



The Boss had maybe dusted that bird a little, but no more. He was safe and sound, and heading for the woods

Test of a CHAMPION

BY RODERICK J. LILL

ILLUSTRATED BY C. E. MONROE, JR.

WELL, there The Boss is, happy as a pheasant in a game preserve. The Boss is how I think of him, but he's nice—probably the best master in all the world. He's so proud of that silly little cup you'd think he and I had won a world championship. Actually it's easy for a dog to please a man, and it pays, too. You should've seen the dinner I had tonight. And lying here in the nice, warm clubhouse isn't causing me any pain either.

Bull—that's Bullet of Arnim, the dog with the reputation—is out in the kennel. It's gloomy there, and the food isn't so hot. A young dog like Bull gets ideas sometimes; it doesn't do him any harm to face up to the facts of life. Anyhow, Bull's out there, and I'm in here. Bull's master is the sad-faced one.

There wasn't really much to what I did. It was just a matter of keeping my eyes open and not wearing myself out foolishly. I'm going on nine years old and I've got a system of living. A dog has to have his sleep—fifteen hours a day. He's got to eat—fifteen minutes. Then an hour for pleasing The Boss. And another hour for mild exercise. That leaves six hours and forty-five minutes—just for loafing.

The Boss is still admiring that cup as though it was the Crown of England. And if he's read the inscription on it once, he's read it a hundred times.

*South State English Springer Spaniel Club.
Winner Shooting-Dog Stake 1954.*

*Carfax's Danny Owned and Handled by
Fletcher Carfax.*

I'm Danny, of course, and Fletcher Carfax is The Boss. The "owned and handled" line always amuses me. But masters have to have their illusions. . . .

In a shooting-dog stake some pheasant are let loose out in a big field and you go out and find them and root them into the air. Then your master comes along behind you with a shotgun and he shoots them. If your master misses, which is what usually happens, you aren't supposed to do anything. But if a bird accidentally gets in the way of the shot, you're supposed to go and retrieve him—and look eager about it. That's about all there is to it, although there are a lot of technicalities about style and control that have been put into the rules to make the judges seem important.

Anyhow, The Boss wanted to win this cup because he would give an arm any time to beat Charles Johnson at anything. Johnson is Bull's sad-faced master. He and The Boss have been very fine enemies for a long time. It began with an argument over where Bull's master put the fence dividing their property from our property. It never made sense to me, because I either jump over fences or dig under them.

