

Everything You Wanted To Know (and more) About THE UPLANDER America's Newest & Most Versatile Dog Breed

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THE UPLANDER

Our philosophy of breeding is straightforward if unconventional. What most people believe they want in a dog is unqualified devotion and loyalty, and if possible, physical beauty. Almost any canine can provide the former, and most purebreds, the latter. Others want a hunting dog, but invariably discover that field ability is in itself not only difficult to find, but that hunting qualities detract from the dog's companionability, and often can only be brought to fruition by a professional trainer. In America, we have unfortunately evolved two stereotypes: the "house pet"--often nervous, intractable and stupidly dependent--and the "field dog"--often high-strung, uncontrollable and heard-headed. While this state of affairs is predictable, given commercial breeding practices, it is absolutely unnecessary.

From its inception, the *Uplander* was bred to be a versatile hunter/companion, recognizing that the best companion is a dog which has been bred for intelligence and responsiveness, and that the superior hunter is a dog which is easily trained and whose field work, like all its activity, is based upon eagerness to please.

What most people learn, however, after spending a good deal of money and frustration on their animals, is what they really want is a pleasurable, reliable addition to their entire family. A dog which will be playful with children, affectionate and well mannered with adults, and business-like in the field. With pets, as with children, one not only wishes love, but also a distinctive personality and style, a disposition capable of growth and adaptability. As in all other affairs, behavior is the bottom line.

To put it simply, a desirable dog is one which even an amateur can train easily without breaking its spirit and sense of uniqueness; and animal which is highly responsive, but basically calm and tractable. Such personality characteristics are genetically the same--whether one requires simple obedience, or pursues a highly complex activity such as bird hunting. While it is true that most canine behavior, like our own, is based on conditioned reflex, anyone experienced with dogs knows that they are capable of reasoning, and if selectively bred and well treated, are also capable of being perfectly reasonable.

The most important aspect of a dog is its *temperament*, and unfortunately, this attribute is often ignored in present day breeding, as it involves not only exceptional brains, character, instinct and physiology, but their proper proportion in the genetic mix. *Temperament*, simply stated, is *the ability to respond appropriately in different situations. Fine temperament can be defined as full enthusiasm without nervous tension.* To say that it is rare is an understatement. With such dogs we take their canine attributes--devotion, beauty and utility--for granted, and call "almost human", by which we tend to flatter ourselves.

Any breeder who has secured decent foundation stock and pursues the simplest notions of genetics can breed animals "true to type." It is much more difficult to standardize, and over the long term, even to improve upon temperament. Yet reliable temperament and tranquility must be selectively bred for--and since World War II we have witnessed an insidious explosion of dogs bred primarily for showy and stylish looks--often a gross

exaggeration and distortion of the original standard--with the result that these dogs are temperamentally stable only in the narrowest of circumstances. While it is hard to dislike such dogs, it is easy to grow tired of them. At any rate, since personality is carried by complex interlocking groups of polygenes, once a character defect is introduced in a breed, it is practically impossible to eradicate. "Soundness" is perhaps the most abused word in the dog world. A "Sound" dog is one which is not diseased and can stand on its own four feet without revealing a visible structural defect. When one contemplates the amount of attention a dog requires over a lifetime, any owner certainly deserves a good deal more than this.

We breed the *Uplander* exclusively, because we believe they have the qualities of intelligence, charm and tractability that make up a superior animal. When deciding upon a dog, people often forget that it is likely that they will be choosing a companion for nearly a generation. Such a choice, obviously, should not be a matter of impulse. The relationship between dogs and humans are so deep, complex, and potentially neurotic, that it is wasteful and unnecessary, to say the least, to settle for "just a pet."

The *Uplander's* temperament is due to the fact that they were bred so there would be no contradiction between their companionability and their utility. While this may be confusing to people who have no interest in a hunting dog *per se*, it is a fact of the matter that *the best family pet is an animal whose total personality is intact and integrated*, and given the highest priority in breeding. (To go a step further, the character defects of many breeds--timidity, viciousness, high-strung hardheadedness--are due primarily to the fact that their temperament has been sacrificed over a period of time for show characteristics, or on the other hand, for extremely specialized "sporting" activities.)

Both hunters and those who despise hunters often misunderstand the makeup of the hunting dog. The dog is the only carnivore which man has successfully domesticated, most probably because the parent bond of the puppy continues to exist as a social bond, and he responds eventually to man as the leader of his pack. Hunting is obviously a primordial instinct, but we can say that the dog was truly domesticated when he hunted *with* man, not to eat, *but because man fed him*. This evolution is crucial in understanding how a dog behaves and why he wishes to please. We know little about how prehistoric man domesticated the dog's wolf-jackal ancestor, but we can surely surmise that he selected those animals which were *most easily trainable*. A hunting dog then can be said to be an animal whose *intelligence and response to human contact has been bred through observed, comparable performance* from generation to generation. Hunting, in the largest sense, is not simply a matter of "finding game," which almost any dog will do on his own, in his own fashion--but rather a *most efficient way of measuring how a given dog responds to tasks set to him by man*. Most non-hunters believe they cannot handle a hunting dog, when in fact, the true hunting dog is much more susceptible to "house training" than most so-called "toy" or "guard" breeds. Inquisitiveness and tractability, rather than aggressiveness, are what make a dog a good hunter as well as obedient.

