FTLC

FIELD TRIAL LIAISON COUNCIL of the Kennel Union of Southern Africa

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2017 Annual Report

2017 was both an interesting and challenging year for the field trial community. Economic pressures remained at the forefront, with costs of travelling to the four corners of South Africa remaining a challenge for triallers supporting the out-of-province trials. Despite the ongoing pressure on expendable income we had a slight increase in the number of entries this year.

The FTLC has pleasure in reporting that all Retriever Clubs held national field trials through the course of 2017.

The Weimaraner Club held shooting ratings as always and two clubs held HPR trials. The Working Spaniel Association changed their trial from May to 15th October 2016 and hosted a successful field trial, regaining Championship status.

Entry numbers in retriever trials are the highest this year since before 2012, with a total of 833 dogs participating in 2017 versus 794 dogs in 2016, 784 dogs in 2015, 759 dogs in 2014, 766 in 2013 and 824 in 2012. Five new dogs qualified to run in the next Retriever National Championship in 2018.

Sadly we believe that this will not continue. With the introduction of the new rule by KUSA that all entries in the field trials must be members of KUSA, our numbers, particularly in the younger and inexperienced stakes, is like to reduce dramatically.

The KUSA National Retriever Championship Stake for 2018 has been awarded to the Cape Gundog Club. At this stage we have 14 dogs eligible to run including new qualifiers and existing FT Champions. We thank the Club for agreeing to host this event and wish them well with their arrangements.

Four dogs were awarded the title GMHR in 2017 and three dogs were made up as Field Trial Champions.

The FTLC has continued on its initiative to focus on improving judging skills and of attracting new judges to the sport. There are 2 new Learner judges who passed their “open-book exam” and have attend course setting for the stakes they judged during the year. Hopefully they will all become “B” judges in the near future.

The FTLC plans to continue its initiative on improving the standard of judging and will be holding further events to this end. Unfortunately, due to the cut back in funds from KUSA, we will only be able to hold these sessions every 3 years going forward.

The FTLC has decided to put the “Retrieverite” training sessions on hold as attendance was not good. Instead we have recommended that all breeders try and encourage new puppy owners to train their pups for retrieving and approach their club if they wish to attend a training course.

The FTLC strives to maintain the standards of Field Trials in accordance with the relevant Schedule 5(C) and thereby ensure quality in the working ability of South African Gundogs.

Unfortunately the FTLC Chairman, Michael Kloeck has been transferred to Zambia by his Company so we have lost his services on the FTLC. We would like to thank him for the tremendous input he has given to the sport both in his capacity as Chairman and Representative. We all wish him well in his new venture.

The Field Trial calendar for the season was administered without any hitches, and all affiliated clubs complied with the FTLC governance requirements concerning schedules, levies and post-trial reporting.

For those readers interested in learning more or in participating in Field Trials, the FTLC website, *http://www.kusa.co.za/field trials* contains up-to-date information and links to the Field Trial clubs.

Ms Jenny Smith
Vice Chairman, FTLC