

Gamekeeping with Welsh Springers



Kieron Moore with his Echo (left) & her daughter Misty (right), with Dillon (Sh Ch Fearnley Dillon) Misty's sire

In Spring of 2002 I had the pleasure of visiting Mr Kieron Moore a well known local Head Gamekeeper and a Welshie enthusiast. Kieron is also the Chairman of the Union of Country Sports Workers.

I was able to persuade Keiran to agree to an interview and I hope that you will enjoy the result below.

My name is Kieron Moore and I am the Head Keeper for Lord de Ramsey on the Abbots Ripton Estate near Huntingdon. I came here as a boy in 1974, worked my way up, and became Head Keeper in 1986.

The estate is five and a half thousand acres in size, farmed mainly arable, with some large woods for sporting purposes. I am just about to start my 29th season on the estate. The shoot is run on a commercial basis, breaking even after expenditure, with Lord de Ramsey retaining some days for his family use. We rear pheasants, English and French partridge, and put on 22 days shooting per year. The shooting seasons run from the first of September to the first of February.

When it came to getting myself a working dog I decided to go for the Welsh Springer spaniel. I purchased my first bitch in 1975, from a breeder near St. Albans. I have worked and bred Welsh Springer's ever since. I have been so pleased with the way these little dogs work that I have no reason to try any other type of working strain, and that is the only reason. My beaters and pickers-ups run English spaniels, golden retrievers and Labradors, and they all work very well.



Echo, Dillon, & Misty

My main reason that I like Welsh so much is because they have a lovely temperament, and are always willing to please. I also find that they are very thorough in their working pattern, flushing birds with ease. They look very different in the working field, particularly with the colour of red and white. Many guns, beaters etc., have commented how nice and good they work. I find it quite easy to train these spaniels because of their nature, basics like sitting and staying come easily, retrieving is sometimes more difficult.

I find running a young dog with an experienced dog far the easiest way to train, that is provided that you have a good one in the first instance. I have a young bitch at the moment and hope to run it with its mother this coming season. Can't start them too young is my theory.

If you ever have the chance to try a Welsh, go for it.