

2008 VCA NATIONAL FIELD EVENTS

Welcome to the 2008 VCA National Events, which will be held in Sonoita, Arizona. I am writing to provide you with some information about the National Field Events and to answer some questions that have arisen.

First and perhaps foremost, we have arranged all field events to take place in one general area. By one general area I mean within 6 miles of the Championship grounds. We are aware of the cost just to get to Arizona and we have arranged for training areas, a local field trial and the national championship to be within that area.

- Training areas will be within the Las Cienegas (Empire Ranch) on which the Championship will be run.
- The Southern Arizona German Shorthair Pointer Club has scheduled a trial for Friday, Saturday, Sunday, October 31, November 1&2, to be held on grounds contiguous with the Eastern side of the Championship course. They have set aside three days to be sure that all Vizsla handlers who want to participate in that trial can be accommodated. The club felt that the entry for that trial may be large and they are sponsoring this trial to accommodate National Event participants.
- After the Saturday (November 1st) braces finish there will be a party and dinner at the home of Tom and Cindy Pescod, again just 3 miles from the trial grounds.
- The National Trial will begin November 4th. There is a course familiarization planned for Monday November 3rd along with a kick-off dinner that evening. The QOL judge will be available on Monday so you have adequate time to get your dogs qualified.

If it sounds that there is a lot going on at the Empire Ranch, rest assured there is plenty of room, since this ranch is 75,000 acres. The committee has arranged for training birds, both quail and chucker if you need them. We ask that if you want birds to let us know in advance what you will need. Those wishing to come to the area earlier will be shown areas to train on the ranch.

The second concern is the issue of Valley Fever. As its name implies it is a disease of the valley areas, almost exclusively to altitudes below 2,500 feet above sea level. Originally called San Jacquin Valley Fever its range was from the San Jacquin Valley of Southern California through Southern Arizona and the Phoenix area (1,000ft elevation) through Southern New Mexico to West Texas. Sonoita enjoys an elevation of 5,000ft and essentially no incidence of Valley Fever.

Background: Valley Fever is a ground dwelling fungus that is over 100,000 years old. Its primary route of infection is through inhalation of dust and dirt. Areas under construction where large areas of the ground have been disturbed show higher infections than areas such as the Empire Ranch, which remain as they were originally. Even in areas of higher risk (below 2,500 foot elevation) and consistent dust and dirt, the incidence rate is about 5-6% of all dogs living in those areas. Exposure to high-risk conditions is required over an extended period of time before infection can take place. Hence, it is only common sense that if you are concerned about Valley Fever exposure you do not leave dogs staked out for long periods especially if it is windy or dusty.

Our dogs have lived within the confines of the Empire Ranch for the past 5 years, have trialed all over the Southwest and to date are Valley Fever titer negative. Personally I believe the chances of contracting Valley Fever are greater quail hunting in West Texas than trialing in Sonoita, Arizona. If you have concerns about Valley Fever, which the above does not answer, please give me a call at 520-455-4692.

The grounds for these National Events are superb and the committee has planned a great event for all. See you in November.

Tom Pescod DVM
Chair 2008 National Field Events.

