Super: Pooch still your best bet when fighting geese

By TONY RZADZKI

Nothing works better than a well-trained dog in chasing geese off a golf course. Nothing!

Make sure you read the key words in that past sentence "well-trained." You need a dog that will: a) ride on a golf cart, b) sit still when approaching golfers, c) not bark around golfers, d) sit quietly on a cart or leash if you need to talk to someone, check a green, or go to the clubhouse for a cup of coffee. You need a dog that will mind your commands when she is working (chasing geese) and a dog that is determined to get the job done.

In my mind, there is no dog better suited for this type of work than a Labrador retriever. I've read about the border collie and I also believe that a Chihuahua could speak geese as well as a Great Dane. But a water dog, bred for swimming, will go out on that lake and chase a goose off its greatest sense of security-the water. To me this is essential in controlling geese.

The best method I have found when chasing geese out of a lake, especially a larger lake, is to use two dogs. One will spook the geese to the far side of the lake. They usually swim there. If she is by herself, oftentimes it is difficult to flush them out and this takes a lot of time. If you can start one dog at the near side of the lake where the geese are located, then drop the other one in at the far side of the lake where the geese are heading. Dusk your head or make sure you have a raisinuit on, because they'll soon be bombarding you as they take off.

Not to worry about a dog "catching" a goose. It is almost impossible. I've seen geese intentionally swim slowly in circles just six feet or less in front of my dog for a half an hour at a time. Jeez, I thought my dog would die of exhaustion. But she wouldn't quit until I was hoarse from screaming at her and she finally scrambled up the bank. That gander swam away waddling its tail, her chest is heaving, pink tongue lolling out, eyes alert for action, and conversations are immediate.

Everything will be all right soon. You scratch her on her head and smile to yourself: "Yeah, everything will be all right."

From this bounty of knowledge, what have we learned? For now, the goose is here to stay. Our best solution at this time. I believe, is to use a combination of the better tactics that I described above. One thing is for sure: Whatever methods that you should decide to use, be persistent, as persistent as that gander was with my dog. These geese are now living in what they may consider their heaven, and they won't give up paradise any easier than we would. Good luck!

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