

page 20)

WINTER GAMES

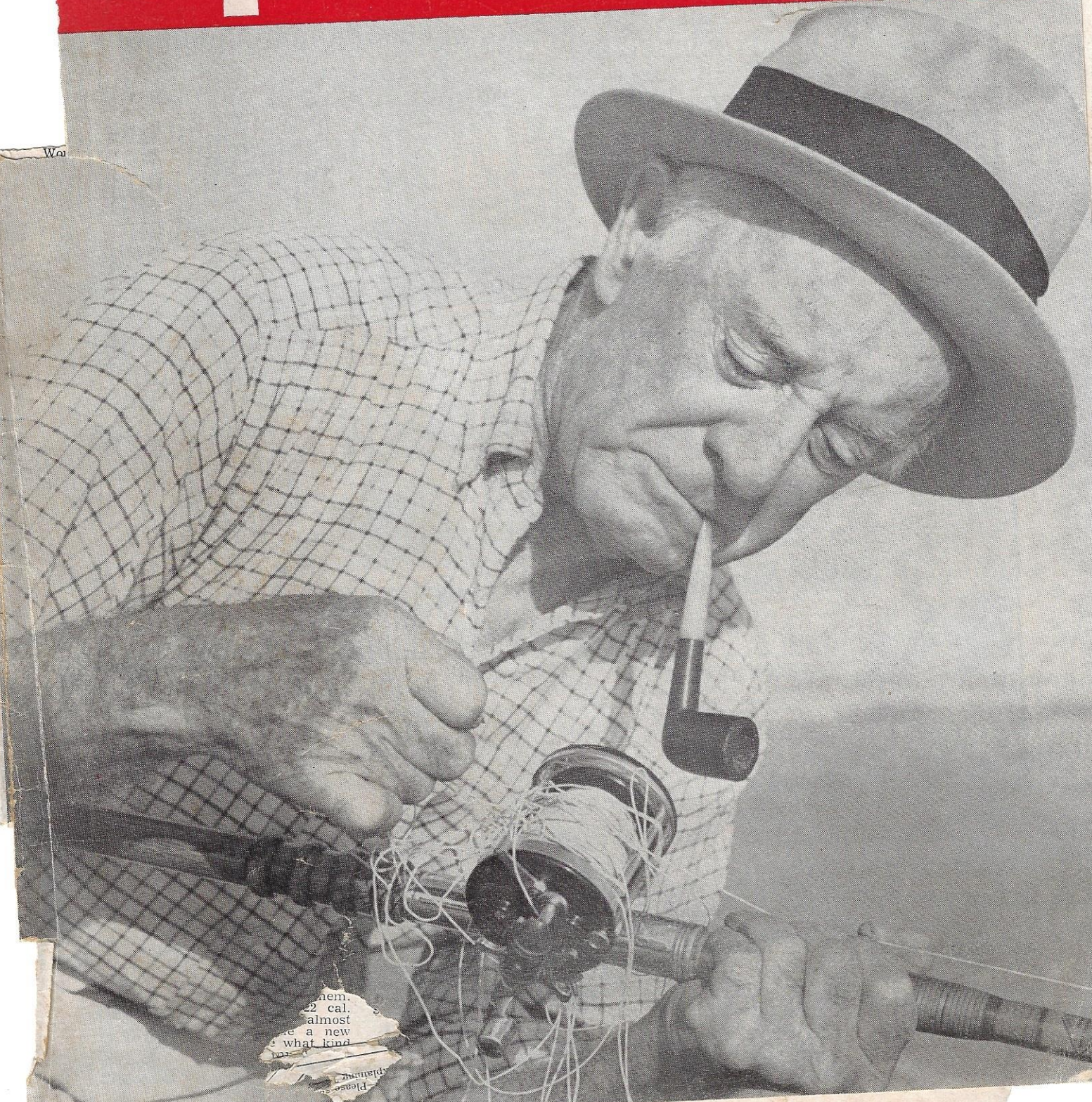
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Dogs

By CARLOS VINSON

Irish Setter Comeback

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Because of the information contained in the following letter, we believe it will be of interest to all dog followers, especially those interested in the Irish Setter—therefore our decision to give it this column space.)

