Craigrua Devin and third to Des Linton's Craigrua Flute.

On the same day in the north, the Ulster red setter club held its open stake on Glenwherry Hill Farm in Antrim. Judges Gerald Devine (Gortinreagh) and John Murray awarded the winner as Ray O'Dwyer's Sheantullagh Bolt with second place to Carol Calvert's Ballyellen Blue Grass.

The last of the Ulster trials in 2019 was the Ulster Irish red setter club's re-scheduled trial on November 9th in Legfordrum county Tyrone on pheasants, partridge and snipe. Game was plentiful and while the ground was wet there was a great standard of dog work particularly in the second round. Judges for the day was Carol Calvert (Glynlark) and Mark Adams.

The results were first Joan McGillycuddy's Int. FTCh (Snipe Ch) Ballydavid Starjet of the Kingdom on pheasant, second was Michael Houston's Int. FTCh Ardelinis Francie Frank on snipe, partridge and pheasant and third was Hugh Brady's Malstabodarna Embla on snipe and pheasant. Reserve was Gerald Devine's Gortinreagh Komiko on pheasant and COMs for James Coyle's pointer Brackbawn Wanda (pheasant) and Gerald Devine's Gortinreagh Jack Duggan (snipe).

The next day was the Donegal field

trial clubs trial also in Legfordrum under the judges of Michael Houston and Des Linton. The winner was declared as Gerald Devine's FTCh Ballyellen Tango, second was awarded to Mark Adams Irish setter Hunshigo Donard with third to Gerald Devine's Gortinreagh Jack Duggan and reserve to Jim Sheridan's red & white setter FTCh Craigrua Devin. There were COMs for Kevin Quinn's Sheantullagh Bronagh and Gerald Devine's Ballyellen Duke.

The Irish snipe championship festival is run by the Championship Committee of the Irish Kennel Club and is chaired by Strabane native Michael Houston

and the secretary and treasurer team of Christy Davitt and Maeve Waters.

All of the trials were held in the midlands with the base for the trials being the Cleggan Court hotel in Athlone. On the 13th November, the Native Breeds Society held its confined stake on an extremely damp day under judges Billy Grace (Capparoo) and Jim Crotty (Brackbawn) and the winner was Ken Watterson's Irish setter Cronk Mooar Ola with Pat Reape's Lisduvoge Lilly in second and Christy Davitt's Irish setter Blackstairs Misty in third.

The next day was the Gaelic Gundog League and Ken Watterson's memorable run continued winning all of the awards: winning with Cronk Mooar Ness, second was Cronk Mooar Ola and third was the dam Erinvale Nippy Glow.

On Friday 15th November, the Native Breeds open stake was run and the winner and runner-up was Billy Grace's English setter team of FTCh Capparoo Jata and pup Upperwood Resolution of Capparoo with third place to Jim Crotty's pointer dog Brackbawn Thunder. Thanks to social media and particularly Ray Monroe for posting results.

The next two days were the second running of the Irish Championship on snipe. 42 dogs went to post under experienced trio of judges Michael Houston (Sperrin), Billy Grace



Judges were Billy Grace, Jim Crotty, Michael Houston with official gun Helmut Cywinski
(Photo Ray Monroe)



Malstabodarna Embla setting a snipe in round two (Photo Heike Sporleder)

(Capparoe) and Jim Crotty (Brackbawn). The first day was like a scene from the horror film *The Others*. After initial low hanging freezing fog, it dissipated to a breathless cold day where the ice crackled in pools. The first six brace were victims of the luck of the draw as dogs searched erratically trying to find the wind. Ground work therefore was not of championship standard and none made it through to Day 2.

After a successful dinner in the Cleggan Court Hotel, Athlone, six brace got the opportunity to improve their chances in the Irish Championship. The first brace was Aidan Dunne's Irish setter Maodhog Feochadan and Larry Quinn Irish red & white setter Lisduvoge Patch. Larry Quinn added to his credentials with a nice find and great quartering. The second brace was Vincent Flannelly's Irish red & white setter Benwhisken Stinger and Brian MacDiarmada's Irish setter Oileannoir Tinnie. Benwhisken Stinger had two finds on Day 1 and added another find and back in round 2.

The third brace was Hugh Brady's

Malstabodarna Embla of Ballydavid and Pat Reape's FTCh Ballinahemmy Mike. Embla had a nice find in this round and dogs quartered the ground well. Brace 4 was Joan McGillicuddy's FTCh Ballydavid Gaelforce of the Kingdom and Joe O'Sullivan's Gardenfield Rena. Next brace was Aidan Dunne's FTCh Blackstairs Behenny and Christy Davitt's Irish setter Blackstairs Misty. Rena and Behenny were then paired together. Last brace was Alan Bartley's grouse championship winner FTCh Lisduvoge Tyson with Donal O'Leary's English setter Kerry's Pick Up. Gaelforce, who had been eliminated earlier, was paired with Tyson where both dogs ran well. The run ended with Gaelforce finding on snipe but of course it did not matter.

The judges waved their arms indicating the Second Irish Championship on snipe had ended and competitors and spectators returned to the cars for lunch before returning to the Cleggan Court for the results. Secretary Christy Davitt thanked the local landowners and local gun clubs and

Vincent Flannelly for the use of the ground. He specifically praised the foreign competitors and in particular the gun for the two days, Helmut Cywinski who had flown from Germany specifically for this task.

The results were read in reverse order which increased the tension enormously. Best foreign dog was Heike Sporleder's Irish Setter Vilslev Nilsson. Certificate of Merits were awarded to Vincent Flannelly's Irish red & white setter Benwhisken Stinger and Larry Quinn's Irish red & white setter Lisduvoge Patch. Third place was awarded to Pat Reape's Irish Setter FTCh Ballinahemmy Mike with second to Aidan Dunne's Maodhog Feochadan with the winner being Hugh Brady's Malstabodarna Embla of Ballydavid. Breeder of the winner was Paul Thompson and Lisa Ericsson. The beautiful snipe trophy commissioned in France and the Irish Kennel Club's Tommy Dunne Memorial cup were presented for the second time and with that the 2019 field trialling season had come to a close.