The act of hunting for the *Uplander* entails a constant interaction between man and dog, not a "blood" interest in game. Just as *Uplanders* will never "lose" their hunters in the field, neither will they run off from their master in the front yard. This seems to be a natural instinct, not based on "guarding," but simply wanting to be at all times an extension of his human family. Indeed, the hunter who kennels his *Uplander* and pays little attention to him, will find that the dog will not pay much attention to him when he wished to go hunting. *Uplanders* are quiet, calm and extremely affectionate in the home, and virile, no-nonsense hunters in the field. They do not get these activities confused unless you do.

Furthermore, *Uplanders* are remarkably quick to learn. They will invariably house-break within a week; sit, stay and heel--retrieve, point and quarter ground, within a matter of months. They respond as no other dog we know to human contact. They also have a highly developed and intriguing sense of humor. *Uplanders* are invariably fun-loving "characters." They will seldom leave your side, are extremely enthusiastic, give and require a good deal of affection, but are easily disciplined with simple verbal commands. They enjoy traveling, new situations, and many of our owners take their dogs everywhere with them.

ORIGINS & HISTORY

The *Uplander* (in German, *Drathaariger Ungrischer Vorstehunde*; in Czech, *Madarsky Ohar Dratosrsty*; in Hungarian, *Drotszoru Magyar Vizsla*) roughly translated “Wirecoat Vizsla,” originated in Central Europe in the 1930’s. There are fewer than one thousand registered in the entire world, and fewer than one hundred in North America. At present, we are the sole US Breeder. While rarity counts for something, it should not be overemphasized. The uniqueness of the breed is not due to a collector’s fancy, but rather to old world breeding techniques, as well as accidents of history. We did not set out to find a rare or “exotic” breed. We sought a breed suited to the modern family and modern hunting conditions, whose considerable brains and strength would be something to behold rather than beware, and a gene pool which had not been determined by commercial considerations. As it turned out such a dog was rare.

The origin of the breed is somewhat mysterious, and perhaps will never be fully unraveled. Any definitive explanation will depend on further research in three languages in Central European Archives. At any rate, after living on and off in Central Europe since 1968, we have been able to substantiate the following.

We know that the Vizsla, a yellow pointing dog of probably Asiatic origins, immigrated into Hungary with the Magyars from the Russian Steppes as early as the 11th century, and there are written and visual records of the type as early as the 15th century. Originally the word “Vizsla” was used as an adjective (“to look, or search for”) and such a dog was used by the nobles in falconry and bird hunting with nets. As the technology of hunting firearms progressed in the 18th century, each nation tended to develop its own pointing breed, and there is substantial evidence that calculated outcrosses were made to Turkish and Bulgarian pointers as well as Transylvanian hound. More importantly, in the last forty years of the 19th century, extensive outcrosses were made to English and German rough-haired setters to increase retrieving and water ability, and it is then that the first written records of “prickly coat” Vizslas appear.

This was a period characterized by intense biological interest and there was much crossbreeding throughout continental Europe. In retrospect, it seems a very healthy phenomenon, as it meant a massive infusion of field proven foreign into in-bred lines whose “purity” had been maintained more by geographical isolation than by any rationale. Nevertheless, by the advent of World War I, during which a great many dogs were destroyed in central Europe, there was no consensus about what constituted a Vizsla.

The first effort to save the smoothcoat Vizsla from extinction was made in Transdanubia in 1920, the idea being to return to the smoothcoat standard as depicted in medieval paintings. Only six specimens suitable for breeding could be located in the entire country of Hungary, and not a single example with a pedigree could be found.

Nevertheless, after four centuries of fairly haphazard outbreeding, a program of intensive inbreeding commenced, though perhaps not with the immediate effects that we read in local chronicles--”after *that*, better and better ‘yellow ones’ grew out of the ground, proving that it would have been a great offense to God to let the Hungarian Vizsla become extinct.”

During the 1920’s, there was considerable controversy as to what should be done with the “prickly coat” dogs which were naturally not uncommon in litters. It is clear that despite the new standard, several independent breeders persevered with the wirecoat strain, but information at this point becomes anecdotal at best. We know how one strain had its start, and it is probably not atypical. In 1932, a rough-haired dog, Csabai Lurko, famous for “hunting the length and breadth of Upper Hungary, retrieving from ice floes in the Danube,” etc., gaining him the appellation, “Eternal Champion,” was mated to the National Challenge Cup holder, Szikra, a smoothcoat bitch who was known to throw “prickly coat” puppies. “What County Borsod wanted,” one Josef Vadas writes in 1941, “was a sporting dog able to get on top of every difficulty the terrain faced them with, but one which moved gracefully and was suitable for every kind of work...he must be fast, but cool and slow when needed, must be able to reach near and far and fetch everything from water, undergrowth, sedge, meadow or forest. His outstanding

scent would insure he could do a bloodhounds work as well...he should put with heat or cold, work in rough country without suffering injury...a typical passionate, indefatigable hunter, with considerable staying power, but also one who sticks to his master, a true and obedient hunting mate..."

