

TEACHING THE POINT

Yes, I know the pup has pointed different objects and maybe even a bird. Now is the time though to teach him to point each and every time he finds a bird. The confusing part of this is that you will be doing it at the same time you are teaching the dog to stop and stand and introducing the E-collar to it. What happens is that during the other two phases you will take your turn and let the dog go forward and handle a bird. At first it will only want to run it up as we taught it to do previously when we introduced birds and the gun to it.

Using the check cord we allow the dog to go in and flush the bird but not catch it. This will require you to only allow the dog to have approximately five (5) to six (6) feet of the cord. Once the dog has committed itself to flushing you will use the check cord to restrain it so that it cannot get the bird. It also requires the flusher or gunner to be alert and prepared to complete the flush quickly if the bird will not fly away on its own. During this process we do not fire the blank gun. By not firing the blank we are able to allow the dog to advance and work the same bird again. Remember that the blank is the signal that the bird work has been completed satisfactory. Now once the bird has flown restrain the dog with the cord and set it back as we have been taught and work it on standing still until it is calm once again. Then advance on the bird and repeat the process. With in a few attempts your dog will point and stand on the bird. At first this may only be a flash point but if you quickly slide your hand forward and locate it at the collar you will be able to restrain the dog until the gunner flushes it and fires the blank. At that point you

will return to the main group and another will come forward to work his or her dog on a bird.

As the days of training go by you will find your dog holding its point longer and longer as you work it on birds. Eventually it will point and hold to the flush every time. Yet you will find that once the flushing process commences he will break. If you have taught him the basics of stopping and standing and also have introduced the E-collar correctly you will be ready to start tying it all together. The way this work is when he breaks on the flush you will begin to use quick taps with the electric collar to make him stop and stand while the bird is in the air. Remember that in close proximity to the birds his excitement level is much higher and the stimulation level will be correspondingly higher also. In time this process will stop the dog from breaking not only on the flush but also on the shot.

As you can see in the breaking process a number of things are going on at the same time and each one is related to the other steps. One item that is very important to remember is that your dog does not need a bird killed for it each time you go out but it is important to kill a bird now and again. I usually train three days a week and like to kill one for the dog at least once a week. So plan this event before you go out and always have enough birds on hand to accomplish it. Another time to kill a bird for the dog is when you have done something to dampen its enthusiasm. This is the reason for not working your dog in a place that birds are not present and you are able to shoot one for it.