



San Pasqual Valley Herding Club Newsletter

Fall 2014

Welcome to the periodic newsletter from the SPVHC! The purpose of this newsletter is to inform all club members of current information and planned events, educate about herding questions, and help us get to know each other better. We welcome submission of brags, information and suggestions from any club members! If you are interested in joining the club, talk to any of the club members or contact us through the club website: www.spvhc.com

Upcoming Local Events: check the websites frequently for updates: www.spvhc.com and www.ActionK9Sports.com

We are planning a 2 day Trial Prep class at Action K9 Sports: 1 day for Started and 1 day for Intermediate/Advanced handlers. We will also be presenting a duck herding seminar—watch the website for dates/times in Nov/Dec 2014: www.ActionK9Sports.com

USBCA Snowbirds Trial, south San Diego County (site pending) Dec 27-31, 2014: k9znewe@aol.com

USBCA Riverside, CA Jan. 2-5, 2015: www.iHerd.org

San Diego Classic Winter Herding Trial Series, AKC and AHBA: January 16-25, 2015, Escondido, CA: www.spvhc.com

Herders Mentoring Others:

Are you new to herding? Have lots of questions, but don't want to "bother" anyone or feel afraid you will sound "stupid" if you ask those questions? Hey, ALL of us have been there and remember quite well those uncomfortable feelings! SPVHC members have expressed an interest in mentoring others-- all we need to know is that you are interested in entering into a one-on-one relationship with someone who has already struggled through the initial steps of learning this very challenging sport! Let us know, and we will help you make the connection with one of our more experienced members to encourage, share stories and generally help you sort out the details as you embark on this adventure with your dog.

Meet the Members: Barb Easton (with Titus and puppy Gina)



Barb Easton is the President of SPVHC. She was born in Racine Wisconsin in 1964 and moved to California at age 19 to obtain her Associate Degree in Animal Health Technology. She has worked at STAT Veterinary Lab as a Registered Vet Tech for the past 20 years.

Her first German Shepherd was Hadley, followed by Titus, who she trained and handled to his AKC Herding Championship under the instruction of Cathy Modica and later Terry Parrish. Barb

bought her current German Shepherd, Gina at 7 weeks old. What an adventure they are having! Gina has finished her AKC Herding Championship and AHBA HRD-III and HTD-III on sheep and HRD-II on cattle. In May 2014, they ventured north to Canada, had 9 very successful herding runs, and for the year ended up #1 Canadian dog in Advanced Arena Ducks, #3 in Advanced Arena Sheep and Advanced Stockdog Sheep! Barb could not pass up a return trip to Canada when she and Gina were invited to compete with the top scoring dogs, all breeds, for the Canadian National Showcase Sept 27-28, 2014! From there they flew down to Missouri for the GSD AKC National Specialty Oct 4-5. Check out the Brags page for their accomplishments!

Barb has assisted Terry Parrish with training all breeds at Action K-9 Sports. She has been training and showing Paula and Kermit Harcos' Belgian Tervurians Kanon and Soleil in herding. Kanon just finished her AKC HC this year. She is also currently training Meha's Bearded Collie, Rebel. And Barb has another young Shepherd, Trip, in early herding training, all of which along with her more than full time job keeps her from giving lessons right now.

Barb's message to club members and potential club members is: "I encourage everyone to come down and get involved. Have fun with your dog! Challenge yourself! Please come to me with any questions—I love to teach people about herding."

Brags (Summer/Fall 2014)

Reegan Ray and Boxer Pip won the Advanced A Course sheep class at the Siesta Trials in July for the major win needed for Pip's AKC HC. Not too much needed now to complete that title and become the first Boxer to earn a HC! (Fingers crossed!) They also finished her HXAsMasters title, and were RHIT on B Course sheep from the Intermediate class. AND they won the Chet Backus Memorial Trophy for High Combined score for breeds other than Border Collies!



Marie-Paule Gherardi and her Briard Arista also earned a major win in HXAs at the Siesta trials. Good luck on your way to HC!

Rich and Jan Godfrey and GSD Singer travelled to Washington state in July, where Singer finished his AHBA championship—he now has his HTCH as well as AKC HC!

Terry Parrish qualified 2 Open dogs, Blazin' Bryce and Blazin' Zula, and 3 Blazin' puppies, Fiero, Meg and Mereda, in the Nursery class for the USBCHA National Finals in Carbondale, CO, Sept 9-14, 2014. Terry Folsom also competed with Blazin' Quin and Marla and Larry VanWilligan's Blazin'Chance in Open, and she handled Terry Parrish and Dru Bertone-Cursi's Blazin' Mereda in Nursery. Bill Wilder competed quite credibly with Russell at his first USBCHA Finals. All of the dogs had moments of brilliance, but unfortunately, none progressed to the final level of competition this year. Look out for the Blazin' dogs and students' dogs next year!





Barb Easton and GSD Gina flew to compete in the Canadian National Showcase Sept 27-28, 2014. They were twice HIT on ducks and Q'd with score 192 on sheep (and only missed the High Combined award by 2 points!) Then they flew to Missouri for the GSD AKC National Specialty Oct 4-5, where they won 1st and RHIT on A Course ducks, and 1st in Advanced A sheep. The second day of the trials, they won 1st on B Course ducks, 2nd on A Course ducks and 2nd on A Course sheep!