Mr. Carlos Vinson
Outdoor Sportsman
Dog Editor
Dear Sir:

I have been reading your column for quite a while in Outdoor Sportsman, also articles of yours in other magazines and have always enjoyed them. You always seem to write on the subject that is close to my heart, which is hunting. Since childhood I have been hunting over various kinds of dogs, having moved up here about ten years ago from God's country, which is Virginia. Today I have two breeds of dogs; coon hounds and Irish Setters. I like the music of the old fashioned coon hounds, but I also must have the thrill of a pointing dog to save my soul. My father before me raised Irish Setters and that is how I suppose I started breeding them, after I obtained a place of my own big enough to accommodate a barrel in which they might sleep. Now comes the purpose of my writing to you. Irish Setters. (FIELD)

You are, of course, familiar with the many disparaging articles that have appeared in practically all of the National hunting magazines about the red dog. And the sad part about them is they are mostly correct. You know the stories about the bench show people taking the breed over and breeding them for their beautiful coats, and changing his conformation so that he is as big as a St. Bernard, and giving him a long collie like head, and giving him a wolf lope instead of a smooth gait, and most of all forgetting for generations that he had a nose that was supposed to be used for something other than smelling for the dinner pail. Also changing his backline so that it sloped so far

downward that it was a physical impossibility for him to get his tail up while pointing, consequently it became the normal thing for the red dog to point with the so called pump-handle tail, or straight toward the ground. Goose Rumped.

A group of several never-say-die fanciers of the field Irish got together in Rusty Baynard's service gas station in November of 1951 at Dover, Delaware and decided we had to do something about the plight of the Irish Setter. It was argued that there had been spasmodic attempts to revive the red setter ever since old Elcho was first imported around 1875, but with only minor success. This was refuted by another die-hard over his glass in that he said there never had been, to his knowledge, a club devoted to the Irish Setter as a utility dog, only. This point was kicked around a bit and some said there had been local attempts at organizing a club on field lines. However the upshot of the gathering was that out of this bull session of 4 or 5 hunters came the germ of a new, active organization called THE NATIONAL RED SETTER FIELD TRIAL CLUB. The dedicated purpose of this organization is to bring the Irish Setter back to his former high place as a class shooting dog. It is not our aim to try to breed reddogs that can go out and whip the pointers in all-age stakes, because besides being an almost impossible job, we actually do not think all-age stakes are practical, as only a few parts of this country are still big enough for the wild running type of dog.

What our club intends to do is to breed, beg, borrow or buy, Irish Setters that will make good class shooting dogs for the average hunter. As far as field trials, we want the Irish Setter to hold his own in shooting dogs stakes with his English cousin, pointers, and other breeds. Our first purpose, however is to show the average hunter that he still makes a top gun dog.

We propose to do this job if we

OUTDOOR SPORTSMAN—May 1953

have to develop two entirely different strains within the breed, such as the English Setter is divided into today. Everyone realizes the English Setter bench dog is almost an entirely different breed of dogs from the field types. Perhaps the Irish will have to follow suit. Anyway this club is trying to breed smaller dogs, around 45-50 lbs., instead of 65-75 lb. giants. We are also putting legs under them so the tail comes out of the back very high, instead of way over the hump like in the goose rumped show dogs. Most of all we are breeding for nose, and they are proving that they have noses in the field of competition. Only the dogs that are capable of winning in gun dog stakes over all his other bretheren under the watchful eyes of national known judges will head our breeding program. They must gain their laurels on the field of battle, for there is no other way of deciding what dog is best. Everyone



Willow Winds Lady, Field Trial winner, Shooting Dog Stake, Irish Setter Club Trials, fall 1952, Indianapolis.

thinks his dog is best, so impartial judges to decide.