The KC AV Variety Spaniel (except Cocker) Championship

The 2020 Any Variety Spaniel (Excluding Cocker) Championship was held at Blenheim Palace on 15th-17th January 2020 by gracious permission of the Duke of Marlborough.

Blenheim Palace was an outstanding venue for this prestigious Championship and Headkeeper Lee Walker and his team had worked incredibly hard to ensure the ground was perfect to enable dogs and handlers to perform at their best. There was indeed some outstanding dog work to be seen which was avidly watched by the enthusiastic gallery over the three days.

Judges for the Championship were Peter Avery, Martin Ford, Chris Thurston-Woolnough and Mick Walsh.

Thanks were expressed to everyone involved in the Championship, in particular the Kennel Club Working Party who had worked for months to assist in the organisation of all aspects of the event. Thanks too were expressed

for the generous sponsors Skinner's Field & Trial and BASC for their support.

William Delamore, Sales and Marketing Director at Skinner's Pet Foods said: "We are thrilled to be able to support such a fantastic event. The standard of performance was exceptionally high this year, which was a pleasure to witness. We would like to say well done to all who took part and congratulate those who won an award."

Results:

- 1st Mr I Openshaw's FTCh Mountvue Heidi, handled by Mr S Dixon (also receiving Gun's Choice, Best Bitch and Best Hunting Spaniel)
- 2nd Mr R Wilson's INT FTCh Meadowbeat Neala of Greenbrush (also best newcomer handler)
- 3rd Mr D Horseman's Cornermarsh Charisma
- 4th Mrs T Siwek's FTCh Surefly Sassy



Diploma of Merit:

- FTCh Hagghouse Warrior - Andy Cunningham
- FTCh Broomfield Anna - Eddie Scott
- FTCh Bucklawren Krusoe - Simon Jones
- FTCh Murrayeden Brandi - Andy Skinner
- Spirocon Annie of Jenoren - Jim Adamson
- FTCh Helmsway Harrington - Ian English
- INT FTCh Luthmhor Draco - Steve Blackwell (also Best Dog)
- Cornermarsh High Scar Girl - David Horsman
- FTCh Bucklawren Luna of Stockingford - Maurice Stanbury
- Kansas Kate - Sarah Higgins
- FTCh Fuselea Delight - Ian Clark
- INT FTCh Gardenrath Cheyenne - Ed McCauley
- Cowarnecourt Keisha - Angelo Curto
- FTCh Gorsebay Snipe - Craig Lewis
- FTCh Willowsaul Whizz - Kev Richardson
- FTCh Syncerus Solo of Creccamarsh - Richard Biggs
- FTCh Hillfighter Alps - Jon Bailey
- FTCh Hiluxdream Clipper of Cheweky - Mark Whitehouse
- FTCh Dawsonlee Jellybean - Simon Dixon
- FTCh Walkers Winkle - Aubrey Ladyman
- Delflush Dice - Martin Bell



Team from sponsors Skinners & BASC.

PICTURED AT THE E.S.S. CHAMPIONSHIP 2020



THANKS TO RAYMOND WILSON & SKINNER'S FOR SUPPLYING THE PHOTOS



PROUD TO SUPPORT THE IRISH GAME FAIR



Skinner's
has been
trusted by
dogs & their
owners for
over 50 years.

Our Field &
Trial range for
working and active
dogs support the
day to day energetic
requirements for dogs of
all breeds.

These diets are formulated to help
support the development of muscles
& prepare the cardiovascular systems
for explosions of energy use & post-exercise
replenishment.

Each diet is made at our Suffolk Mill using high
quality, consistent ingredients.



www.skinner.co.uk

TRADITION. HERITAGE. TRUST.



By Peter Smith

Irish Eyes were smiling at the IGL Retriever Championships

The 2019 IGL Retriever Championship was held on Glenalmond Estate, Perthshire from Monday 25th to Wednesday 27th November by kind permission of Astrup-Fernley. The principal Sponsor was Roger Skinner Limited. The Judges were Keith Bedford and Lynn Mitchell who were on the right of the line, and Phil Parkin and Damien Newman occupied the left. As is expected all of the Judges were serious and experienced practitioners of the art. Steward of the Beat was Glenalmond Headkeeper Brian Dickson, who along with his team prepared the ground to perfection, and ensured that the trial ran very smoothly throughout.

Sixty-four dogs qualified, but two did not run, which unfortunately included last year's Champion FTCh Harperrig Breac who was unable to defend his title because of injury. Of the sixty two that did run nearly all had achieved FTCh status in qualifying, showing the high standard the event now demands. There were 48 dogs, 14 bitches and four of the total field were Golden Retrievers.

The Irish representatives were:

John Barr with Int FTCh Shinnavale Jasmine of Drumnamoe,

qualifying as the current Irish Champion

Richard Johnston with FTCh Trefaldwyn Kribensis of Shadowbrae

Declan Boyle with Int FTCh Miller McDuff

John Williamson with GR Tealcreek Isla

Damien Kelly with Dee's Companion

Tony Rodgers with Int FTCh Highwalk Galway

Matty Lambden with Int FTCh Tamrose Aragon

The Championship was conducted almost entirely on white grass and bracken, typical of the rolling Perthshire hills which make up the Estate, and there were two strategically sited duck ponds which altogether produced an abundance and variety of game rarely seen even at an IGL. Included were blackgame, grouse, woodcock, snipe, duck, partridge, pheasant, rabbits, and hares.

After an early meet to cater for formal registration and introductions, we headed to the hill in inclement weather which was to persist for most of the day, and after lining out, the



Declan Boyle and Int FTCh Miller McDuff with the winner's trophies.

Photo by MITRA HAKIMI

first shot was fired at 9.10am. With much thought and pragmatic thinking, which was to persist for the three days, the Judges reduced the first round to one retrieve. This quite sensibly allowed all dogs to have at least some work on the first day, and settle in to some serious retrieving in subsequent rounds.

The first three birds shot were woodcock, two of which tucked in and required some good hunting, before the third was tried for after a delay. The second dog down on this bird, which seemed to move after falling in to some unsighted cover, was Declan Boyle with Miller McDuff, and after being called up there were some sharp intakes of breath as the Judges went to look. No-bird was declared, and redemption was swift as the two dogs



Winner Int FTCh Miller McDuff returns with a very lively cock bird.



