

**English Setters**  
**Our High-Achieving English Setters**  
**October 2020**

Once upon a time there was a widespread belief that Setters in general were dumb. Maybe some people still think that you can't train a Setter – that they don't listen, don't pay attention, aren't motivated, or whatever drivel has been passed along. If you have an English Setter looking at you at the moment, you know this is false. Dogs developed for different tasks have different temperaments and our English Setters have been bred bred for centuries to be "biddable." That means that they are quite trainable.

To prove this point, here are three people who have reached the highest levels of obedience excellence with their English Setters.

**Chris Cornell and OTCH Cornell's Queen Princess (1976-1993)**

*Today we can look at Chris Cornell and OTCH Cornell's Queen Princess as trailblazers but back in 1976 Chris was simply dealing with an English Setter puppy for his son that needed some training. He tells the story.*

We will always remember our son's first vacation. At age 6, he looked so vulnerable as he boarded the plane alone, bound for Seattle and his grandparents' home. It was to be an exciting trip with the 1976 Bicentennial Year festivities, camping, fishing, crabbing and a new litter of puppies. After a week had passed the inevitable call came, "Can Shahn have a puppy, a cute little, tri-color English Setter"? We had already discussed that it would be yes, but had a lot to do in our new house and making a yard for her. So, with the help of his grandparents, Shahn selected the perfect puppy, to be named Queen.

Queen arrived in Phoenix in mid-July, at 10-weeks-old. Since she was not accustomed to the Arizona heat, she spent her days in the kitchen, patiently waiting for her new family to come home. She was such a sweet puppy. We never imagined what an important member of the family she would become.

Every evening when the sun had nearly set, we would take Queen to the park for some exercising. She loved that so, and was so enthusiastic about being with us. However, by the time she was 4-months-old, it was becoming an adventure because she was now dragging us to the park. For a puppy, she sure was strong! It was time to start some training.

About this time we attended our first dog match and came in contact with the English Setter Club of Phoenix. Through them, we were introduced to the beautiful Laverack Setters and learned the difference between them and the Llewellyn Setters. They were also offering obedience and show handling classes, so Queen was enrolled to learn some basic manners.

More formal obedience training started later in the year. We were fortunate to have taken an unruly Labrador Retriever through some classes previously and so we knew of qualified teachers. As this was my first obedience dog, it was very beneficial to be in an atmosphere where I received guidance and good advice on how to progress. I kept the at-home training sessions very short, 15 minutes, but attempted to work with her twice a day. Being very outgoing, Queen loved the attention. I also varied the training sites from the backyard, driveway, sidewalk, street and the nearby park. When she was

about nine months I entered her in some matches so that we both could get some formal ring experience. It was then on to the real shows and she earned the CD title at 11 months.

We had already started Open training while in Novice, working on the dumbbell, retrieving, and jumping. She was a very good retriever and loved to jump. Back in 1976, dogs had to jump 1.5 times the height at the withers. She would have to jump 32 inches, but I practiced at 34 inches, which she easily cleared. Static exercises were never her strong suit, having failed a couple of times on the Novice sit. So, I knew the 3-minute sit and 5-minute down in Open were going to be a challenge. We spent a lot of time on various techniques and gimmicks to keep her up or down, but had problems with the Open sit throughout her career. It was very frustrating when high scores were negated by missing the three minutes by mere seconds. It basically came down to, if she wanted to do it, she would do it. But, her heel work started to really shape up, she earned some very nice scores and earned the CDX title in April, 1977.

Utility training was started early again. Dowels helped tremendously in the directed jumping; and tying down articles was also good. Queen was very partial to cheese but that gets messy in warm Phoenix. She absolutely loved the jumping and that posed a problem. In 1977, jumping was always the last Utility exercise, with the directed retrieve right before it. Queen knew what was coming and would get almost out of control on the glove exercise, knowing jumping was next. The stand for examination back then was a group exam that lasted a minimum of three minutes. Static exercise again, which was not her thing. She did a tap dance or two along the way and kept my heart pumping. Utility is hard, so NQs happened, but she also passed occasionally and, in the Fall of 1978, earned the UD title.

After taking a little time off, we started showing again in Arizona, Nevada, New Mexico, and Southern California. There was no UDX title back then, but the Obedience Trial Champion title was about three years old. We entered a number of shows over the next two years and, in November, 1980, she became the first English Setter to earn the OTCH at 4 years of age. It was an exciting and fun journey!

