

TO GARMIN OR NOT TO GARMIN
THAT IS THE QUESTION.

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And at least for the time being that question albeit amidst much controversy has been answered. A resounding NO to the use of the most excellent device yet designed by man to be used for the express purpose of locating an all age canine competing in one of the seventy- five events that have come to be known as “qualifying trials” for the championship of the National Field Trial Champion Association.

So be it. The sun will continue to rise in the East and set in the West. What is remarkable has been the reaction among Field Trialers from the sand hills of the Carolinas through the piney woods of Georgia stretching to the palmettos of Florida.

As I gather the situation, the purported case against the device is twofold; one, Its technology can easily facilitate “cheating”, if you will, and two, the weight is heavier than currently allowed. Evidently the device represents such a perilous threat to the sanctity of the qualifying stakes that the Association has forbidden its use in same. I, for one, will rest easier knowing my interests are being guarded with such a high degree of diligence. From time to time one wonders how one has survived all these years.

Compliance to the restriction will be almost universal for the truth of the matter is that an open all age trial, due to the

mentality of the participants, cannot survive unless it is among the seventy-five or so trials designated by the Association. The optimum word there is “almost”. There exists a trial or two with unique qualifications of their own which may choose to use the device.

There is a caveat to all these machinations. It appears that yet another governing body; the Amateur Field Trial Clubs of America may have input in the matter. In decades gone by there existed a notable chasm between the two groups and preferably so one might add. With trustees of the latter infiltrating the board of the former the distance has narrowed considerably. Another strategically placed “award” or two should assist that liaison. Pending the results of the annual June meeting of the amateurs there may be a change in position of the Association. Kind of sounds like the “tail wagging the dog” from an uneducated point of observation.

So it is that the restriction on the use of the device would fall into the category of “helping” field trials if one were to listen to the mantra emitting from the Association; namely, To Wit: “We aren’t here to hurt field trials, we’re here to HELP field trials”. This harkens to mind the anecdote of the late president Ronald Reagan who upon answering a knock at his door was greeted by a man with a grin on his face saying as he extended his hand, “Hello, I’m from the government and I’m here to help you”. Precisely the same connotation exists. Precisely.

This propensity for governing has superseded the need for production if the majority of renewals of the last few years are to be any indication.

The affinity appears also to have been self-anointed one might add.

When this issue first surfaced Chicago authored a statement that the device could be used through April of this year and at that time after evaluating appropriate data a permanent ruling would be forthcoming. Not content with that occurrence the Association made its own statement forbidding the use of the Garmin in its qualifying trials there by circumnavigating the recognized governing authority for open stakes. While within their prerogative to do so the act of usurpation was at once insulting while exhibiting a total lack of propriety in the matter. In truth the device was not the issue. It was merely an instrument that happened to be available and used in retaliation for conflict on another matter altogether.

Profiles are formed as a result of actions such as this. This policing act is a bit much to say the least. The qualifiers are quite capable of overseeing their respective events with ethical integrity.

And if there are any paragons of virtue at the table I fail to see them.

While Grand Junction is indeed located below the Mason Dixon line apparently it is not southern enough to have heard the old saying “You tend to your knitting and I’ll tend to mine”.

One simple solution would be for brother Garmin to drop a donation into the ever-present collection plate. He would then be ushered to the front pew of the church amidst glorious hymn singing. Amen.
Personally, I will await the final decision from Chicago.