Louie Robertson handling in typical Glenalmond country.

were taken to the other end of the line, where two dogs had already failed. Declan and “Paddy” proceeded to achieve a three dog eyewipe – a promising start after some initial fear inducing trauma.

The line moved smoothly on with game coming quickly to hand, but accurate marking and pin-point accuracy in handling were required to stay competitive. Good work was seen from Steve Richardson with FTCh Birdsgreen Cluedo of Wedgenock, Billy Steel Snr with FTCh Mitforton Oscar of Leadhills and John Barr with Ftch Shimnavale Jasmine of Drumnamoe.

Trouble was encountered on the right of the line when a hen pheasant was shot and landed over a fence into a conifer plantation. First Andy Latham and Aneeterbeg Seamus and then Ms Sam Drysdale, who had qualified FTCh Highwalk Kerry with two wins in Ireland, were sent for the bird but both failed to negotiate the fence despite repeated commands of “get over.” Dawn Scott with FTCh Diglake Jasmin eventually picked the bird, but again made hard work of the fence and all three dogs were eliminated. On the left John Halsted had his first retrieve of the day with FTCh MacGiriaght Foxy Lady, a cock grouse shot into heather and smartly picked.

Richard Johnston made a good start with FTCh Trefaldwyn Kribensis of

Shadowbrae and some smart handling to eye-wipe Glynnis Hillier with FTCh Hitowngreen Diamond on a woodcock shot far out on a heather clad bank. Unfortunately during the next phase of work Damien Kelly with Dee’s Companion and Tony Rodgers with Int FTCh Highwalk Galway, failed first dog down on birds that moved but were subsequently picked. At 12.45pm and at the end of Round 1, twelve dogs had been eliminated.

The second round commenced in dramatic style when Leigh Jackson and FTCh Laggengill Dawn of Blackgrass were eye-wiped by Katerina Ljungquist with Meadowlark Humpty Dumpty. Katerina, I believe, is the first person from Sweden to

qualify for the IGL, and she should be justifiably proud of her efforts in this her first Championship. Some superb work was produced by Mike Jones with Ffnongain Buzzard of Wauniago on a running pheasant in heather. The dog hunted the fall perfectly, but was given the runaround by a determined ‘woundie.’ After some great hunting the dog picked in front of a delighted line whose applause was spontaneous. As Judge Phil Parkin remarked “that is what we come to the IGI to see”.

Mid afternoon on a hill, with the line at least one hundred and eighty yards long, the trial moved to a critical stage, with the Judges demanding Championship quality work. Declan Boyle and Int FTCh Miller McDuff maintained progress on a duck across the line and downhill. We now ran into some serious game as we moved towards a duck pond on the right of the line. Sporadic flights of duck produced challenging work which saw the end of the trial for a number of dogs, including those of John Barr and Richard Johnston. Time was called as we neared the end of Round 2 and thirty-nine dogs were called back for Day 2. The only Irish survivors were Declan Boyle and Matty Lambden.

Day Two

Day two again demanded an early



Matty Lambden hands a bird to Judge Phil Parkin.



Judges Damian Newman, Phil Parkin, Lynn Mitchell and Keith Bedford.

start and we resumed on the hill where we had finished on the previous evening. Again the weather did not oblige, and we experienced torrential rain, wind and low cloud which posed serious problems for all. On the right, veteran Tony Parnell with Mordonmanor Bree of Blackharn came to grief, being eye-wiped by Reuben Corbett with Ticefield Dazed n'Confused. Also showing good form were Louie Robertson with Mitforton Onour, who eye-wiped Polly Dunckley and Castlemans Oasis of Smithsteads. Also making quiet and unnoticed if steady progress were Nathan Laffy with the remaining Goldie Think Twice Zero to Hero, Jamie Bettinson with FTCh Tanyrhallt Blue Bloods and Clare Baker with FTCh The Windbreak Whisperer of Arklebar.

Good work was also seen from Kevin Butler with Turpingreen Ando who retrieved a bird some two hundred yards away over two fences, eye-wiping Allie Hogsberg with Quarnford Pochard of Rufriver in the process. David Field with the evergreen FTCh Artistryn Ulrich finished off round two with some challenging work, summed up succinctly by the handler as "I can only keep asking him to do the

impossible for so long". Round 3 of two retrieves now commenced.

Early success came to Declan Boyle with two straightforward retrieves in a long line which at times stretched to two hundred yards, on a high plateau of white grass and heather. The weather proved difficult and accounted for some bizarre conditions as follows. With four dogs in line, two birds were shot on the right, one wounded and one dead. The wounded bird was picked immediately, but the dead bird was offered to the other end of the line. At 180 yards and over a fence, Billy Steel Snr with Mitforton Oscar of Leadhills and Kirsty Cousins with FTCh Hawksgarth Sirocco both tried and failed. Coming from the other end of the line Louie Robertson with FTCh Mitforton Nacho and Kelvin Nettlelingham with Tagabea Pretty Thing of Luddesdowne both tried on what should have been a memory. Unfortunately the mist came down, dogs mis-marked and all four were eliminated, the bird being picked by the Judges. At the end of Round 3 the day concluded with twenty-one competitors remaining, including Declan Boyle and Matty Lambden.

Day Three

Thankfully Day 3 dawned with clearing rain and rising mist to reveal the true magnificence of this wonderful sporting estate. Proceeding uphill we levelled out to reveal a large duck pond which produced enough game to make inroads into Round 4 of one retrieve.

The true nature of the hazards of trialling were quickly revealed to David Marx with Lockthorn Ziva, who achieved a dazzling three dog eye-wipe early on, only to be eliminated on his next retrieve for not making the area. Also eliminated at this stage, after previous steady work were Noah Parsons with FTCh Nettlebone Andy of Fendawood, Sharon Dingle with FTCh Bellspaddle Intrepid and Laura Hill with Stauntonvale Moose Milk. Matty Lambden now produced what for me was one of the most spectacular retrieves of the Championship. A partridge was shot and flicked on landing some one hundred yards to the left of the line in tussocky heather. With one command FTCh Tamrose Aragon went like an arrow to the fall, hunted splendidly and produced the bird to a deserved round of applause. Round 5 of 2 retrieves now started with seventeen dogs, as we moved to a tense finish.