To further confuse matters of origin, the wirecoat version was bred primarily in the northernmost provinces of Hungary where it was more suited to the colder, rougher, more mountainous terrain and most of this area was ceded to Czechoslovakia by the Treaty of Trianon in 1920. Thus the smoothcoat standard became, for the Hungarians, an assertion of nationalistic pride. While for the Slovaks, the emphasis remained upon a dog with more resistance to cold and water, a more moderate range, and the ability to work on the widest variety of game. Moreover, the Czechs had a long standing interest in wirecoat breeds, developing a wirecoat Weimeraner as well as their own national wirecoat pointer, the Cesky Fousek. (It is instructive to note that *no* litters may be registered in Czechoslovakia unless *both* parents have won a major field trial.)

Whereas the Hungarians chose eventually to breed back to specimens of the type or to smoothcoats known to throw wirehaired puppies, the Czechs introduced selected outcrosses to German shorthair, field proven Irish Setter and Griffon. But in both countries in the early 1930's, the initial outcross was made to The Drathaar, or German Wirehaired Pointer.

The development of the Drathaar paralleled the rise of rough-haired hunting dogs throughout Europe in the third quarter of the 19th century. The Germans had no patience with specialists, preferring an extra rugged hunter, an ideal dog which would work all game in all weather in all terrain. To appreciate the different hunting skills involved, the Drathaar itself represents the combination German shorthair, wirehaired pointing Griffon, Pudelpointer (a cross between a water poodle, originally bred to be a superior water worker, and English Pointer) and the now quite rare Stichelhaar, which was created from Pointer, Pudelpointer, a Polish water dog, and English Foxhound. Recognized in the 1870's, the Drathaar quickly supplanted most other hunting dogs in Germany.

The aim of this outcross was to increase the smoothcoats's stamina, resistance to cold and dense cover, typical of mountainous hunting, as well as to bring in the range and reduce the relatively highstrung nature of the original Yellow pointer who excelled on the flat treeless grain fields of Western Hungary--while retaining at all costs, the Vizsla's vivacity, coloring and quickness.

To make a long circuitous story short, wirecoat strains from both Hungary and Czechoslovakia were introduced at the Budapest International Trial sponsored by the Hungarian Vizsla Breeding Society in 1942, precipitating a controversy which continues today, but resulting in recognition of the breed and the maintenance of domestic and official studbooks.

The interest in an all-purpose dog, to complement the English pointers and setters which had been predominant in the field since the 17th century, was of course not an isolated phenomenon of Central Europe. To comprehend the development of the Continental or "versatile" breeds, as opposed to the feudal notion of specialty dogs for each kind of game--a tradition inherited by Americans from the English--we must recall the massive changes which took place in European society during the industrial revolution, and subsequent land reform.

Around 1850, the incidence of political revolt, technological improvement in the shotgun and cartridge, and the rise of the middle class foot hunter displaced hunting as prerogative reserved for large landowners and nobility who had denied such privileges to the rank and file. In the decade 1850-1860, the number of hunters more than doubled, game rapidly diminished, and the need for a greater number of proficient dogs increased. This new class of hunters, and the need for a versatile dog became increasingly apparent. Sigbot Winterhelt, President of the North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association, sums up what these breeders wanted:

"...a breed that would handle a variety of game, both feather and fur, before and after the shot...a keen nose and strong pointing instinct, lively temperament, eagerness to retrieve from both land and water, stamina, great

intelligence, longevity, a durable coat and hide...easily trained and a character compatible with living in the master's dwelling place."

While most of the breeds produced during this time differed somewhat in physical characteristics, their hunting instincts were closely allied. As hunting space and game continued to decline, and the cost of maintaining and training a dog increased, the virtues and practicability of the versatile breeds became more obvious. In addition to the *Uplander*, and its direct ancestors, the Vizsla and the Drathaar, other most common versatile breeds are the Weimaraner, the original Breton (Brittany) Spaniel and its German cousins, the small and large Munsterland Pointers, the Wirehaired pointing Griffon, the Pudelpointer, the German shorthair Pointer, rough-haired setter, and long haired pointer, the curly coated retriever, the Irish Water Spaniel, the Flatcoated retriever, and the Gordon Setter. The Spanish and Portuguese have their Pediqueros; the French their Braques; the Italians their Spinoni.

