

# the Flushing Whip

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President, F. C. (Cliff) Bean, Route 3, Athens, Ohio  
Vice-pres., Jim Flythe, Route 7, Raleigh, N. C.  
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Board of directors for the year of 1966-67 have been named as follows:  
Dale Bruns, Millhousen, Ind., Ed Schnettler, Route 1, Clear Lake, Minn.,  
Dee Johnson, Box 416, Route 3, Kansas City, Mo. and Tom Moffat. This  
fairly spreads the representatives of areas for club members so may I  
suggest that when you have questions you write or contact the board dir-  
ector near you.

\* \* \*

As promised last month, here is a copy of the letter written by member  
Rev. Murray Sleeper to David Michael Duffey, Outdoor Life dog writer:

Dear Mr. Duffey: This letter has been prompted by your article "Don't  
Count Out the Irish" in the April Outdoor Life. Unless I'm wrong on  
some of the members of the National Red Setter Club (I've been a member  
a dozen years now) you'll get other, and better responses! Maybe I had  
better introduce myself. I'm a transplanted New Englander; who acquired  
a cross-bred red setter back in '53. I had done enough reading and had a  
brief ownership of a purebred Irish in 1938 when I was just out of high  
school so that I could recognize that her gait was in marked contrast to  
the rocking horse gait of the vast majority of Irish. Archer Church, first  
pres. of the National looked her over, said he thought she had "it" and  
I was off and stumbling.

She did have "it". so much so that if she had had any less my green-horn  
"handling" would have ruined her. I only ran her in a trial twice, both  
times in fixtures of the N. E. Irish Setter club and out of judgement  
(because the A. K. C. rules protect the purebreds from being judged  
against the rough-necks!) I did it mainly to learn how she stacked up.  
Well, the first time she was paired with another bitch. The other dog  
snapped at her as we brought them out for the heat. I being green and  
uncertain, scolded "Taffy"! Shortly after the judges told us to cast  
off. The brace-mate went on out in typical Irish style, but not too far  
out (a moderate fly-cast distance). Taffy went a hundred feet, stopped  
and emptied her bowels ( a characteristic she always had, then took off.  
And I mean "took off". But hunting all the way. The snickers when she  
had stopped, soon came to an end. The class she had was apparent.

At the second trial Al Pilon and Anthony Embesi were the judges. On the  
back course I had let Taffy get behind me. When I brought her up there  
was a tree down in front of us: the trunk broken at five feet from the  
ground, the top on the ground. Both the judges stood in the saddle when  
instead of worming under the tree, she went over it at four feet height.  
This was Taffy. She hunted, and handled, quail, pheasant and ruffed grouse  
in Mass., and woodcock the last year of her life, here in Michigan.  
You should have seen that old timer on woodcock! And to top it all off,  
I didn't realize at the time she was having strokes. The following Jan.  
the vet told me the stumbling she had been doing was just that. But

is the way I always expected her to go- with flag flying. I now have a granddaughter (F. D. S. B.) has been keeping my records for eventual registration as purebred) who has some twenty-odd champions in her background. In spite of those titles, she shows signs of having "it" also. As you can see, I'm no admirer of what show breeders, and those hungry for every last buck from a litter, that they won't cull, have done to the Irish.

May I say, that your article seemed to echo some of the fallacies that have been perpetuated by the AKC show fanciers. You, as a judge (and much better qualified on dogs generally than I'll ever be) watched 20 dogs. I've watched six odd at N. E. Irish Setter Club trials, and heard Pilon and Embesi say of my Taffy, "All the others were just rattling around out there". "They looked like Irish!", remark. But I'm sceptical that they looked like setters, for a setter is a hunting dog. And the show people have changed the red ones, for the worse. Just on appearances--I don't like a snipey muzzle, but I hate the chunky "block nose" all too common. And the upright appearance bred in by the high shoulder makes me weep when I see such a dog even try to run.

You, at least, know they once were red and white. But do you remember that they were (According to Watson in his book, I believe, "Chestnut", rather than mahogany? Many don't. So please, don't call it faded.) A friend, Irish, of course, at one trial who knew I was a Congregational minister asked what I was doing with an Irish setter. I pointed to Taffy who was being looked over by a speechless Ned LeGrande for the first time and said, "Take a good look at her. You'll see that her color is like the old-timers, has a lot of Orange!) I like a white mark, especially on the nose: in heavy cover it helps tell at a quick glance which end is which. And at a trial where she wasn't running one fellow was so struck by her that he wanted to breed her with his male, strictly on a puppy proposition. He had imported his dog, a champion of the London Kennel Club, from the Old Sod--and he (the dog) had a white blaze down between the eyes & along the muzzle.