Matty Lambden and FTCh Tamrose Aragon receiving 3rd place awards.

David Field produced his now annual piece of magic on a running bird with FTCh Artistry Ulrich, while John Halsted seized an opportunity to show the talent of FTCh Brocklebank Bronze of Chatsworth on a long bird behind the line. At this point something was required to cement a good performance with something special and highly visible, and so it happened for Declan Boyle and FTCh Miller McDuff. A bird was shot and wounded about fifty yards in front of the line, and “Paddy” was sent immediately. After hitting the fall, a line was taken and the bird produced to tumultuous applause, and now the Irish contingent dared to hope. The remainder of the round proceeded without incident and we made our way to the final retrieve at the water.

A magnificent lake, with sculptured conifers as hides, produced enough birds to test all remaining competitors, and we speculated if the dogs would be sent in a preferred sequence, signifying a hint of the final placings. Declan Boyle and Matty Lambden

being sent early lifted Irish spirits, and after a couple of near mishaps, the Championship ended and we waited at HQ for the result. IGL Secretary Sandra Onens announced the placings as follows:

Results:

- 1st Declan Boyle with Int FTCH Miller McDuff
- 2nd Jamie Bettinson with Wendy Glue’s FTCh Tanyrhallt Blue Bloods
- 3rd Matty Lambden with FTCh Tamrose Aragon
- 4th Mike Jones with Ffynongain Buzzard of Wauniago

Diplomas of Merit:

- Nathan Laffy with GR Think Twice Zero to Hero
- Lee Hartis with Thelma Blumenthal’s FTCh Troddenmills Full Throttle of Leacaz
- John Halsted with Lady Celina Carter’s FTCh Asterix Aguzannis of Chatsworth
- Louie Robertson with Mitforton Onour

Mark Demaine with Burrendale Fergie of Caytonfell

David Field with FTCh Artistry Ulrich

Guns’ Choice: Nathan Laffy with GR Think Twice Zero to Hero

This was a magnificent Championship and all are to be congratulated on spectacular success. Declan Boyle is only the third person from Ireland to win this Championship, the most prestigious event in the retriever calendar, and he is to be heartily congratulated. Matty Lambden also ran a superb Trial and he is the first person from the Republic of Ireland ever to finish, let alone achieve a high placing in the event.

To the IGL, faultless as usual, but know and understand what countless hours of organisation are done so we can run this special event. Onwards to Ampton 2020. From those lucky enough to have experienced Glenalmond, a big thank you to all concerned!

Photographs courtesy of John Lupton and Clare Wood

THE Gunstore.ie

Connolly's
RED MILLS
SINCE 1908

Shop in-store or online at
www.redmillsoutdoorpursuits.ie



Some of the popular brands we stock:

 **BERETTA**



Blaser



 **BROWNING**

 **Benelli**



 **Hornady**


TIKKA
BY SAKO

sako
FINLAND

HÄRKILÄ

 **AIGLE**
DEPUIS 1853

 **Deerhunter**
OUTDOOR CLOTHING

Seeland

 **BERGARA**

STEINER 

Remington

Connolly's RED MILLS, Cillín Hill Retail Park, Dublin Road, Kilkenny
Ph: 056 4449010 Email: info@thegunstore.ie

Opening hours: Monday - Saturday, 8am - 6pm

53rd IKC Irish Retriever Championships

If the value of a working gundog could be said to be measured in just how versatile he can be; then the winner of this year's 53rd Irish retriever championships left no doubt in anybody's mind that he is a dog that can face any challenging retrieve, on any type of ground set out before him.

Int FTCh Miller McDuff won the Irish retriever Championship in 2017 at Shelton Abbey where he proved his worth as a dog capable of sitting steady under one of the heaviest pheasant drives in the country. In early December, this year, he won the IGL, (International Gundog league), Championship in Scotland after coming through an entry of 64 dogs over three days and then, less than two weeks later, he emerged victorious to win the 2019 Irish retriever Championships for his second time.

The venue for this year's championship was Glenoo Shooting Estate. Nestled between the south Tyrone mountains and the valleys of Slieve Beagh, the shoot spreads out over 30,000 acres of the wildest Irish landscape. It offers a wide range of ground with drives developed around the natural topography of the area.

We were here by the kind invitation of Mr Tom Woods and Guns. Tom has been a long-time supporter of gundog trials and has hosted spaniel trials, HPR trials and retriever trials at Glenoo over the years. This would be the first time, though, that a Championship from any of the gundog sections would be held here.

The time, work and preparation required to make the ground ready for the championships was very evident over the two days with ample supply of game and the smooth transition between drives. The committee are indebted to Tom and his team for his patience, help and support throughout the year of preparation.

As always, this event relies on the generosity of donations from the various retriever clubs throughout the country and also from another long-time supporter of Irish dog sports Connolly's Red Mills.

The judges for this year's Championships were Mr Paul Toal (Ireland), Mr Gary McCutcheon (Ireland), Mr Ian Openshaw (UK) and Mr Roddy Forbes (Scotland).

- Forty six dogs qualified for this



year's Championships.

- Thirty nine made the card for the first morning with one withdrawal.

- Of those running, 25 qualified as stake winners with the remaining 13 dogs eligible through 2nd placings.

- All dogs running were Labradors with the exception of one Golden Retriever bitch, FTCh Tealcreek Isla owned and handled by Mr John Williamson. She has a strong record in the Championships having gained a Diploma of merit two years ago at Shelton and making it to the final ten dogs last year at Corrard.

- The oldest dog to make the running order was FTCH Rosenallis Enzo at over 8 years old. Having broken his leg earlier in the year it was an amazing achievement for him to be able to take his place in the running order.

- The youngest dog competing was two and a half year old Tullyah Jasper, owned and handled by Mr Tony Rodgers, who qualified by winning the

Ready for the competition to begin.





Competitors line out.

Derby Stake at Mohill last year.