In retrospect, it is astonishing what these breeders accomplished without benefit of pedigree records, protective immunizations, large financial means and at least initially, knowledge of Mendelian genetics. Indeed, considering the deterioration of so many of our present day breeds, their success is positively chastening. For they took a collection of hounds, pointers and retrievers, and in less than 100 years fashioned a race of purebred dogs adaptable to the sudden irreversible changes in hunting conditions and the life-style of their masters. They accomplished this with emphasis on intelligence and utility, through patience, rigorous selection, and reliance upon strong local breed association which had no commercial interest--indifferent to the fashionable whims of wealthy fanciers with their entourage of trainers, handlers and exhibitors. They knew what they wanted, and through total enthusiasm and dedication, they came very close to realizing their ideal.

We now confront the same conditions these Europeans faced at the turn of the century, and we can benefit from emulating their persistence and practicality.

During World War II, the majority of all Vizsla stock, as well records and studbooks were lost or destroyed, and for the second time in the 20th century, the breed became nearly extinct. Some of the best smoothcoats found their way out of Hungary to England, Austria and finally America. Joseph Pulitzer, Jr. had imported the first dog in 1938, but for all practical genetic purposes, serious breeding of the smoothcoat as we know it was accomplished here in the late 50's far beyond its native land. And while the smoothcoat Vizsla and the Drathaar were recognized by the A.K.C. in 1960 and 1959 respectively, the secret of their success here seems to be due to a few dedicated breeders and a strong breed association during the crucial stages of the breed's developmental, emulating the experience of European breeders before them. It might be said, not so incidentally, that the Vizsla and Drathaar are among the few breeds which have been *improved* by American interest.

Until the war, wirecoats were kept in the most distinguished "aristocratic" kennels in Hungary (Esterhazy) and Czechoslovakia (Selle), not only for their hunting ability, but to reintroduce stamina into the closely linebred smoothcoat strain. (We are just beginning to discover how many wirecoats occur in the pedigrees of imported smoothcoat stock.) But in Central Europe, the wirecoat became a largely rural peasant's dog, one which was used to put a variety of meat on the table, as well as serve as a guard dog and family pet. Chronicles of country life of the time reveal that it was not uncommon to hunt duck in the morning, hare and quail in the afternoon, partridge and dove in the evening--return home where the dog would play with the children and assume guard duties for the night. (They were also used in tracking roe deer and boar in season.) Thus, if the dog had to be versatile to please the new middle class, its virtuosity was an absolute necessity to the peasant. In this context, natural selection tended to purify the strain. In other words, if a dog was inferior in any significant respect, no peasant could afford to keep it around, much less breed from it. What the peasant lacked in sophisticated breeding means, he more than made up for in his experience with the dog as his constant companion and workmate. It is doubtful that any modern breed was subject to more ruthless culling in its formative stages. The dogs which were kept and bred then, had to pass the rigorous judgement of everyday experience, even though their breeding was not strictly to type in the modern cynological sense. Even now in Central Europe one will find *Uplanders* with differing coat lengths, as this is one of the most difficult genes to stabilize. And while the variation in coat within the entire breed is large

perhaps than one would like, the advantages of stable temperament, hardiness and prepotency seem to be clear. We have never, for example, seen a single incidence of hip dysplasia, patella luxation, retinal atrophy, or cryptorchidism in an *Uplander*.

At any rate, these dogs generally developed a more compact build than its more elegant leggier smoothcoat ancestor--as the German saying goes, "a short back but standing over plenty of ground." And so wirecoat variant became the more rugged, country version of the increasingly citified smoothcoat, which was increasingly bred for show. It is also fair to say that as the smoothcoat became a national symbol, Hungarians tended to regard the wirecoats as a dog of the "lower classes." At one time there was a movement to rename the dogs "Red Devils," but their basic sweetness apparently put a stop to that.

Dogs from both Hungarian and Czech strains eventually found their way to Austria and Germany in the 50's. The first *Uplanders* arrived in North America in 1970. During our residencies in Central Europe, we gradually brought out the best of the Czech, Hungarian and Austrian foundation stock. After five years of selective breeding and culling, we introduced the *Uplander* to the American public in 1975. We are the only established breeder outside Central Europe, and the only breeder in the world to have all three strains in one breeding program. We have subsequently developed two strains of our own. Our primary advantage is that over the years we have seen almost all dogs of the type, and as we have seen every living ancestor in our pedigrees under various conditions, we know, as far as is humanly possible, which virtues and faults are surfacing, and where in which line they originate. With the skyrocketing cost of importing breeding stock, such an importation program is likely a thing of the past.

CHARACTER

At the risk of repeating ourselves, the *Uplander* considers himself a total member of the family and fully expects to share all of your activities. After all, the Vizsla was for centuries allowed free reign in the house while the other dogs were kenneled, and his descendents have apparently not forgotten this. It would never occur to them to run away from home. They are almost cat-like in their cleanliness. They enjoy being talked to, and are extremely sensitive to family emotions. They respond admirably to discipline and persuasion, but not to roughness. If raised with kindness, they will be well behaved in all situations. Most people think the Germans and Central Europeans have some "secret" training method to produce such well behaved dogs. It is no secret at all. They simply know that if you breed for eagerness to please, the dog will develop an uncanny rapport if he is a part of the family, and as a result they take their dogs everywhere. The first *Uplander* we ever saw was sitting on the sidewalk in a provincial Hungarian town, waiting for his master to finish lunch in a cage. Obviously, the *Uplander* is still a dog, and can be kenneled or left alone in the house or apartment for reasonable times when you are away. But when you are home, he expects to be with you. And this, odd as it may seem, is the basis of getting the most out of him in the field.

