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FEBRUARY 2019

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# Faces

## The Field's 165th party at Holland & Holland



Anniversary calls for a shindig, and we couldn't let The Field's 165th birthday pass without a celebration. Columnists, over stars, friends and family gathered at Holland & Holland's flagship store in Mayfair in December to raise a glass to the 'olde dame' of sporting publishing. The impetuous setting also paid tribute to a friendship between sporting institutions as old as the magazine itself.

Pre-party messaging debated what to do for a 165-year-old birthday girl, as dusty figures and Field friends made their way to town – some even flying in to join the celebrations. As is appropriate for proper Field do, gundogs were on the guest list – though tactical retrieving of the circulating game canapés expressly forbidden. Champagne flowed and a generous number of whisky sours got the party going.

Those who ventured below ground to Holland & Holland's gunroom were treated to whisky tastings amongst exquisite shotguns. Those who remained on the shop floor perused the shelves, swapped recommendations (the bright 'irony' walking shoes proved a particular favourite) and delighted in the Field covers from throughout the ages dotted round the store. Amidst the sporting sales and tips, confirmation that the magazine remains the best-selling and most popular sporting title, with 139,000 readers a month, prompted yet more toasts and champagne.

"The Field will take any excuse for a party," admitted the Editor to uproarious agreement by the merry company. Though with a distinguished history and bright future ahead, no excuse was needed.



ROW ONE  
The Field's Christmas cover from 1930; Christopher Graffius, David Thompson and Rebecca Norris; Lisa Linard and George Jones; Bramble; Editor Jonathan Young; Serena Williams; Rachel Dangar and Roger Field



ROW TWO  
Deirdre Shields and Lucy Higginson; Piers Whitaker and Tarquin Millington-Drake; Richard Mabbitt and Diana Berry; Eleanor Osborne and Peter Glenser; Chris Dewbury and Antonia Dewbury



ROW THREE  
Andrew Gilruth and Tim Bonner; Bertie Hoskyns-Abrahall; Eve Jones; The Field's Christmas cover from 1926; Claire Saunders and Neil Cross; Mary Skipwith and Harry Wallace; Lucie Boedts-Kuehnle



ROW FOUR  
Elaine Stewart; Hazel Eccles; Charles Newitt and Ian Bell; Patrick Hawes; Alan Utermarck; Oliver Sidall; Anthony Alborough-Tregear and Gemma Tibbles; Graham Downing; Gavin Gardner