Hopes of a clear winter's day on the mountains faded fast as light slowly came into the morning on the first day. Low clouds over the mountains with little wind and heavy persistent rain saw us heading into the lower valley, down through a moisture laden old spruce wood which opened up to an area of rushy fields and bracken for a pheasant drive.

Even numbered dogs were judged by Mr Gary McCutcheon and Mr Ian Openshaw for the first round retrieves. Uneven numbered dogs, under Mr Paul Toal and Mr Roddy Forbes took their place up on the hill to the left of the drive, separated from a wood by a wide bank of bracken. The drive was short but produced enough birds to see us through the majority of first round retrieves. Dogs were sent from open ground into woodland out of sight. Although these

retrieves were not long distances it does require the handler to be patient and to trust their dog to find the bird unaided.

Five dogs went out on this round of retrieves through failing to find or eye wipes:

Dog No. 1 Lisnalinchy Eskimo handled by Mr Paul Burns.

Dog No. 5 FTCH GB FTCH Copperbirch Mandella handled by Mr Sean Diamond

Dog No. 7 Kilgolagh Morning Dew handled by Mr Anthony Reilly

Dog No.20 Copperbirch Rome handled by Mr Keith Matthews

DogNo. 35 Tullyah Faith handled by Mr Michael Fleville

Once the ground was cleared, our host Tom invited us to follow him to the duck drive.

On route I was told that this particular drive was fondly known as "The

Congo".... quite simply because once a dog or a person stepped into the cover they disappeared, never to be seen again until they emerged back from whence they came.

This cover caused few problems to the dogs on the side of the line where Paul Toal and Roddy Forbes were judging.

Down by the lakeshore, however, the dogs under judges Mr Gary McCutcheon and Mr Ian Openshaw were facing quite a different scenario.

A mark had been given on a duck which had landed in hard over a cluster of tall old spruce trees to the left far bank of the lake. It was a long swim, the width was about 90 yards with an added distraction of the drive continuing and duck landing to the far right of the lake.

Two dogs were tried initially and failed to reach the fall:

Dog No.3 FTCH Ulverton Punch



Another view of competitors and dogs.

ACTION AT THE 53RD IKC RETRIEVER CHAMPIONSHIP



ACTION AT THE 53RD IKC RETRIEVER CHAMPIONSHIP



handled by Mr Matty Lambden

Dog No.9 Tamrose Lannister
handled by Mr Jimmy Black

The next dog No. 11 Tievenamara Eve, handled by Mr Ian Davis, was sent to retrieve a duck from the lake which had fallen in line with the duck on the far bank. She was successful in doing so.

Next dog No.13 FTCH Tamrose Aragon, handled by Mr Matty Lambden, was then sent to try for the original bird on the far shore. He made the long swim across, but unfortunately, he pulled too far to the right out of the area of the fall and was called up.

Dog No. 15 Quarrypool Glenda handled by Mr John Behan was also tried and failed.

Dog No.17 Int FTCH Miller McDuff was next dog up. He crossed the lake, hunted the area asked, held the ground well but found nothing. The dog was called in and on his return the judges asked that he pick a bird that had fallen in the water while he had been working the far bank. This he did and he was credited with a retrieve.

Dog No.19 FTCH Tealcreek Isla handled by Mr John Williamson was sent next. She made it to the far bank and did a good job holding the area without a find. When she was called up, however, she persisted in hunting which saw the end of her time in the competition.

Finally dog No. 21 Dorretsland Goshawk handled by Ms Hazel Murphy was also tried but again pulled out to the right of the lake and was called in.

The judges then moved to clear the ground in the woods along the lake and several tidy retrieves were undertaken here before we moved back to the lakeshore again.

Dog No. 31 Yellow Gorse handled by Mr David Quigley was tried on a deceptively tricky retrieve in the splash pool by the slipway. He had to negotiate two strands of fencing but looked for an easier access point on the way in and also on his return this was enough to see him out of the competition.

The low winter sun had broken through the clouds and was sitting just

above the level of the pine trees as two more dogs took their place along the slipway at the lake.

Dog No. 26 Tullyah Jasper, the youngest dog in the championships, owned and handled by Mr Tony Rogers was sent for a retrieve across the middle of the lake to the far shore. The retrieve was directly into the sun but by now the high trees that surrounded the lake cast the far bank into deep shadow. So, not only was the distance longer than the previous water retrieve, it was also extremely difficult for the handler to help his dog once it entered the shadows on the far side. Tony's dog made the far bank and flushed a duck that had been marked by the judge standing there. He was credited with the retrieve. For a dog so young he showed incredible maturity in coping with such a technically difficult retrieve.

Next dog was No.28 Trefalwyn Kribensis of Shadowbrae, (placed second in last year's championships), owned and handled by Mr Richard Johnston. He cast his dog across the lake to follow the ribbon of sunlight that danced along the surface. One more push to encourage the dog before he disappeared into the shadows on the far shore. Our judge on the far bank radioed in to indicate the dog had reached the area of the fall. With a little handling from Richard simply to steady the dog in the area very quickly a duck was flushed and flew low over the lake. He was credited with the retrieve and was called back across the lake. It was a long cold swim back to the shore, part of which he had to negotiate his way between two rafts of duck that had drifted into his line. He showed incredible self-control by swimming straight through without disturbing a single bird off the water.

With the clouds breaking up we took advantage of that little extra daylight and headed up the valley to a drive called the Watchtower. This was a small compact drive across bracken and heather. The judges were hoping to finish out all second round retrieves before closing their books for the day.

Unfortunately, darkness crept into the

valley sooner than we had hoped. On the final retrieve of the day we saw dog No.33 FTCH Drumgoose Fabagas of Aithness fail to make the fall and called up. Dog No. 31 FTCH Ringbarn Fletching, handled by Mr Michael Corr, followed up on that retrieve. He made a lovely job of going straight to the area and finding the bird but unfortunately switched on his return seeing him out of the running. The judges conferred and finished for the day.

Day 2.

Twelve dogs and handlers lined out for day two. Four of the twelve were to complete their second round retrieves.