To my way of thinking the crime of the Irish in this country has been the ignorance of the AKC people as to what a setter is. Ex.: they had a standard for years with the ignorant phrase "from hook to heel". Dig up the proposed standard worked out by your predecessor and Herm David and compare it to that which the I. S. C. A. adopted.

I can't agree that the Irish itself has been to blame. It has been bred out of the field by people whose interest has been "patrician appearance" long feathering, etc., who wouldn't know a bird dog from a chicken Hawk. (I'll give odds the same thing is/will be happening to the poodle). It's true enough that it's recognized by some of the Golden Retriever fanciers I know in N. E. who are determined it won't happen to the Golden.

I will grant that the Irish have contributed indirectly to their descent. But primarily because of the peculiar temperament of the breed. I do not agree with the late Horace Lytle who said he never saw a hard-headed Irish. They can be forced, but only at the extreme risk of "breaking them" into a spiritless mechanism. You approached the truth on the 2nd column of pg. 170. And let me hasten to add that having worked three of them over better than a dozen years, I don't feel I have found all the insight I need. I think some of it may lie in the development of the dog and handling that Wolters brings out in "Gun Dog". The one thing I'm fairly sure of is that a man can't have a large kennel of them, and have them all responsive. I believe that when Ned LeGrande lost a large part of his kennel to distemper he found that one dog he had been ready to give up on developed tremendously with more attention. Nor do I believe that obedience training is the answer. What I had learned about obedience training leads me to believe the result, with an Irish, would be a dog that hunts more like a spaniel than a "bird dog".

I haven't the time or money to get to the National Club trials, and I want to desperately to expose my Whit and see how she stacks up and find a male to breed to. But I'm sure you will be welcomed, and after the

members learned you aren't a complete stinker, they might even ask you to judge one of their trials! I think it would be mutually rewarding, and will pass the suggestion along to our secretary. But, please, if you ever do and see my Whit, or some other dog, pointing with head low, and in a crouch (front legs, that is) look twice before automatically writing her off as not being intense. Look at the rest of the dog. You may see, as I have, one of the most intense points of your life as the dog lowers to most concentrated portion of the scene.

I realize this has been a pretty strong letter so let me say that I'm in this north-west portion of the Lower Peninsula most of the year, except for our June vacation, and would be glad to have you stop by to fish, hunt, canoe, or just swap lies having to do with reasoning abilities of dogs, if you're interested in that end.) Incidentally, did you know (I just learned) that Gardiners' Island in Long Island Sound was purchased in 1639 for "some red setter dogs, trading cloth and beads". I don't recall ever coming across such an early reference to the Irish before and intend trying to follow it up.

With all good wishes,  
Murray F. Sleeper  
6930 Walker St., Benzonia, Mich. 49616

I hope you enjoyed this letter as much as we did & we'll be interested in any replies & any further info. on the 1639 deal!

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Tabulations for the Duke Memorial trophy are not complete at this writing but did not want to delay the June issue longer for it. Many outstanding wins have been coming in and this is surely going to be a most interesting year of wins to record!

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We have enjoyed many visits from club members the past month. I stand corrected on our Champion Double Jet's sex, Herm David, in the area for judging a retriever trial at Highland, noted I referred to her as male. Sorry, Warren, again. Marilyn and Cliff Bean were here for the previous week-end ( a cold one, natch) and we journeyed up to see Dr. and Hazel Miller at Grand Ledge--they'd heard about us though and weren't home. Enjoyed company of two nice pups in pen, though, considered them for my own, but afraid their son would guess whereabouts. (An English and an Irish) Here also, was Pat Cooper from Lexington, Ky., with a group here for the John Hadaway Classic. It was so nice to see them!

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If you are in the Iowa area or if you have information of the forming of an Irish Setter Club for this region would you kindly send to Rex Trimble, 408 South G street, Indianola, Iowa. He is trying to get one started and would appreciate any help anyone could offer him.

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Middle Atlantic States Regional (Reg. 2) will hold a meeting June 12 at Shankweiler's Inn. It is located at the intersection of Route 100 just 300 yards north of Route 22 Thruway. Election of officers will take place and annual business will be disposed of at this time. 36 clubs belong and it would be nice if a majority of clubs could be represented. (Fogelsville, Pa.)

Membership application for the National Red Setter Field Trial Club:  
Mrs. Thomas S. Moffat, 4369 Forest Ave., Pontiac, Mich. 48054  
Here is my application for membership. Dues of 5.00 per year are enclosed:

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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