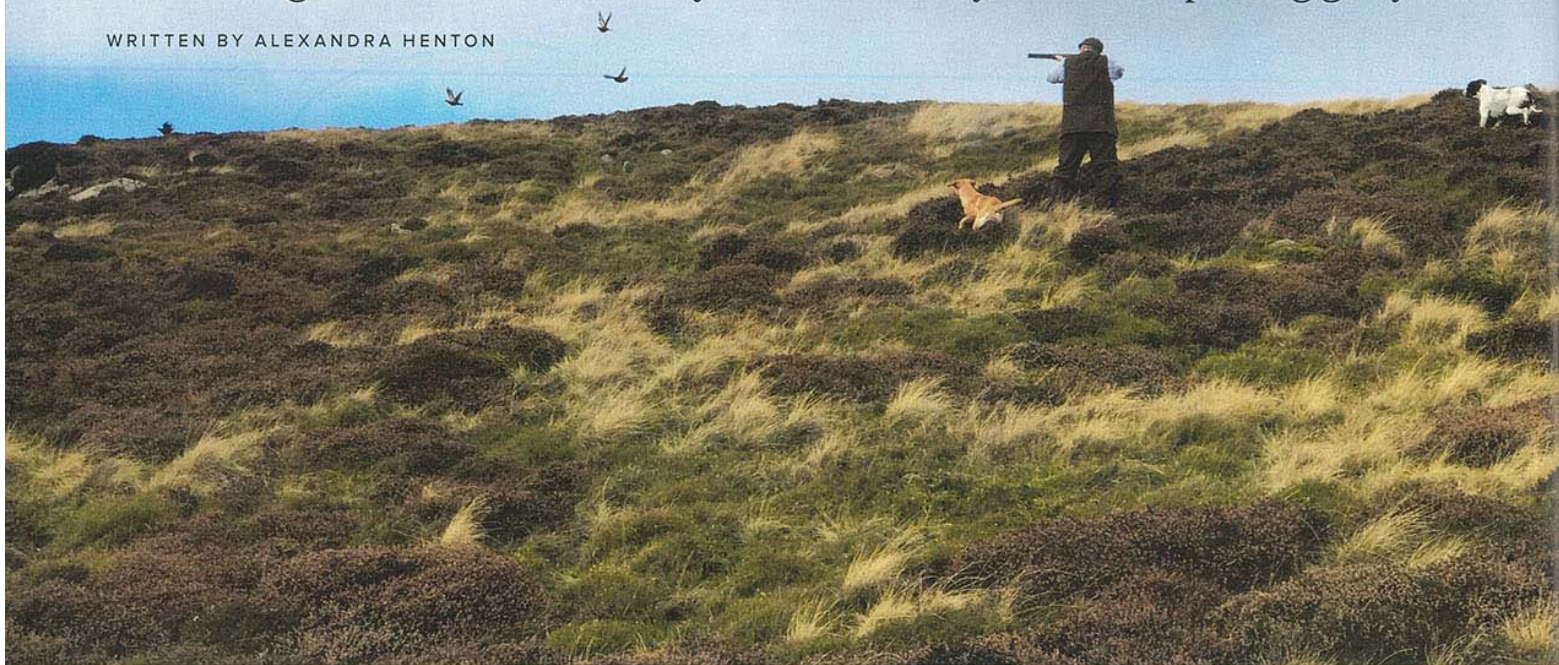


IN ASSOCIATION WITH BLASER

# The 2018 Macnabbers

This year, just seven men and one woman bagged stag, salmon and a brace of grouse in 24 hours. They relate how they achieved sporting glory

WRITTEN BY ALEXANDRA HENTON



**N**othing compares to a proper sporting adventure and *The Field's* Macnab Challenge, in association with Blaser, is a sporting adventure laced with just the right sort of gusto. John Buchan's tale of tenacity and sporting triumph has gripped the adventurous soul from its opening page ever since publication in 1925. Of this year's contingent of Macnabbers, eight succeeded.

Just three days after the season opened, Fergie May was the first Macnabber off the mark during a fortunate day on the Badanloch estate. A leisurely start saw a midday stag shot, the antlers of which were entwined with some discarded electric fence, followed by a "fortunate salmon on Beat One of the Helmsdale" and a final lucky brace after a few hundred yards of walking, under the guidance of head stalker Brian Lyall. "The grouse were exquisitely pan-fried by Kat Lyall, the perfect day, with a lovely team at a very special estate," concluded May.

The only other August Macnab fell to Emily Coates at Tulchan of Glenisla, the estate proving to be a regular source of successful Macnabbers for *The Field's* challenge. Once again, the attempt got off to a leisurely start. "With heavy rain on the previous day the



Top: Dr Willem Moore tries for grouse at Gannochy  
Above: the first Macnabber of 2018, Fergie May (centre) on the Badanloch estate

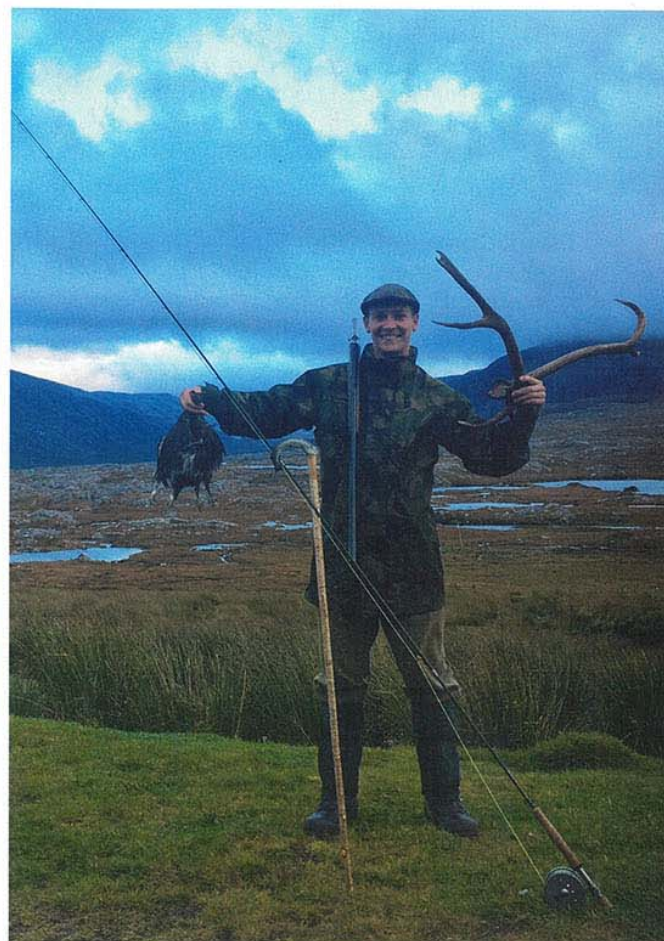
advice from gillie Dougy Morison was to wait until the afternoon to go to the river, so it was a leisurely start for the grouse," reveals Coates.