A cold night gave way to a bright morning with broken cloud and the odd snow flurry. We were headed to the valley. This is the place for which Glenoo is best known as a walked up trialling venue. Long sloping sides are cut through by a small fast flowing river which seems to run on to infinity. It offered wonderful viewing for the gallery of followers and the dogs would be tested greatly on their ability to mark and to run directly to a fall without hesitating at the white water rushing through at the bottom of the valley.

Dog No. 32 FTCH Shimnavale Jasmine of Drumnacree handled by Mr John Barr jnr, last year's Championship winner, was the first dog sent on day 2. Hesitation at the water cost her and she was called up quickly.

Lost on this round also were:

Dog No. 36 Crosstone Trickster handled by Mr Kieran Coey

Dog No. 38 Copperbirch Arthur of Scappaflo handled by Mr Martin Fitzgerald

Dog No. 39 FTCH Mayberry Boitien handled by Mr David Fitzgerald.

Within an hour of starting the field had been whittled down to the final eight dogs.

As we made our way along the valley the terrain changed making it a little less straightforward. Rocky outcrops on one side of the valley matched by small birch and spindle woods on the other pushed the dogs, handlers, Guns and gallery higher up both of the valley sides

meaning retrieves were longer and more technically difficult.

The final eight dogs were a true pleasure to watch. Casting without hesitation and crossing the river without difficulty. Dog No. 25 FTCH Skerryview Alisha at Annaloughan, (the only bitch in the final eight line up), Dog No 17. Int FTCH Miller McDuff and Dog No. 27 Dees Companion handled by Mr Damien Kelly really stood apart in these final round of retrieves mainly due to their casting skills, style and ability to hold an area when asked.

The final retrieve of the day epitomised, for me, just why Glenoo is such wonderful ground for testing the merits of good trialling dogs. Mr Damien Kelly's dog, Dees Companion, was sent for a retrieve that had fallen in line with the last Gun onto the top crest

of the valley on the far side. He took the line, never hesitated when crossing the river, and headed up the far bank with speed and style. It took just one further push to get him past the scent of a previous fall but then he did not stop until told to do so by his handler. A quick find then he was on his way home with as much style and speed as before.

When this ground was offered we knew it would be challenging for all sorts of reasons and it did not disappoint. Glenoo proved itself as an unforgiving master. It is ground where mistakes on the part of dog or handler cannot be hidden and where really the best dogs on the day shone through.

Three dogs remained and truly deserved the awards they were given:

First Place : Int FTCh Miller McDuff owned and handled by Mr Declan Boyle.

Trophies for 1st place were: Redmills perpetual trophy, Winners trophy sponsored IRISH COUNTRY SPORTS & COUNTRY LIFE. The Knight Frank Ganly Walters Perpetual Trophy, The Barabara Eustace Duckett Memorial Trophy, The Maude Perpetual Challenge Cup.

Second Place: Dees Companion owned and handled by Mr Damien Kelly. He received The Auckland Perpetual trophy.

Third Place: FTCH Corrib Darcy owned and handled by Mr Paul O'Brien. He received The Barra Flynn Memorial Perpetual Trophy.

Top placed bitch was awarded to FTCH Skerryview Alisha at Annaloughan owned and handled by Mr Peter Colville. He received The Fred McGuirk Perpetual trophy.

53rd IKC Retriever Championship Award Winners



Winner Int FTCh Miller McDuff owned and handled by Mr Declan Boyle who was awarded a range of trophies.



Second Place: Dees Companion owned and handled by Mr Damien Kelly. He received The Auckland Perpetual trophy.



Third Place: FTCH Corrib Darcy owned and handled by Mr Paul O'Brien. He received The Barra Flynn Memorial Perpetual trophy.



Jenny Crozier from Red Mills awarding Mr Peter Colville, The Fred McGuirk Perpetual trophy for top placed bitch for FTCH Skerryview Alisha at Annaloughan.



2019 Irish Kennel Club Championship for Cocker Spaniels

A fine retrieve at the Irish Cocker Championship.

The 2nd Irish Kennel Club Championship for Cocker Spaniels took place on Sunday 15th December 2019 in the ideal surroundings of Ballinlough Estate, Co. Westmeath by kind invitation of Sir Nick and Lady Alice Nugent and Ballinlough Estate shooting syndicate.

Main sponsors for this prestigious event were Connolly's Red Mills and other sponsors included Country Sports Ireland, Irish Game Fair, Alpha Dog Trailers, Sporting Saint Gundog Training Equipment J Warburton Kennel Supplies Harbour Bar and Dogwood Pet Resort.

The ground was ideal spaniel terrain of mainly mixed woodland with patches of bramble, holly and an ivy bottom which enabled dogs to demonstrate their hunting ability and technique. Game supply could only be described as perfect and master of the beat, Gavin Tegetmeier very capably steered the trial in the right direction as far as game was concerned throughout the day. The

exceptionally capable team of guns – Ed McCauley, Sean Rothwell, Fintan Byrne and Gordon Blakeney – knew exactly what was required when shooting over spaniels and barely missed a bird all day.

The experienced team of judges were Pat Brennan and Mark Stewart from Ireland and Peter Avery and Jon Bailey from the UK. Their job cannot have been easy with so many dogs putting in very strong performances throughout the day.

Organised by the Donegal Working Spaniel Club and now into its second year, the event had a distinctly international flavour with several UK dogs competing and a Viking raider from Denmark in the form of Jane Thron Sorensen.

The Championship gets underway

The first dogs called into line, amid glorious sunshine were number 1 FTCH Windwithe Winter Night handled by



Nick Gregory on the left side of the line under Pat Brennan and Jon Bailey and number 2 Ardcaein Jimbob with Anthony Smith at the wheel on the right hand side of the line under Mark Stewart and Peter Avery.

Nick Gregory's FTCH Windwithe Winter Night put in a tidy performance in ivy bottom and bramble, finding a bird positively and completing the retrieve. On the other side, Anthony Smith's Ardcaein Jimbob was demonstrating some very eye catching hunting technique – driving through low bramble, using the wind effectively and finding positively. Jimbob completed his run with a long marked retrieve from heavy cover.

