

## ***Year of Induction - 2023***

### ***Category – Prominent Persons***



***PRUE WINKFIELD***

#### **Club Activities**

Committee member of the German Shorthaired Pointer Club of Victoria for 10 years approx. and the Victorian Gundog Club Committee - 10years

#### **Trial- Judging/Stewarding/Managing**

Prue has always been very generous in helping clubs with obtaining properties on which to conduct field trials including for training days.

This willingness to assist has enabled many trials to be conducted that would not otherwise have gone ahead and has, without exaggeration, enabled field trials to continue to be held in years when it appeared very likely that no suitable paddocks could be obtained.

Prue managed the **Victorian Gundog Club (VGC) Novice and Open Utility Field Trials** for at least 12 years, and allowed the L'Epagneul Breton and the GSP Clubs of Vic to hold numerous Utility Field trials including a **National Utility Field Trial** on the property to which she has exclusive permission to use.

#### **Owner/Breeding**

Prue has been a passionate and dedicated breeder of **German Shorthaired Pointers** for many, many years, producing her first litter under her **Yorifeld** prefix in 1979.

Prue has always strived to produce top quality working GSP's which excel in field and retrieving as well as being sound in health and body. Over the years Prue's breeding has produced **3 Retrieving Trial Champions** and **5 Field Trial Champions** one of which was a **National Utility Field Trial Champion**.

## Handling/Trial History

She has competed in retrieving trials since 1975 starting with her first **GSP Dog Hofronig Axel -YORICK** and has competed in Utility field trial since 1985.

Prue became only the second woman in Victoria to campaign her dog to become a Retrieving Trial champion.

She has travelled the length and breadth of Australia competing in retrieving trials and travelled overseas to America on her holidays to gain further knowledge in retrieving.

Her dogs **Rt Ch Yorifeld Joy to the World, (Joy)** came second in the 2012 National Retrieving Trial held in Western Australia. Joy was the first GSP to gain her Retrieving Trial Title in Victoria in the previous 20 years and her dog **Rt Ch Yorifeld Tornado** won **3 State Championship Retrieving Trials** (Queensland, Victoria and Western Australia).

Prue was the first and only woman to win a **Victorian State Retrieving Championship** event.

This was highlighted by the fact that it was the weekend before the Nationals with a large field of the best retrievers in Australia.

An excellent achievement when competing with utility Gundogs in a male dominated retriever specialist field.

## Other

Prue has given much more to the sports of field and retrieving than she would have received herself. It ranged from the simple things like gun stewarding or placing out a blind in a trial to the more demanding tasks such as picking up and dropping off interstate and international judges at the airport and accommodating interstate Field Trial judges to reduce the cost to clubs. Prue is the type of person who works silently behind the scenes for the benefit of the fraternity.

Of great value and worth high praise is her role as a highly knowledgeable mentor to newcomers wanting to get involved in Gundog sports.

She has also been a trailblazer, at the forefront of change within the **Utility Field Trial** fraternity, pushing the rights of women to be able to compete on a level playing field with their male competitors.

Fair to say Prue was not the best of shots, which is certainly a major handicap in field trials. However, Prue continued to compete against the odds as she loved the field trial game so much.

Prue pushed hard for rule changes so competitors could nominate a shooter. Seen initially as a very contentious issue particularly for many male competitors. However, as they grew older they were often the ones who appreciated the assistance of a shooter.

The net effect was widening the appeal of field sports to a broader mix of competitors. This push to allow competitors to nominate a shooter on their behalf allowed **Diane McCann** to be the first woman competitor to win a **National Utility Field Trial** with the aid of a Nominated Shooter.

Another contentious issue that Prue championed was to allow competing dog in field trials to take water when required. This was opposed by several senior judges who were of the opinion that if water was given too frequently, they were not able to assess stamina.

Prue won the argument on animal welfare grounds.

This again demonstrates Prue's forward thinking and dedication to the sport. Extremely hard working field dogs should be treated like elite athletes – which is now the accepted basic common sense norm worldwide.

Prue also allowed the **GSP Club of Victoria and the Victorian Gundog Club** to use her training property at the St Anne's Winery for Training days and was always on hand to assist people getting started in retrieving.

**Prue** is seen as a very well respected, highly credentialled, notable figure in Australian gundog sports and someone to turn to if you are experiencing a problem with your dog and always ready to assist in any way she can.

**Author: Mr. David Blacker**