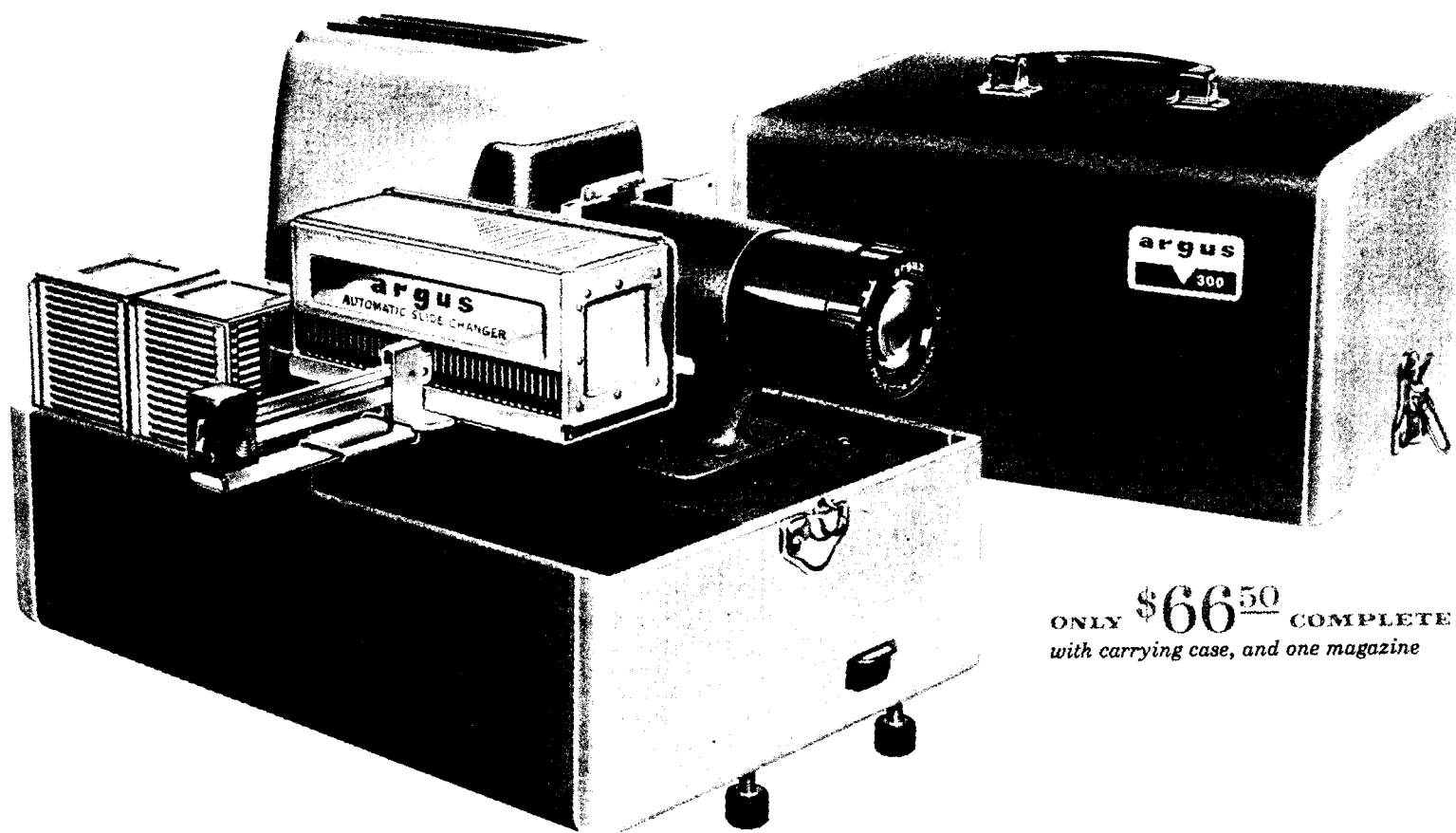
For two straight years after the fence incident, Bull won the cup. Bull had cost a lot of money, and he'd been trained by the best trainer in the state, and he'd run fairly good in some big field trials. In fact, Bull's master had talked Bull up so much that all of the rest of the club members were fit to spit black—The Boss particularly.

A week before this shooting-dog stake, The Boss took my head between his hands and said, "Danny, my boy, if you can win this stake you'll make me the happiest man on earth. You've got what it takes, Danny, if you'll only put it out. And I'd give you—well, T-bones from now on in."

He talked a long time. I wanted to do The Boss a favor, of course, because I like him. But this little stake didn't seem worth all the uproar. And too, Bull is a lot younger than I am, and he spends energy like it was water.

Well, finally the day of the stake arrived. It was so hot in the field that a shot bird was practically cooked before it hit the ground. It was a day when any sensible dog or man should have dug himself a little hollow down to the moisture level and relaxed. But men, they don't know what sensible is, and