Because of its intelligence and desire to please, the *Uplander* is ideal for obedience training. (Indeed, if you cannot fully obedience train an *Uplander* before it is nine months of age, you probably have no business owning a dog at all.) They are protective of, and easily handled by children. Non-biters, their general response to abusive or rough treatment is to sit down and stare at you in disbelief. Their guarding instincts are based on simple alertness rather than looking for trouble. Generally, they welcome approved visitors into their family. Their fearlessness is based on self-confidence more than aggression, just as their protective instinct seems more family oriented than territorial. *Uplanders* are not promiscuous barkers, and their attitude towards a stranger is simply to quietly interpose themselves between you and them, regarding them as a curiosity more than a threat. One thing we have noticed is that it is almost impossible to stare a mature *Uplander* down. In Europe, some *Uplanders* have been trained as guard dogs, but we consider this a perversion of their abilities. After all, any dog can be taught to challenge. Few have natural good manners, and a discriminating sense of protection.

We previously mentioned the *Uplander's* sense of humor. Reversing the usual situation, they seem to be fascinated and somewhat amused by humans. They love to engage in long animated conversations, which can be

potentially embarrassing to owners if they are overheard. Samuel Butler perhaps summed this up best: "The great pleasure of a dog is that you may make a fool of yourself with him, and not only will he not scold you, but he will make a fool of himself too!"

HUNTING

Just as we believe that the non-hunter is better off with a dog bred for function because his intelligence and eagerness to please are intact, so we believe that the majority of serious hunters require a versatile dog who is also a genuine companion and basically people-oriented. First, because such dogs are easier to keep, and will work on a variety of rapidly diminishing game in a close and methodical manner in all terrains and climates, but most importantly because *Uplanders* are so tractable, that any serious amateur with common sense can easily train his own *Uplander* in a half an hour a day. While we sell trained dogs of various ages, many people will not want to miss this experience, as well as saving an enormous amount of money..

It should be emphasized that while some of our dogs will do very well in field trials, we do not breed or train for that purpose, any more than we breed for show. All of our breeding stock have many European championships in their pedigrees, and we feel that the European field trial (as well as those sponsored in this country the NAVHDA) are a more suitable test of the dog, not only because they emphasize the animal's total ability, but because they closer approximate actual hunting conditions. In Europe, *Uplanders* are prided for their unusual stamina and courage, and used on partridge, pheasant, ducks, geese, hare, deer, wolf, and boar.

We breed for sensitive dogs which are not highly strung, who will work with style, but methodically, and can always be handled at a distance. Their consideration is for the gun and their master, not for racing or pursuit. Our ideal is the personal gun dog for the foot hunter, that increasingly rare animal--a sensible dog that likes to work at a reasonable distance in rough country.

Specifically, the *Uplander* will point, retrieve to hand, and perhaps most importantly, quarter ground instinctively from very early age. Check cords, training collars, flushing whips are not only unnecessary but positively detrimental. These are not hard headed dogs in any sense, and physical correction is seldom if ever necessary. Verbal commands, a leash, whistle and hand signals are all that are necessary for hunting or obedience training. While precocious puppies, *Uplanders* have a long adolescence, and we do not recommend breaking to more complex maneuvers such as wing and shot until three years of age. They are very long-lived and it is not uncommon for them to hunt at a peak through ten seasons.

Uplanders are unexcelled on grouse, woodcock and other upland game. They have excellent noses, discriminating bird sense, soft mouths and willingness to work in the cruelest cover, as well as water. In a sense, the name *Uplander* is a misnomer, for few of the dogs have realized their full retrieving potential. In Europe the dogs are also used regularly for tracking (even man tracking!) and these aspects of the breed's usefulness have not been exploited here. We are guilty of this, for we simply feel that upland bird hunting is the ultimate in interaction between man and dog. We hope that future owners will test the other aspects of the dog's working abilities.

While tractability is standardized in the breed, certain subtleties in hunting attitudes are not. All our puppies are tested and graded extensively; and within our lines, as within any litter, there will be dogs with relatively longer range--more suitable for quail, say--and others, with more flair for waterfowl. As we know their ancestry well, we can differentiate these dogs. Obviously, there will also be dogs which are better in the field than others, no matter how selectively bred, and these will go to active hunters.

Comparisons are odious, and always unfair to individual specimens. In Continental Europe the following, we believe, represents a fair consensus. As might be expected, the *Uplander* in the field is less high strung and hard charging than the Pudelpointer, less far ranging than the English pointer; faster, wider ranging and less aloof than the Drathaar or Griffon, with equal retrieving ability and as good a nose as the German shorthair or Weimeraner, though the *Uplander* had a gentler mouth than the former and more pointing instinct than the latter.

