

FC Dareg Caol Shraid Marshen



Dareg Caol Shraid Marshen "Freckles" is one of our first generation of US bred cockers. Her dam, Brit, was whelped in the UK, but raised from a few months old in the US.

I had bred Freckle's sire, Bran to the bitch, Brit in Virginia before sending Brit down to Mississippi to her owners Art and Cheryl Persons home. After Brit whelped, Art kept Freckles and just as he had done with Brit, sent her to Virginia for me to train after putting a good foundation on her.

I had set up shop in Berryville Virginia, training cockers out of a renovated pig pen on Dr Martin Fleming's Glenwood farm. I rented a small apartment in town. The few dogs I had in for training covered the rent, but didn't allow for much in the line of training birds.

Innovation is the key when working with animals. My quail pen, as it has always been, was a mainstay of my training routine.

But, a friend named Peter Cook, had an apple orchard with a great rabbit population. I would take Freckles with three or four other dogs at heel, working one at a time in the apple tree rows around clumps of honeysuckle bushes. After each dog had a rabbit find or two, which I would serenade with a shot from a training pistol, I would pull the dog in and release another. It was evident from the beginning, that Freckles had genuine qualities. She quickly became really proficient on locating tucked in rabbits.

From an early age she worked a near perfect pattern, rarely taking in too much ground, or fiddling around under foot. It was uncanny. Like her mother, she was more focused on hunting than retrieving, which proved challenging.

The first open stake she ran was in Idaho. She was not yet two years old. She had had a couple of quail and a rabbit shot over her before the event but certainly no pheasants. They were not in the budget. She won the trial on pheasants, Lucy was second and her dam, Brit came in third. The judges were Janet Christianson and Marty Knibbs, two people I have a lot of respect for.

There is so much nonsense talked about needing great expanses of land and countless thousands of birds to make a field champion. This does a great disservice to the sport. The folks who spout this rubbish have certainly never lived and trained in the places I have and many people who I respect still do.



Paul with Brit, Freckles & Lucy, Idaho

By the time of the first Cocker National Championship in 1998 we were training at our new farm in North Dakota. At five years old Freckles placed second.

Art took her home right after the 1998 National. The next Cocker National was held in October, 2000, two years later. Art sent her back, two months before the trial. It had been twenty two months since I had set eyes on her other than at a Southern duck hunt near Natchez. It had been twenty two months since she had worked game birds whatsoever. The first thing I did with her after bringing her home from the Bismarck Airport was to try her on a dozen released quail. I had to laugh. It was like she had never left. She honed in on the quail, striking at them like a cobra, never thinking of breaking to flush or shot. She was overweight and sluggish. Taking that into consideration she was still the same brilliant dog. We worked really hard on her fitness.

I took a day out from training for the Cocker National to be sworn in as a United States citizen in Minot North Dakota. Later the same week,



Cheryl Person, Paul, Freckles and Art Person, 2000 Cocker National Championship

Freckles and I won the 2000 Cocker National under judges Carl Colclough and Jeff Miller, an astonishing accomplishment from a truly first class, seven year old bitch.