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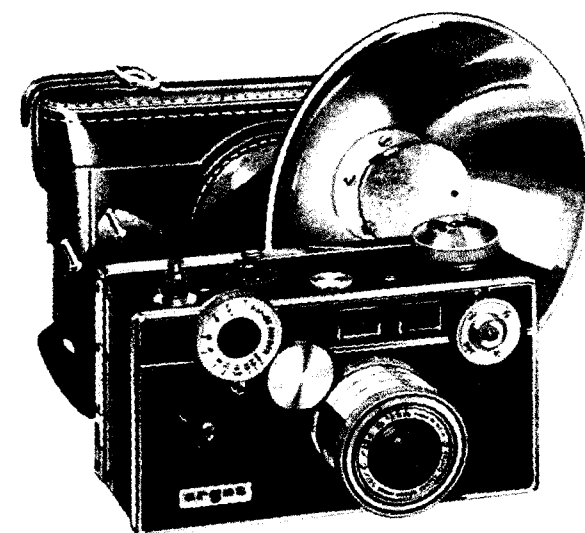
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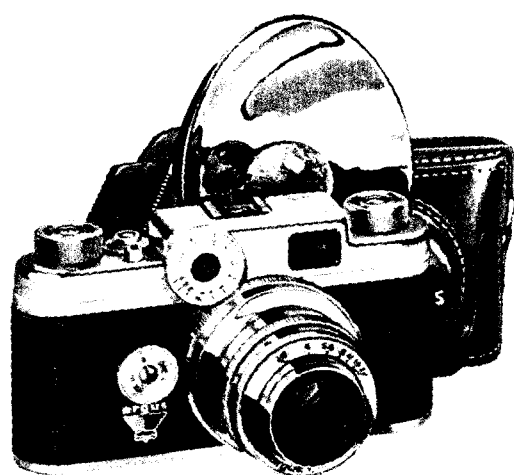
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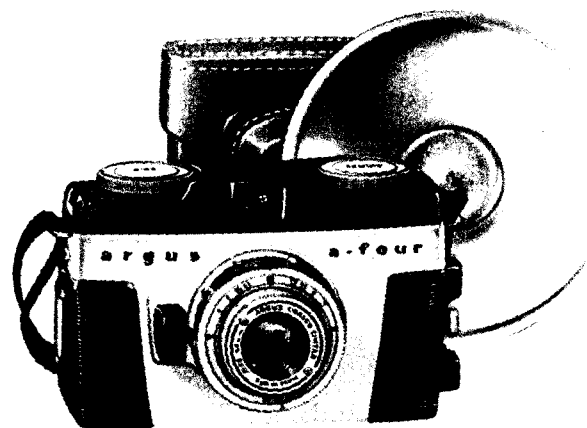
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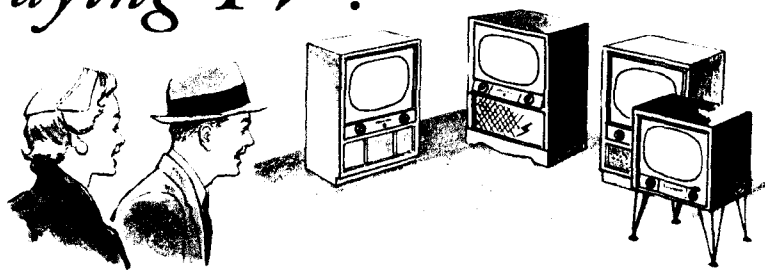
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COLLIER'S SHORT SHORT continued

they keep dogs from being sensible too.

There were eight dogs in this stake, but I knew them all and had a hunch that six wouldn't do any good. I figured Bull would take it. After all, Bull is still practically a pup; and when a dog is eight and three quarters, like me, he hasn't got quite as much of the old push as he once did. Also, The Boss has a habit of pulling the trigger at the wrong time. Bull's master is the kind who wouldn't give you a bone if he owned a dinosaur skeleton, but he's a reliable gunner.

I couldn't get very enthusiastic. Waiting at the starting line, in that sun, I was hungry and thirsty. I just wanted to get it over with.

BULL and I and our masters were the last to go. We would work side by side, in a brace—as they call it, with four pheasant planted for each of us.

Finally the other dogs and their masters finished. They hadn't brought back nearly as many pheasant as had been planted, so I knew no new records had been set. And now it was our turn. Bull's master and Bull got up. The Boss got up and jerked a little on my lead to get me up.

Bull's master said, "Well, Carfax, this seems to be it. Do you want to concede now or go along for the ride? You know, if I were you, old man, I'd kind of watch out for myself. Particularly in this heat. None of my business, of course—I'm just trying to be helpful."