The National Red Setter Field Trial Club held its first shooting dog stake on Easter Sunday in 1952. It was an auspicious start, but good bird work was at a premium. It did bring out a total of 36 entries. The trial was held over the Petersburg game refuge in Dover, Delaware.

The second trial was held in the fall of 1952 at Strongville, Ohio a suburb of Cleveland. This trial brought out a total entry of 46 dogs, and really proved that work pays off. In the shooting dog stake 5 Irish Setters had perfect bird work and did not even place. The three top dogs were really a credit to the breed, each having one or more birds pointed and remaining steady to shot and wing. Another thing that gave this new club encouragement was the fact that several Irishmen pointed with high tails, a thing that was unheard of several years ago. Also there were quite a few braces that had excellent range and looked good while doing it. It was a most encouraging exhibition.

The club is issuing a special invitation to anyone who has an Irish Setter of field breeding or that shows he has field qualities to come out of hibernation and join THE NATIONAL

OUTDOOR SPORTSMAN—May 1953

RED SETTER FIELD TRIAL CLUB, R. C. Baynard, Sec., Dover, Delaware, 544 N. Bradford Street.

Somewhere in this broad land of ours in some little village or hamlet there is a red dog that the club needs. How about getting in on the ground floor and help to save a grand old breed of gun dog, from a life that is entirely foreign to him, one of being nothing more than a pet.

The club tries to move the shooting dog stake every Spring and Fall to a new place so as to bring out more Irish in different sections of the country that would otherwise never get a chance to compete, and so would never be recognized. We are looking for the best possible dog, no matter where he is. We must find them. They must play their part and not remain hidden.

The next National trial will be held at Allentown, Pennsylvania, April 10th, and 11th, 1953.

I hope you will publish some of this letter in your column. We believe you, as a dog lover, and your magazine would like to see the Irish Setter remain a gun dog. Don't sell them short. There are literally thousands of them in this country, and there will be more.

I enclose a picture of Willow Winds Lady, Irish setter field trial winner showing good form in winning Irish Setter Club of Indiana gun dog stake in fall of 1952 at Indianapolis.

Sincerely,
W. E. Le Grande
Douglasville, Pa.

RAT TERRIER?

After reading your stories on dogs, I thought I would find out if there is a dog called a rat terrier. Some say there is such a dog and some say there isn't. If so, can these dogs be trained for good squirrel dogs?

Answer: The American Kennel Club, which is generally accepted as our standard to go by on dogs, does not list such a breed as the Rat Terrier. We have personally heard various small terriers, and terrier type dogs called "Rat Terriers," especially Manchester and Toy Manchester, but our official standard, The American Kennel Club, lists no such dog. It is possible that some of the smaller kennel clubs and dog registration offices do recognize "rat terriers" as a distinct breed and register them as such, but we have no records of such.

While small dogs like Manchester terriers might be trained to hunt and tree squirrels, we do not recommend them for this purpose. Fox terriers often make excellent squirrel dogs, but any dog smaller than this breed we would not recommend.

WANTS A VARIETY

My family has been interested in dog breeding for a long time, but breeding information is very difficult to obtain. We are considering buying a small acreage for the purpose of dog breeding. We have three dogs in mind but would like suggestions as to the best dogs to breed. At the moment we would like the German Shepherd, Doberman Pinscher and Afghan Hound information on kennels, breeding, feeding, and mailing addresses.

John Keller, E. Chicago, Ind.
Answer: The information you seek is much too lengthy for correspondence, and we strongly suggest that you get a copy of "The Modern Dog Encyclopedia", a book that will tell you all you need and want to know on the various breeds of dogs, breeding, kenneling, feeding, and many other things. This book costs \$10.00, and is worth every cent it costs. This modern dog book is available from our own Outdoor Sportsman Book Dept., 109 Commerce St., Little Rock, Ark. To give you the information you seek in a letter would require a letter containing fifty or seventy-five pages.

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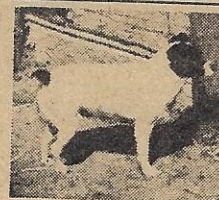
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