



The Guns: (back row l-r) Jason McCarthy, Dick Tomlinson, Mark Neil, Anthony Collier, Mick Kavanagh, Dick Mumford and Donald Collier. Front row (l-r): Stuart Lawrence, Jack Collier and Ben Bailey

when I sent my yellow Labrador, Jodie, for a bird, is clay country, for she was plastered with mud when she returned.

From a relatively slow start, the shooting and the birds grew better with each drive. The next, Dickens Wood, consisted of a small spinney with a covercrop to one side and a stream running through the middle. I seldom handle a gun when reporting on a shoot,



The shoot works hard to encourage youngsters, with several helping out in the beating team

but on this occasion Richard insisted I take his 28-bore hammergun. The Guns stood with their backs to a dense wood, with the spinney, some 200 yards away, driven towards them. Now, as the clouds cleared, a low sun offered a dazzling hazard, causing us to squint as birds started to climb from the drive. I noted several neatly shot on my left by Stuart Lawrence and Ben Bailey, while I managed to miss three relatively easy birds, each of which I should have killed. I put it down to a strange gun.

On then to what was to prove one of the best drives of the day, the Fern Pen drive. The Guns were enjoined to silence as they lined out with their backs to woodland and a small stream and pool behind them. Some 300 yards in front, coppiced trees and bracken were slowly brought forward by the beaters and, as birds broke cover to climb over a row of oaks in front, the first shots sent a flush of mallard from the water behind high into the air. I stood with Anthony Collier and his nine-year-old son Jack, who was using, under instruction from his father, a Lincoln 28-bore with a cut-down stock. Jack started shooting with a .410 when he was six. He is regularly taken to nearby Bisley for clay instruction and, as I noted

Keeper says...

Richard Mumford, though not a trained keeper, has shot all his life and been involved in rearing and shoot management. Creating the Trumps Farm shoot has not been easy, but he said: "I have had great support and encouragement from the Collier family, who own the land. My father has been supportive and I have tapped into his vast knowledge of shooting in all its aspects. Additional



drives are planned, more gamecover will be sown and there is a tree-planting programme under way. In five years this will be a shoot to be proud of and I'm determined to see that it is."

when he killed a neat mallard drake, has the makings of a useful Shot.

Getting an early start

The shoot lays great emphasis on encouraging youngsters, whether as beaters or in the line, so that on the next drive, the Bluebell drive, I noted one of the Guns, Dick Tomlinson, instructed his grandson, 12-year-old Charlie Caulfield. Charlie had been shooting for only six months and he and his grandfather were thrilled when, using a 20-bore, the lad brought down his first duck. On this drive the Guns had to deal with pheasants and mallard, all flying fast and high, to the background cackling of guineafowl, most of which retired to the surrounding oak trees to watch the action.

After lunch, the team retired to the Bog Wood drive, a long arm of wood surrounding a pool. Standing in fields set back from the woodland and despite a low sun in their eyes, the team dealt more than adequately with a steady stream of pheasants and mallard. Dick Tomlinson killed two high-flying duck, while Dick Mumford dropped a cock in front and then winged a hen, which my dog quickly retrieved. To my right, Michelle's two Labradors were kept very busy as Jason McCarthy and Mick Kavanagh dealt with a steady stream of birds.

I drove home with a tired dog, a brace of birds and the satisfying thought that, while it still has some way to go in terms of development, the Trumps Farm shoot is providing good, traditional sport in a most unlikely setting. ■

The shoot is seeking one or two new Guns and also beaters for next season. For further information, contact Richard Mumford, visit www.fourseasonsshooting.com.

SHOOTING TIMES A COUNTRY MAGAZINE SHOOT CARD

SHOOT SIZE
365 acres

WEATHER CONDITIONS
Raw and cold with sunny intervals

NUMBER OF SHOOT DAYS
10

THE DRIVES
• Landfill Hill
• Landfill Lake

- Dickens Wood
- Fern Pen
- Bluebell
- Bog Wood

TERRAIN
Arable with woodland

LUNCH VENUE
A Portakabin

SHOT OF THE DAY
Jack Collier's mallard

RETRIEVE OF THE DAY
Dick Mumford's running hen pheasant

THE BAG
45 pheasants, 31 duck and one partridge