The Boss growled just like a dog. He was boiling mad. I was mad too. But it was what Bull said that cut me. He said it, 'way back in his throat, so low that nobody but another dog could hear it. He said that I sure was getting the short end of the stick, not being in retirement with mush and milk to chew on.

What I replied didn't have much dare in it. Considering the difference in Bull's age and mine, and how terrible The Boss usually shot, I didn't have much confidence.

A few more remarks were exchanged. This increased the heat of the day. Then the judges gave us the sign and we were off.

As I've said, Bull and I had four birds apiece. We ran down the first three by scent, got them flying, and then waited for our masters to shoot. For my part, I'd have been amazed if The Boss had got two out of the three. The miracle was that he got all three. I retrieved them all in nice style, if I say so myself, and we had our par with one bird to go.

Bull and his master matched us. We were even up, but I knew in my heart that Bull was ahead. He always goes after each bird as if it is the last one on earth and his life depends on it. That kind of stuff impresses judges.

We moved on for the last bird. We were almost to the end of the field now, and just beyond, there was a steep place where the ground dropped sharply away. At the foot of that cliff there were willows and a small, year-round stream. I couldn't see them from where I was and neither could anybody else, because of the drop. But I sure thought about them: Water! Trees! Shade!

Well, I got my bird up. This time The Boss was a fifty-to-one bet to miss; if he ever dropped four in a row it should be given headlines. The pheasant towered. I heard the shot. Then

that bird dived down and out of sight, behind the cliff.

"Got him!" The Boss yelled. "Fetch, Danny! Fetch, boy!"

So I took off like dynamite—well, anyhow, I took off. I hadn't liked the way that pheasant flew after the shot. I've seen a lot of hunting, and that bird . . .

Well, I scrambled down the cliff and it was just as I had figured. I caught a glimpse of the pheasant's tail feathers a couple of hundred yards away, and he was flying as true as any airplane I'd ever barked at. The Boss had maybe dusted him a little, but no more. He was safe and sound, and heading for the woods.

I don't think anyone could honestly blame me for what I did next. The Boss had missed his bird. We'd been had for sure. And there was that water, and that shade, and that soft, moist, cool, lovely earth!

I rolled in it. I stuck my forelegs out flat in front and my hind legs out flat behind and just scrounged around. It felt so good I still can practically taste it.

Then there was another shot. I didn't look up. They could shoot until Christmas for all of me; and if they all collapsed from sunstroke, they'd asked for it. Then I heard something land with a thud nearby. It was a big cock pheasant, and he was dead as a bone.

It was perfectly clear what had happened. Bull had got his bird up, and Bull's master had dropped it clean. Well, they'd added insult to injury, and so what? Then, like a flash, I saw my chance. Don't think I'm crooked. It's just that—well, why argue it around?

Bull wasn't in sight; probably he hadn't marked the bird's fall, which sometimes happens to the best of dogs. So I got up and gathered that pheasant in, holding him neat and soft, just like the rules say. I started up the cliff, taking it easy. When I was about two thirds up, Bull came over the edge. He gave me a dirty look and kept on going.

WHEN The Boss saw me coming, I put on my best act and gave him that bird with all the style there is. He practically kissed me. Then he said in a voice you could have heard four counties away, "Just look at that dog of mine! Look how muddy and wet he is! He had to put up a real fight to get that bird. But he's the kind that never gives up. No, sir! He's a champion through and through."

I hung my head just a trifle, looking modest. The way to get along in the world is to take the breaks as they come. And this time, we had us that cup.

There was a lot of waiting around while Bull's master yelled at Bull to find his bird, but nobody ever was going to find it. But what was the use? We already had us that cup.

Well, The Boss is still talking it up. Wonder how many hundred times he's told about that wonderful last shot he made? It's all right with me. I wouldn't be surprised if I got me another nice big steak in a little while. All I have to do is give him the look that tells him how wonderful he is.

The Boss is calling me now. Look at that grin and that loving look in his eye! I don't want to get sentimental, but I'll bet The Boss is as good as they come.

Hi there, Boss! Some day, what?

