

BEN (MAN) RAND JR.

FROM Sedgefields Plantation, near Alberta, Ala., has come an array of pointing dog greats and a coterie of prominent personalities associated with the field trial sport.

A. G. C. Sage, the Easterner come south, put together the original acreage in Dallas County, Alabama for his preserve that became known as Sedgefields. Such legendary names as Sulu, Rapid Transit, Luminary, Ariel, Paladin emanated from Sedgefields kennels, and later Palamonium, Wrapup and Allure.



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A trio of leading field trial personalities have been associated with Sedgefields — Mr. Sage, Clyde Morton and Jimmy Hinton — all elected to the Field Trial Hall of Fame. No. 4 joins these men in the persona of Ben (Man) Rand Jr., the scout who worked the many legendary dogs associated with Sedgefields Plantation.

Man Rand's father came to the plantation in 1905; he died but a few years ago at the age of 104. Man was born on the plantation in 1917, and attended classes in the one-room school house, the remains of which still stand near the clubhouse area on the grounds. In 1938 he married Julie Mae, his wife, and they had five children. He accompanied Clyde Morton to "Great Britain" (Canada), as he calls it, for thirteen years — 1936-1948.

Louis Holloway, Mr. Sage's trainer, the story goes, would stop by the schoolhouse and engage the teacher in conversation. Once she was distracted, Man would slip out of the room, get up behind Mr. Holloway in the saddle, and off they would go to work dogs.

Man started with the bird dogs at Sedgefields at the age of eight and has worked dogs for more than sixty years — for Mr. Holloway, Ed Mack Farrior, who briefly worked for Mr. Sage, then Clyde Morton, and finally Billy Morton, the current resident trainer at Sedgefields. Man scouted and worked Sulu, Ariel, Luminary, Paladin, Saturn, Palamonium, and when Jimmy Hinton acquired the plantation in the 1960s, Man carried on for Billy Morton with Wrapup and Allure.

Man scouted thirteen National Champions, nineteen Free-for-All Champions, ten American Field Quail Futurity winners, and eleven National Derby Champions. These statistics do not take into account the many other placements Man was involved in, when Clyde Morton won on the Canadian prairies handling dogs for A. G. C. Sage.

"Man has worked hard all of his life," confided Sedgefields manager Billy Morton. "He has a knack of developing a special rapport with a dog. When we worked dogs or were at a trial, you could come to the top of a hill, and the dog would be nowhere in sight. Man would save the day. He'd spot the dog and be calling point. He seemed always to know just where the dog was. Man could 'think like a dog.'" Er Shelley was Clyde Morton's mentor, and Clyde taught Man.

Having seen so many great dogs and having been associated with so many important champions, which five does Man like the best? Ariel was his No. 1, followed by Luminary, Palamonium, Wrapup and Allure.

Bill Tarrant wrote a year ago when nominating Man Rand for the Hall of Fame, "More than 100 years have passed since the first field trial was held in America. Since that time stalwarts of the game have elected professional handlers, their patrons, gun dog writers, noted breeders, landed gentry, seasoned amateurs and other devotees to the Field Trial Hall of Fame." Now a legendary scout has been accorded the honor.