**SETTER AND POINTER SPRING TRIAL 2nd April 2023**

The handlers, owners, dogs and spectators met on a dry early April day at Holwick, near Middleton in Teesdale. Permission had been kindly granted by Lord Strathmore for the trial to take place and Mr Andrew Dent, head keeper gave everyone a superb chance to see dogs working on the Spring pairs of grouse.

Our judges for the day were Mr Bill Connolly and Mr Lester Anderson, both had travelled a long way and after conclusion of the trial were thanked for giving their time to judge for us.

Once the introductions, draw and judge’s books completed the field snaked its way up the hill onto the beautiful moor.

The first stake was the puppies. Thankfully, 8 puppies made the draw allowing the stake to be a qualifier. This made it an even more satisfying win for handler Mrs Kim Brown whose ISD Coldcoats Rum won with the only award with style.

Next came the Open dogs a field of 37 dogs took to the fell and although some extremely clever dogs took part, this day on Spring pairs was very difficult. This trial is the first of the year and scenting was not good, setters and pointers are enthusiastic in their hunting but unfortunately many ended in bumping birds.

The only dog to survive the difficult conditions on the day was Mrs Carole Brown’s homebred pointer bitch Crahan Sapphire who was awarded a COM.

Thankfully, spirits were still high and handlers left the trial looking forward to the following days trial.

Val Isherwood

Setter and Pointer Secretary.