Nevertheless, versatility can be exaggerated and oversold like anything else. The *Uplander* is not the super dog, and must be regarded as a separate entity with its own style and design. The *Uplander* cannot outpoint pointers, outretrieve Labradors or outrail Foxhounds. Furthermore, they are not just hunting dogs, but hunting companions. Their training must be personalized and based on continuous human contact with their owner/handlers. They will not respond to their full potential if they are kenneled in isolation, or subjected to conventional “shooting stakes” training.

The versatile dog trainers, Jerome and Alyson Knap, give a balanced account of what one might expect from a good versatile specimen.

What can be expected of a versatile dog in the uplands? This is not easy to answer. Versatile gun dogs were developed for hunting in small covers by walking hunters; therefore, their range is restricted when compared even with that of pointers and setters which run solely in “shooting dog stakes” in field trials. This range restriction is difficult to express in yards. It depends too much on what and where the dog was trained and how it is handled. Also, individual dogs vary their range from cover to cover. Take our present dog, for example. When we hunt the stubble and hay fields of eastern Ontario for Hungarian partridge, our dog will range up to 150 or 200 yards, but when we move into a grouse or woodcock cover, she immediately restricts her range to a third of that. However, a good versatile specimen is never a boot polisher.

A versatile gun dog is also generally slower than “shooting dog stakes” pointers and setters. But again, a good versatile specimen will never be a plodder.

Generally, when working out the intricacies of a game scent, the heads of the versatile dogs tend to be held lower than those of the pure field specialists. This, of course, is what makes these dogs such fine retrievers of running, crippled birds. Again, a good versatile performer will not carry his head constantly so low that he cannot pick up air scent.

In other respects the versatile gun dogs can be compared to the upland specialists. They possess an eagerness to find game along with the stamina and endurance for an all-day hunt. Their scenting ability is good and their pointing instinct is intense, but not refined for a certain posture of pointing style.

How about the versatile dogs in water? We should not expect them to out-perform the specialists--the retrievers. We cannot expect versatile gun dogs to make very long blind retrieves. After all, there are many enticing smells along the way which the dog has been trained to investigate. To suddenly ask the animal to forget this part of his training and concentrate on the task of a blind retrieve, is probably too much to expect from all but the exceptionally gifted and well-handled specimens. Similarly we cannot expect a dog who is also a field dog to have the necessary constitution and physical makeup to sit out, covered with ice crystals, during a bluebill or scoter hunt in late December. We can expect a versatile performer to retrieve ducks even in old, ice-festooned water, but not to take the exposure afterwards.

COAT

“As the *Uplander*’s coat is to our knowledge unique in the canine world, a few words are perhaps appropriate. Perhaps the best description of texture and color, are the Hungarian words, ‘sarkash’ and ‘sarga’ which translate ‘splinter hair’ and ‘bread crust,’ respectively. This texture and color are the result of a unique pattern of overlapping, creating a golden-rust hue as well as providing excellent protection against cold, briars, burrs, etc. without the excessive lanolin or length characteristic of setters. The coat is dense, hard, dry and lies flat. It is weather resistant, highly water repellent and will not hook up or mat. It usually takes a year and a half for the moustachios, bushy eyebrows, beard, head crest and leg feathering to become fully prominent. The coat is long enough to shield the dog from rough cover, yet not so long as to hide the body’s outline, averaging one to one and one half inches. Each strand of hair is multi-tinted from light gold to dark red, so that while the color is solid, its cast will change subtly depending on the light. The coat is carried by a dominant polygene, so that the length of coat on individual specimens may vary as much as a centimeter. In the winter the dog will develop a heavier undercoat, but *Uplanders* shed very little, and minimal brushing and maintenance are required. If an *Uplander* has a place to swim, it is unlikely that you will ever have to bathe him. They are extremely fastidious about their own grooming and general cleanliness.”

REGISTRATION AND BREEDING

The *Uplander* has been recognized as a distinct breed in Europe since 1963 by the *Federation Cynologique Internationale*, the largest breed association in the world, and was recently recognized by the Canadian Kennel Club. The American Kennel Club cannot recognize the breed until there are at least five hundred dogs in this country. In the interim, we have incorporated our own breed association, *The Uplander Association of North America* (a Virginia corporation) to keep pedigree records, maintain a stud book, and to supervise and promote future breeding activity in this country.

Each of our dogs will be sold with a five generation pedigree (documentation through ten generations is available), as well as membership in the association, which registers your dog in the stud book by its tattoo number and includes a subscription to the Association's newsletter.

Unless prior and specific arrangements are made, all breeding rights of any dog we sell will be retained by this kennel. This is done solely to protect the uniqueness and integrity of the breed in this crucial stage of its development, and also to involve owners as a community in efforts to foster and preserve breed. This represents a unique opportunity for owners to participate as actively as they wish in the future of their breed, and the experience of continental breeder is conclusive evidence that a strong, private, self-policing association is the only way to insure that a breed will not deteriorate through popularity. Owners should be cognizant of the fact that we are all only temporary custodians of the breed. We have no interest in being snooty or exclusive, just very, very particular.

