

MOUNTAINVIEW SHEEP DOG TRIAL

Carstairs, AB May 2017

by Daphne Tomblin

Many thanks to our host and hostess, Alistair Simpson and Linda Comeau and to our judge, John Griffith who made this a memorable experience. The venue was spectacular with a valley and rolling hills where at times the dogs lost sight of the sheep. One brave dog located itself in an adjacent field and attempted to gather some quietly grazing bulls!

There was a large entry and BC was well represented with 14 handlers. They did a good job of bringing home their share of the prizes from a very generous payout. Saturday we ran open and nursery dogs. The courses were challenging having sometimes flighty groups of 3 ewes and a lamb.

Sunday the open and nursery dogs found the sheep heavy and willing to stand their ground to challenge the dogs. It took a strong dog to move them and remain calm under the pressure. In fact Sweep, who has never gripped (except when asked to in training sessions) was DQ'ed for a grip. I was shocked!

The pro-novice and novice dogs ran Monday. The sheep were a little more dog friendly and less difficult to pen although care and persuasion were still required. I am sure the sheep had figured out the sequence of events....pen --> exhaust. Some of the dogs were disoriented by the hills and dips where they lost site of the sheep. Concerns that some inexperienced dogs would be bothered by a set out horse resulted in the horse not being used to hold sheep for the pro-novice and nursery runs. This was much to my relief as I was sure Scott had never picked up from a horse...anyway that was my excuse for our two nursery disasters.

We had great weather with a hillside viewing area where a nice breeze kept us cool and the bugs away. Saturday evening after the trial the Alberta Herders hosted a lovely barbecue. Many thanks to Corey and his crew! This trial was a great success and I really hope to have the opportunity of going there again.

Daphne