Although she often was in the ribbons with high scores, I doubt that she will be remembered for them, but rather for the unbridled and contagious enthusiasm she typically demonstrated. She often most impressed spectators when she was flying around the ring with tail flagging, although parts of some exercises might have been temporarily performed incorrectly.

She was a loved member of our family for almost 17 years.

Chris and Claire Cornell

### **Terry Barnes and FC AFC OTCH Smitty's Winchester Rival UDX3 RAE MH AX AXJ AXP MJP NFP (1996-2011)**

*It seems as though there is no limit to the number of titles that Terry Barnes can earn with her English Setters. For many people, however, Terry will always be associated with the unforgettable Rival. Here she tells how Rival came into her life and what the tri-color was like.*

I had told Roy Smith if he ever bred his two Field Champion English Setters Jack and Sandy I would like to buy a puppy but only if I could get the first pick of the litter. In 1996 there were 9 tri-color

puppies to choose from when this much-awaited litter was born. I visited and played with them weekly from the age of 4 weeks to 8 weeks. From the first visit I was attracted to this one little girl who soon became my Rival. She was bold, driven and focused on me and the toys that I had every time. She was very intense on the bird wing with wonderful style. She was a very busy puppy so as she grew she kept me very busy with her training.

At six months old she won both her puppy points and derby points at her first field trials. At 2 1/2 years of age she earned her Field Championship and Amateur Field Championship. The next year she earned her Master Hunter title and started to pursue her obedience titles. At three-years-old she finished her CD by going High In Trial at the English Setter Association Of America National Specialty.

Rival was so much fun to train and show. While pursuing her CDX she was recognized by *Front And Finish* magazine as the #1 all breeds in their rating system for Open A that year. After she earned her Utility Dog title we pursued the UDX and she started earning OTCH points by winning Open B and Utility B classes! One year later she earned the UDX2 and earned the Obedience Trial Championship! It was over 100 degrees that day and we were showing at a trial outdoors. Rival won the Open B class with an awesome score of 198! It was a glorious way to finish her OTCH under one of our favorite judges.

That year she also earned her Rally Excellent title and started earning Agility titles. The next year she became the first English Setter to earn the UDX3, she earned her RAE and she earned her excellent titles in Agility all the while she continued to compete and win in field trials. Rival won many High In Trials and High Combined scores during this venture. Rival was always owner-trained and handled in all venues.

Rival had a wonderful sense of humor and many times liked to put her own twist on exercises in the obedience ring. People still comment on what fun she was to watch! Rival lived a very active 15 years and passed away in 2011 while sleeping next to me, once again doing it her way.

Terry Barnes

### **Rose Miller and CH RACH Aerden's Talk of the Town UDX4 OM7 GN VER RM3 RAE3 JH TKA (2008-2019)**

*Laurie Engel and Rose Miller went to the same high school. Rose trained Morgan horses during the same period when Laurie and her mother were breeding and showing them. They also had field English Setters at the same time. When Laurie got her first show ES, she went to Rose for help with grooming. They have been best friends for some 20 years. Cooper's sire was CH Set'r Ridges Winning Colors (aka Joshua) and his dam was Aerden's Chatterbox.*

*Laurie and Rose describe Cooper's career:*

CH RACH Aerden's Talk of the Town UDX4 OM7 GN VER RM3 RAE3 JH TKA, aka "Cooper," seemed to be destined to achieve a lot of firsts in our breed. He was in the first litter co-bred by Rose and Laurie. In obtaining his breed championship he was shown by Rose and it included him winning WD/Best Puppy at the '09 Kettle Moraine ES specialty under breeder judge Garth Gourlay. When

Cooper was mature enough to start his obedience career there was no stopping this team. He was the first English Setter to earn a UDX4, Obedience Master level 7, HIT at 4 Nationals spanning 6 years and multiple all-breed HIT awards. Retired from obedience at the age of 10, Cooper wasn't satisfied resting on the couch so Rose set her sights on becoming the first rally champion. Cooper earned his RM and RACH in just under 6 months at the age of 10.5 years. His last ring appearance was at the 2019 nationals and he didn't disappoint. Cooper won the High Triple Q award. Two months later he succumbed to lymphoma. His entire career he was loved, owned, and trained by Rose.

Today Rose continues to climb the heights with English Setters, working with Quincy (CH Aerden's Game Changer CDX PCD RM TKA) who was the number 4 Novice dog in the entire country for the year 2019, according to *Front & Finish*.

So, the next time someone questions your English Setter's intelligence or ability to be trained, take them to the obedience ring and show them what English Setters can do.

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