Next up was dog number 3 Rapstaff Hopping Holly handled by Andrew Stewart. Dog and handler were



Championship Winner Ian Openshaw and FTCh Endawood Faith.

operating very effectively as a team with Holly demonstrating text book hunting pattern and technique but unfortunately a failure on a retrieve of a hen pheasant which fell on the woodland edge closed the books Andrew and Holly.

Ian Openshaw's FTCh Mallowdale Shine ran at number 4 in a lovely piece of open woodland. This pretty little bitch took advantage of the favourable ground conditions, demonstrating admirable pace and drive. A clever find under a holly bush and a smart marked retrieve concluded a satisfactory first run.

Running at number 5 was Welsh man Jon Rees with Maessyderwen Millgi. John's bitch was hunting well before enthusiasm got the better of her on a bird shot off her nose.

Ian Openshaw was back in again

with Mallowdale Quad running at number 6. This black cocker dog encountered some tougher cover on his beat and concluded his first run with a retrieve of a bird shot out into a field.

Dog number 7 was Wolverton Drama – again with Ian Openshaw in the driving seat. Drama was unfortunate and passed game on her beat so was eliminated.

Damian Newman's Maighmor Magic, handled by Trevis Crothers came in at number 8. True to her name Magic delivered a high class hunting performance, hitting the bramble hard and finding positively under a fallen tree. Her steadiness was also well tested when a shot bird fell close to her and flapped around for quite some time before the judge was in a position to send her. Magic completed her run with a second dog down eye wipe retrieve from the woodland edge, with a little work.

Next in line, running at number 9 was Nick Gregory's second dog FTCH Misselchalke Nettle. Nick's bitch was neat and tidy in a nice piece of ivy bottom woodland, flushed and retrieved a hen bird followed by a loose retrieve over a wall into a field. A run that Nick could be satisfied with.

Number 10, FTCh Ardcaein Chance, handled by Ivan Wilson was another dog that hunted bramble well. Chance demonstrated good ground treatment, had a classic flush from cover and completed his run with a blind retrieve in a paddock that he made look easy.

Joe Proctor's Dendorbys Girl hunted with pace and precision. Running at number 11, this pretty little bitch delivered an eye catching run – hunting, finding and retrieving in style.

Brian Crothers, under the watchful eye of his daughter Emma was next up at number 12 with FTCh Tamneymartin Ferrin. Unfortunately, Ferrin was eliminated for running in – but she did hunt well before enthusiasm got the better of her.

Proving that number 13 is indeed lucky for some was Mick Walsh with FTCh Mallowdale Quim. This hard

hunting liver cocker dog was full of positive spaniel qualities; pace, power, drive and technique. Quim had an excellent find, followed by a good retrieve to conclude an excellent first run.

Action packed run

Running at number 14, Ian Openshaw's Endawood Faith had a short, action packed run. Faith hit the cover hard and wasn't long off the lead before she was amongst game. A positive find followed by a long blind retrieve out in a paddock completed a short but very satisfactory first leg of a championship standard performance.

Jane Thorn Sorensen travelled all the way from Denmark to run her pretty cocker bitch Mallowdale Queenie at number 15 in the 2019 Irish Kennel Club Championship for Cocker Spaniels. Queenie was busy and eye catching in her approach to hunting. She also withstood considerable temptation when her brace mate had a bird shot and subsequently retrieved right under her nose.

At number 16 was last year's winning handler, Adrian Doris – this time running FTCh Helmsway Kate. This black cocker bitch was very much 'with' Adrian, hunting cleverly and with purpose. Kate was enjoying her cover work and completed a noteworthy run with a blind retrieve of a bird in a field with no fuss.

Last year's winning dog, FTCh Gardenrath Cadillac – this time handled by her owner Tom Hayden was running at number 17. Cadillac was busy and hunted well but a little work on a marked retrieve from woodland out into an adjoining field may have taken a little 'shine' off her performance.

Running at number 18, Derek Bell's Dashing Dave hunted with pace and style. Dave completed a marked retrieve from an awkward area to conclude his run.

With number 19 being a non-runner the last dog to complete its first run was FTCh Endawood Florence at number 20 with a busy Ian Openshaw at the



The winning dog was Ftch Endawood Faith.

helm. Florence's work was effective as she found and retrieved with little effort.

With game coming well to hand the second round commenced around 12 noon. Unfortunately number 1, Nick Gregory's FTCH Windwith the Winter Night was eliminated shortly after commencing its second run when moving whilst another dog was sent for a retrieve.

Anthony Smith's Ardcaein Jimbob built on his first round performance with hunting that had drive and purpose. A find and retrieve in a field completed Anthony's championship.

Number 4, Ian Openshaw's FTCH Mallowdale Shine was the next dog to successfully complete both runs with some positive game finding and a long retrieve completed in a field.

Maighmor Magic, handled by Trevis Crothers running at number 8 made a good job of some very tough cover, finding 2 birds positively and finishing her run with a nice retrieve in a field.

Nick Gregory's bad luck in the

second round continued when he was eliminated with number 9 FTCH Misselchalke Nettle.

Ivan Wilson put in another decent performance with number 10, FTCH Ardcaein Chance, finding in ivy and retrieving from a field.

All was going well for Joe Proctor's Dendorbys Girl at number 11 when a bit of work on a difficult retrieve on a bird shot across a drain undoubtedly knocked him back. The bitch may have been unsighted. However, Joe's bad luck was preceded with some exemplary cover hunting, positive game finding and 2 good retrieves – one a long blind.

The gallery enjoyed the action

Mick Walsh's FTCH Mallowdale Quim put on a spectacular display of cover hunting – full of aggression and drive - much to the enjoyment of the gallery. Unfortunately, Quim hadn't marked a bird which flushed loose just ahead of him and the resultant work on

the retrieve proved to be his undoing. Maybe number 13 was unlucky after all.

Number 14 Ian Openshaw's Endawood Faith hunted a narrow strip of ivy bottom woodland with pace and style in unison with her handler. A positive find followed by a retrieve from the top of a wall concluded another excellent run for this bitch.

Jane Thorn Sorensen's Mallowdale Queenie at number 15 put in another polished performance; full of pace and style coupled with excellent game finding with the 'icing on the cake' being a long marked retrieve completed with flair.