Coates has been shooting, stalking and fishing for most of her life and read about the Macnab Challenge in *The Field*. "I contacted the Ladies Macnab Club and was invited to take my DSC1 at the Tulchan estate, which I completed in June," she says.

First, it was up onto the hill, Coates shooting with her "new 20-bore Beretta Parallelo, fitted but not yet fully broken in". It handled the job with aplomb, downing a right-and-left ("or two from one shot") from a covey rising up and off to the left in front. Then it was swiftly on to the stag. "It was windy on the hill and we spied hinds and stags in a sheltered spot at the far end of the glen. Luckily, a hillwalker passed by without disturbing the herd so we continued the stalk down into a steep burn and then crawled in to take the shot," she says. "It was then a long drag for stalker Bill Mearns." After a pit-stop for tea and cake at Tulchan Lodge it was onto the River Shee, casting a version of the Orange Shrimp fly into slightly murky water. "After 10 minutes I had a fish on, and with huge excitement landed my first salmon – a hen fish of around 6lb." After sharing a celebratory dram with Morison, Coates caught a 10lb cock salmon within the hour, which took more than 10 minutes to land. What a way to break your salmon-fishing duck.

Like Coates, Orlando Hill has sporting adventure in his veins. "The first cartridge I ever fired at a grouse [aged 13] killed two and then another with the second shot also. Perhaps I should have hung up my guns then and there," he jokes. It is a good thing he





didn't as this 21-year-old's sporting enthusiasm runs deep. "We have been going to the Gualin estate as a family every year since I was born," says Hill, "and my brother and I both worked on the estate for a month or so as a gillie/underkeeper, too." With these credentials a Macnab might seem a certainty, but there had only been one taken on the estate during the previous 30 years. "But this year, when I caught my 5½lb fish before breakfast and got permission from my brothers (as we only had two stags for the three of us for the week), I set off to try for the Macnab, knowing that I would have to be extremely lucky to complete as there was a scarcity of grouse."

Heading to the hill on his own – "Duncan, the estate stalker, let's me do my own stalking," reveals Hill – stags were spied 1,500ft above but clouds closed in. "I tried to get a good mark on the deer as I continued the stalk, with visibility of only around 80 metres. After walking through the clouds for about 25 minutes, I stumbled across the stags, quickly chose my target and shot." With the game firmly on, Hill readied himself for the toughest part of the day, a suspected long walk back to the lodge, shotgun in hand. "I set off, again by myself, and within 30 minutes spotted a covey of grouse in the

distance. I tried to follow them and around 10 minutes later they got up within range, but when I went to pull the trigger the safety catch was on. I was furious with myself. I thought it was my only opportunity and I hadn't seen which direction the covey had gone. I carried on walking (with steam coming out of my ears) and two minutes later a pair of grouse got up straight in front of

**I knew I would be extremely lucky to complete as there was a scarcity of grouse**

me and came down, a right-and-left. Done by 4.30pm." A sporting first to take pride of place in the gamebook.

"My friends and I have completed the individual elements of a Macnab over the past few years and all thought we would attempt it 'one day,'" says Malcolm Smith. "If it hadn't been for Bruce Cooper, headkeeper at Glenprosen, suggesting my stalking day

**Left: 2018's only lady Macnabber, Emily Coates  
Right: Orlando Hill headed to the Gualin estate**

might turn into a Macnab attempt, I'm not sure that 'one day' would have arrived."

As soon as it was suggested, planning started, "While being careful to keep it from my friends in case of failure," he says. Smith's attempt started with the stalk. "I was out before dawn to get onto the hill for sunrise. Scrambling around a Scottish hill in the semi dark is fun." It worked, and by 7.30am the stag was in the bag, with the brace of grouse added by 9am. Would this be the fastest Macnab completion yet? "As the hours started to pass on the river I began to wonder if this wasn't going to be my day at all, especially when I saw Bruce Cooper's face. But as we entered the last few hours of the day, we had success, much down to the guidance of local gillie Malcolm Owen." A nail-biting end to a swift start. "Although it is an individual event the hard work of the keepers and gillies shouldn't be forgotten," says Smith. "These special people put so much into these days, too – the smile on Bruce's face at the end of the day said it all. And to cap off an unforgettable day, the Laird of Glenprosen estate sent my party a bottle of champagne to help us celebrate the Macnab." →