Should you wish to breed and have your litter registered, it will be necessary to have the papers of the mating cleared through the *Uplander Association*. This is a simple, quick and inexpensive process (similar to A.K.C. practice), and it is required only to protect your investment in the breed. Once any pairing is approved by the Association, breeding rights are automatically waived to the owner. Moreover, we will provide a free one-time stud service to any purchaser, as well as free lifetime consultation to any of our owners.

Any prospective Uplander owner has the right to understand our principles (and biases), as they bear little relation to the conventional dog world. We put our money and energy into the art of breeding, the importation of the finest stock, which must be searched out in remote areas of Central Europe, and research in genetic lines and selective pairings. We have no intention of selling any dog to anyone whom we have reason to believe will not give it the very best of care.

We do not breed for show competition, partly because as the only breeders in the country we would win miscellaneous classes with meaningless frequency, partly because we simply do not care for the ambiance, but mostly because we consider it a distraction to the long term best interests of the breed.

To reiterate: *field ability is in no way incompatible with proper type and confirmation, and field ability reinforces rather than detracts from "pet" quality. One can always show a field dog, but not vice versa. And with versatile breeds, the field worthy dog will make the best family companion, even if he is never hunted.*

To inbreed for show is to emphasize secondary sex characteristics and is ultimately detrimental to the dog's basic personality and behavior. This type of breeding, *by genetic law*, produces a single show champion more rapidly, but also a majority of second rate puppies, which commercial kennels then sell while trading on the reputation of the champion they retrain. Furthermore, there is no guarantee that such a "champion" will pass his physical characteristics on to his offspring. No pedigree, no matter how distinguished, guarantees anything but parents of the same breed, no championship guarantees prepotency in a line. Despite the enormous advances in the science of genetics, any breeder worthy of the name must continue to engage in costly trial error, subject each generation of his dogs to rigorous performance standards, keep in communication with his fellow owners, and be willing to admit his errors and not pass them off. Such a program is too costly for all the most reputable commercial kennels, which have presided over the virtual characterological destruction of many breeds. This is the reason that among those finely chiseled and/or cute heads which make up the American dog world, that one encounters so many nervous, peeing, intractable uncontrollable boors.

We will, of course, cooperate with those owners who wish to engage in show, obedience or field trials, and will choose dogs from any litter on that basis.

RESERVATION POLICY

Serious breeding is an art which requires considerable cost, patience and rigorous selectivity. A *maximum* of twenty-five puppies will be offered for sale in any one year. Occasionally, older trained dogs, both obedience and field, will be available. Therefore, it is necessary for prospective owners to reserve puppies far in advance. We urge owners again that whatever dog they buy, they not fall prey to the temptation to buy a dog on impulse, a “bargain,” or for a certain occasion.

If you are interested in an *Uplander*, please write, telling us about your situation, what you specifically want in a dog, preferred sex, whether you actively hunt, or wish to participate in any show, field trial or obedience activity. Please enclose a one hundred dollar deposit. We will then apprise you of the next anticipated whelping, and reserve a dog for you. Because we know our stock and their ancestry, we can, in effect, produce a dog which will meet your specific needs. We will then advise you if the litter has produced such a dog; if not, we will either put you at the head of the list for the next litter, or refund your deposit with annualized interest accrued at five per cent upon your instruction.

While we prefer that puppies be picked up at the farm, we will arrange for air shipment, provided the routing is not too taxing.

Puppies leave the kennel at ten to fourteen weeks, so that their most formative months are spent with their new family. While costly, we retain puppies longer than most kennels to insure that their development is all their owners expect. All litters are raised in the house with one of the two families which run Hungry Mother, where they are constantly overseen while allowing the bitch her privacy. Uplanders respond to human contact and begin weaning much earlier than most dogs, often in their third week. At this time, they are handled extensively and their diet supplemented with fresh meat, milk, and soya. While our “humanization” begins quite early by most standards, we know from experience that it results in much healthier and well adjusted animals. From four weeks of age, the litter has access to an acres of meadow, woods and water surrounded by cyclone fence. It is here they are tested and exercised, and their hardiness is such that even at this young age they rarely return to the heated kennel except at night. They are also subject to regular human contact, both adults and children, as well as other mature dogs. Any substandard puppies are culled. We are just beginning to discover how totally early environment affects the development of canine personality. A puppy’s brain more than doubles in size during its first eight weeks. Laboratory tests have proven conclusively that dogs subject to cautionary early handling are more resistant to stress and exposure. Moreover, a pup exposed to an “enriched” environment during its first twelve weeks, performs much better in problem solving tests later in life, as well as being better socialized, whatever its genetic heritage. With proper stimulation, their brain matures faster, the nerve cells are larger and have more elaborate connections. If this sounds fussy, we can only say that the difference is obvious even to the most inexperienced eye. This is why one should never buy a puppy from a litter reared in isolation, much less, God forbid, a pet store.