Margie Clutter drove all 4 of her dogs to Missouri for the Border Collie National Specialty at St Louis Sept 1-6, 2014. Winthrop Clary competed in Advanced classes for A & B Course sheep and A & B Course ducks. She Q'd 10 of 12 runs, placed in 7 runs, finished her HXBd title with 5th place Monday, was HIT in B Ducks Tuesday, twice won RHIT in A ducks, placed 3rd in B sheep and 3rd and 5th in A sheep. Overall she earned another 17 championship points in 3 days. Margie's two 14 month old pups, Winthrop Chia and Winthrop Boaz, both finished their HSAs titles, and Boaz earned his first HSBs leg! And almost 13 year old Myrrh was honored in the Parade of Champions.



Training and Trialing Pups by Terry Parrish

One of the most important elements of having a successful competition dog is TEACHING them HOW to trial. We've all seen "trial-wise" dogs that go to a new place, blow off commands and generally have a rompin' good time, much to their handler's dismay. We as handlers tend to go to trials hoping for a good score and maybe a prize, so we compromise on our training criteria, and that reinforces the dog's bad behavior. To prevent the above scenario, we must take a tough mental stand with ourselves and view each trial run as another TRAINING opportunity. That is the only way to build a sound foundation in herding skills, especially with inexperienced dogs.

In May I took my three 18 month old pups and my experienced dogs on a road trip. That was the first long trip those pups had, confined to crates for 700 miles driving straight through to Susanville, CA. My good friend Pam Cherny had some great fields for herding practice the next day. We trained for four hours, and (according to my Fit Bit) I RAN over five miles getting those pups right on their outruns and lifts. They had to get sheep out of brush, go around ditches, and *not* go for the loose sheep we were resting at the other end of the field. My most important goal was to MAKE THEM LISTEN even at 300 yards away. By the end of the day, all were doing nice outruns in the unfamiliar territory.

That afternoon we drove the last 300 miles to Tule Lake, CA for the trial. After I ran both of my Open dogs the next day, I had a good idea of the challenges these sheep presented. They were very touchy—too much pressure and they turned to fight the dog, too little pressure and they ran OVER the dog to get back to the set-out pens. I knew they would test the little ones! Each dog had two Nursery runs, and I opted to run each once on Friday and once on Monday. I felt it was important to give the pups a shot at the tough range ewes *before* the sheep became wise to the layout of the set-out and exhaust pens. The set-out crew had quite a wrestling match getting those sheep in and out!

Blazin' Meg was first. She had a nice gather, but was stymied by the drive. The draw was so strong back to the set-out trailer that she kept covering the top and ended up bringing the sheep back to me after the first drive gate. I wasn't bothered by that, just reset her and she got them to the crossdrive gate, and was on the way to the pen when time ran out. Prior to this trip all of the pups HATED driving. I constantly worked on them to drive farther away from me, but they fought it. All have exceptional "balance", but that had not yet translated to holding a line going AWAY from me. I was very happy with Meg's run as she kept her head about her and stayed pretty obedient despite the challenges.

Next was Blazin' Fiero. He had a lovely outrun and lift, but he has a tendency to "wear" too much, swinging back and forth behind the sheep. He should use his eye more, but he's still learning. Therefore, I stopped him immediately after the lift and the sheep turned on him. He popped up and got them moving, but I made him stop again. Oops, my mistake, they thought he was showing weakness and, well, now he was. His little head peeked out around the sheep at me like, "Uh, Mom, it's not working..." I ran off the post to go help, gave him encouragement to try again, and it worked! He brought the sheep nicely off the field, confidence restored.

Blazin' Mereda was last, had a gorgeous outrun and lift. The sheep turned on her a bit and she flew into them, but did not grip. She got them moving, brought them down around the post and up to the first gate. Faith and begorra, she was DRIVING! She got them almost to the crossdrive gate, but they were pushing on her to get back to the set-out trailer with their buddies. She over flanked to cover the escape, and then would not release the hold. I ran up, showed her she could hold them and still move, and we walked them quietly off the field.

By the fourth day of trials on Monday, the sheep were TESTY! For Nursery they moved the course up to the top of the field, closer to set-out, hoping to make it easier for the set-out crew (who BTW worked their tushies off for four days!) Meri was first and had a lovely outrun, but I knew we had better stop short to be able to prevent the sheep from flying back to the pens. (I hate stopping a dog short...) She lifted them and brought them down to the post, but they were about 30 feet off line to the side of the post. I had to really flank her around to make the turn. I was not happy with that performance, but carried on with the run. She drove the first panel, made the turn and took them through the crossdrive gate! WOW! She brought them to the pen, but I did not try very hard to get them into the pen. I did not want to make the pups nervous or too excited with the pressures of pen work just yet, and these sheep were tough for the Open dogs to pen!

The next 12 Nursery dogs lost their sheep on the fetch. The pull of the draw was too strong, but my tough little Meri held them! Fiero was next, had a good outrun and a straight fetch (but missed the fetch gate), drove them around the course to both gates. We made it to the pen, but, again, I opted to keep things calm and we did not pen the sheep. Meg was last. She really felt the pull of the draw on the sheep and stopped herself short, but correctly in this situation. She brought the sheep straight through the fetch panels and around the post to the first gate. By then the sheep were really trying to break for the set-out pens, and she covered their escape, but then would not let go. I gave her three chances to take my "Go Bye" command, but she would not release the cover. I ran up there and circled her on the flank a couple of times so she could see that she could still control the sheep even while flanking and they would not get away from her.

I give these examples to show the importance of maintaining that TRAINING mindset, even while trialing. When your inexperienced dog needs help, leave the post to help them, even if that disqualifies your run! Hold to your training criteria in new and challenging situations—that is the only way to build a strong foundation of the basic herding skills. And THAT approach will serve you and your dog well over many years of trialing!