—RODERICK LULL

Collier's for October 29, 1954

How to date another man with cheers from your husband

It's no trick at all for a smart gal. Get the other wives in your gang to do it and you'll rate ace-high with every husband in town.

Here's the plot. You know Ben works like a beaver all week. He treasures his weekends—*his* time to relax with you and the kids. But he can't do that spending Saturday morning getting the car lubricated. So, he puts it off.

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car in for Alemite lubrication.

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Differential Lubricant | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Packard from Wheel Bearings | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Checked Brake Fluid and Adjusted Brakes | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Balanced Wheels | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Changed Oil Filter Cartridge | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Cleaned Air Cleaner | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Washed | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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48 STATES

By WALTER DAVENPORT

While the world is busy with plans to annihilate itself, Mr. Henry Harris is bent on making our editorial lives sweeter. He is working feverishly in West Point, Mississippi, to perfect a pencil with a built-in aspirin holder.

A post-carder whose name would seem to be A Friend informs us from Norman, Oklahoma, that he merely asked the filling-station man which



fetches the state more revenue, cotton or tourists. The filling-station man gave the question a brief mulling over and replied: "Can't rightly say, mister, but tourists are easier picking."

Another gentleman, named Constant-Reader-of-Your-Column (we had a hunch he was around somewhere), announces from Toledo, Ohio, that he is glad his son has gone back to college. Now, he explains, "I no longer have to make application for the use of my car three or four days in advance."

In Washington, D.C., a quasi-important bureau boss was holding personal examinations for a new secretary. Came in one doll who looked like an escapee from the Miss Universe contest. When he got himself under control, he requested her to take a trial communication: "Concordant pre-supplementary memo re reaction to multiple assumption of co-operative nonfunction of yours of even date." After several equally lucid moments like that, he paused. "Now tell me what that means," he said. Sweetly she threw notebook and pencil into the wastebasket and replied: "That means I don't get the job."

If it weren't for assists from such alert watchmen as Mr. Alan Phillips, old 48 would miss a lot of important national happenings. For example, there's that ad in the Pico (California) Post: "Puppies six weeks. All male. Mixed boxer. Mother, boxer show dog. Father, leash-law violator."

Election Day will be just another tranquil Tuesday in Hubbard, Nebraska. Haven't had a town election in Hubbard for almost twenty years.

Should one of the town's officials get tired, he merely waggles a finger at somebody who isn't serving and says: "Hey, Joe, you take over for a spell." And Joe takes over. The Hubbard system saves time, money and a lot of wind. Works fine.

Political situation in Kentucky was recently so precarious, the Louisville office of our own Decentralized Intelligence Agency reports, that one candidate refused to kiss any baby from the age of eighteen down until she had security clearance.

To the defense of the lazy man (and none too soon, either) comes Dr. Harvey A. Lewis, a Chicago psychoanalyst. Space forbids the whole heartening story, but the short of it is that sluggards aren't allergic to work at all. They're merely afraid of being a success and having to make a lot of decisions that will need sticking to. With as lusty a yawn as we've enjoyed all year, we thank you, Doctor.

Nobody could have tried harder than old 48 to get a tiding or two out of Lebanon, Indiana, this week. But the best we could do is to come up with the discovery that there's a traffic cop there named Park Quick. And we needed the help of Mrs. Margaret M. Lucas, of Crane, Missouri, to get even that.

It is the fixed opinion of Miss Sally O'Brien who works "in cosmetics" in a St. Louis, Missouri, department store that the Army doesn't know the meaning of real chemical warfare. If our



IRWIN CAPLAN

officials at the Pentagon want the low-down, she assures us, they should listen in on what the girl customers at the perfume counter say.

Quite an interesting shred of conversation between two gentlemen in Salem, Oregon, was picked up and forwarded by Mr. Harry Seeds. First gentleman: "I'm quitting work for good. Gonna do nothing from now on but loaf and sleep." Second gentleman: "Yeah? But what are you gonna do when you feel like knocking off and resting for a while?"