We have never had a complaint about the health, disposition or confirmation of any dog we have sold. We intend to maintain that record. Perhaps the most indicative thing we can tell you about our dogs is that more than half of our customers buy a second *Uplander* within two years.

All puppies are wormed, and have their tails properly docked. All are provided with a complete shot record, five generation pedigree, tattooed registration number, membership in the breed association and rearing and training instructions.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to write or call. As we are served by an antiquated rural phone line, it is best to ask the operator for assistance in dialing. Direct calls often do not go through. Evenings are the best time to reach us. We welcome visits to the kennels upon reasonable notice. We live in what we believe to be one of the most beautiful and remote areas left in the Eastern United States, surrounded by National and State Parks and the New River Valley. If you would like to combine a vacation with a visit to the farm, we would be glad to assist you.

STANDARD OF THE UPLANDER

(Adopted by the Uplander Association of North America)

GENERAL APPEARANCE

A hunting dog of moderate size, distinguished appearance, vivacious and intelligent demeanor. Strong bone frame, steely sinews, lean musculature, dry feet and limbs. The overall impression should be one of a lively, well balanced symmetrical animal with its considerable drive and agility held in natural control.

Movement should be alert, far-reaching, graceful and light, with no wasted motion.

Height at the withers for males, 56-66 centimeters -- for females, 50-60 centimeters. Desirable weight for dogs 55-70 pounds, for bitches, 50-65 pounds. The length of the body from withers to tail should be equal to or only slightly longer (as ten is to nine) than the height from withers to ground.

DISPOSITION AND GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

A sensible and tractable dog, extremely responsive to training, but sensitive to rough handling or isolation. Demonstratively affectionate, of gentle and discriminating manner, energetic but basically calm and obedient.

ORIGIN AND PURPOSE

The *Uplander* is of Czech and Hungarian origin, basically formed of the Hungarian Yellow Pointer (*Magyar Vizsla*) and the German Wirehaired Pointer (*Deutsch Drathaar*). Bred for the foot hunter, capable of working any game in any terrain or weather, as well as a superior companion. Works methodically at varying but generally moderate range, keeping contact with his handler, investigating all scents with its keen nose; retrieves indefatigably, excellent swimmer as well as tracker, works within itself as all times as a mature dog.

COAT AND COLOR

The skin should fit the dog closely (no folds or wrinkles). The coat should be dense, hard, smooth lying, about 3-4 centimeters in length on the neck and body, and the facial armor. It is shorter and smoother on the legs, forming a slight brush on the back of the fore legs and down to the hock on the hind legs. Eyebrows, mustachios and beard are prominent and bushy. Tail is very slightly fringed. Undercoat on body in winter. Color is solid rust-gold, even throughout, the tint of French bread crust. White spot on chest not exceeding 5 centimeters permitted.

HEAD

The skull is moderately wide with a fairly prominent occiput, and a median line down the forehead. The suborbital ridges are medium showing a moderate stop. At rest, the forehead is smooth. The muzzle meets the skull at a 30-35 degree angle, and is of equal length with the skull, ending bluntly. The jawbone and mandible are very strong, the incisors meet in a scissors bite. The brown lips and flews cover the teeth and are dry and are not pendulous. The nose is broad with wide open nostrils and may be pink to light brown in harmony with the coat. Ears are thin with rounded leather ends, set at medium height, close to the cheeks, and should be long enough to touch when drawn beneath the jaw. The eyelids should fit tightly with the apple of the eyes, which are medium in size and depth of setting, and are of a golden hue harmonizing with the coat.

NECK

Sinewy, of medium length, presenting a graceful slight curve when viewed from the side, and blending nicely into the shoulders. No throatiness or dewlap.

BODY

Chest of medium width, capacious; shoulders well laid back. Ribs moderately arched. Withers are high, distinct, elongated; back straight, short and well muscled. Topline slightly rounded, bottom line lifted slightly into the set of the tail.

LEGS AND FEET

Elbows of forequarters close fitting and straight as perceived from any direction. Hind quarters also straight and well muscled with *moderate* angulation at stifles and hocks (between 110 and 120 degrees). Upper arm should be equal to shoulder blade in length, hocks equidistant from each other from hock joint to the ground.

Paws are short, rounded, tight and closed with large, coarse, deep pads. Nails are short, strong and harmonize with nose color.

TAIL

Docked to approximately two thirds of length, so as to reach popliteal space. Tail hangs down when calm, horizontal in normal movement, elevated when in full action.

FAULTS

Wooly Coat

Black eyes or nose

Drooping eyelids, exposed haw, protruding eyes

Under or overshot jaw more than 2 mm.

Curvature of muzzle

Coloration other than type

Lightly muscled body, loose back or loins

Snipey face or pointed muzzle

Extreme or insufficient angulation of hindquarters

Cow hocks or bow legs

Flat rib cage

Loose metatarsus

Depressed saddle

Hare foot