Number 16 FTCH Helmsway Kate with Adrian Doris handling also staked a claim for championship honours with a performance full of positive spaniel qualities. Kate took advantage of nice open ivy bottom woodland to deliver a polished hunting performance topped off with a very clever find on a hen pheasant and a smart retrieve and the end of his run.



Next in line competitors sharing a smile.

We lost last year's Championship Winner at this stage as temptation got the better of number 18 Gardenrath Cadillac.

The last dog running in the 2019 Irish Kennel Club Championship for Cocker Spaniels was number 20 FTCH Endawood Florence. Her hunting was neat and tidy and her run was concluded when she flushed a bird from cover and returned to handler Ian Openshaw with the resultant retrieve.

When the judges made up their books 2 dogs were called for a run-off – Ian Openshaw's Endawood Faith and Adrian Doris's Helmsway Kate. The run-off was extremely tight with both dogs showing no quarter so judges needed to run them for a considerable period of time before being able to separate them. After a water test was successfully completed by all dogs called to water the result of the IKC 2019 Cocker Spaniel Championship was as follows.

Results:

1st : FTCH Endawood Faith, CSB (Ftch Mallowdale Gun x Ftch Mallowdale Midge) – Bred By John Healey Owned by Simon Dixon,

Handled by Ian Openshaw.

2nd: FTCH Helmsway Kate, CSB - Owned and Handled by Adrian Doris.

3rd: Maighmor Magic, CSB - Owned by Damian Newman, Handled by Trevis Crothers.

4th: FTCH Endawood Francesca, CSB - Owned by Alex Hayes, Handled by Ian Openshaw.

Diplomas of Merit:

Ardcaein Jimbob, CSD - Owned and handled by Anthony Smith.

FTCH Mallowdale Shine, CSB - Owned by S. Charlton, Handled by Ian Openshaw

Dendorby's Girl, CSB - Owned and Handled by Joe Proctor.

FTCH Mallowdale Quim, CSD - Owned and Handled by Mick Walsh.

Mallowdale Queenie, CSB - Owned and Handled by Jane Thron Sorensen

Dashing David, CSD - Owned and Handled by Derek Bell Jnr.

Guns Choice:

Mallowdale Queenie, CSB - Owned and Handled by Jane Thron Sorensen.

The award for Top Cocker Spaniel of 2019 'Ardcaein Cup' was presented to

Mick Walsh's young dog FTCH Mallowdale Quim.

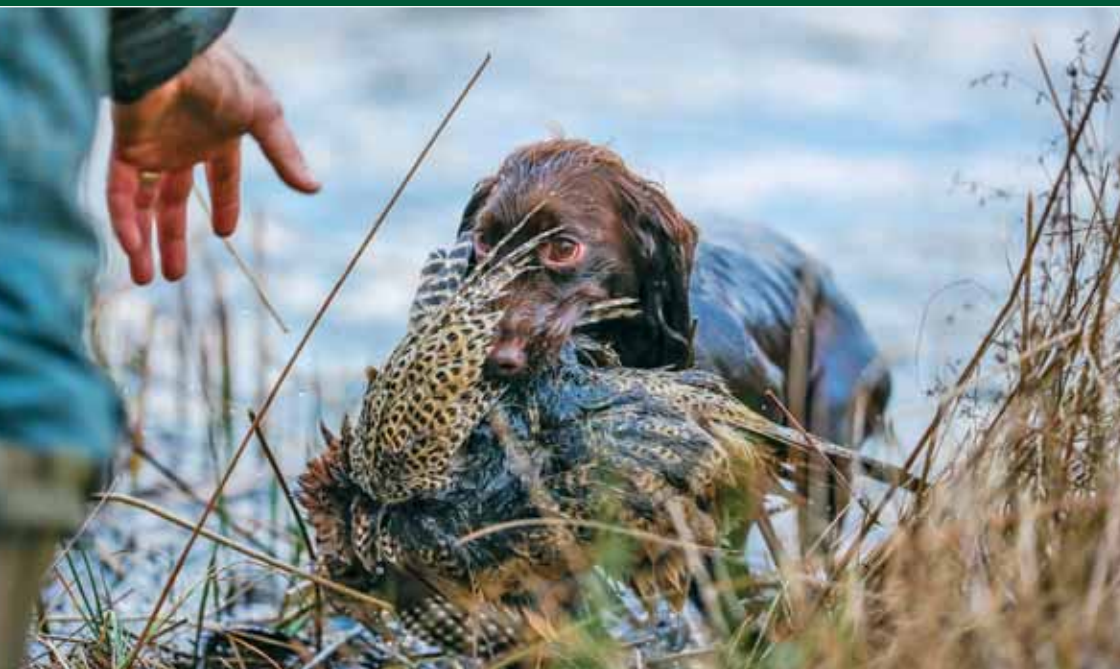
There was also a special presentation to the Creamer family for their lifetime commitment to the breed which was accepted by an emotional Domnall Creamer.

Congratulations to the Donegal Working Spaniel Club who under the guidance of Chairman Christy Hasson, Secretary Mark Stewart and others such as Mick Finglas, Mick Donnelly Matt Morgan Damien Newman and Ronan Gorman delivered another first class event. The enthusiastic support of the Ballinlough Shooting Syndicate including Gavin Tegetmeier, Kevin Somers, Pat Peppard and Paul Carragher also went a long way to ensuring the success of the event. Sincere thanks also to Norman Blakeney, Jan Evans and Vinnie Cauldwell for supplying some fantastic photographs. Finally, a very special thank you to all those handlers who travelled from far and wide to run in the 2019 Irish Kennel Club Championship for Cocker Spaniels, many of whom also made donations to support the event. Their support and generosity is greatly appreciated.

ACTION AT THE IRISH COCKER CHAMPIONSHIP 2019



ACTION AT THE IRISH COCKER CHAMPIONSHIP 2019



Connolly's
RED MILLS
SINCE 1908

engage

PREMIUM COUNTRY DOG FOOD

www.engagedogfood.com



ENGAGE YOUR PARTNERSHIP

BIOΔMMO

BIODEGRADABLE AMMUNITION



www.ardeesports.com