



## **Drake Team Members Hunter Grounds & Mitch Hughes Capture World Goose Calling Title and World Live Duck Calling Championship!**

**November, 12 2005  
Easton, Maryland**

Congratulations to Drake Elite Team member Hunter Grounds for capturing the 2005 World Goose Calling Championship at the annual Waterfowl Festival held in Easton, Maryland. Hunter took home this prestigious title Saturday evening while a packed house in the Easton High School Auditorium cheered him on. During the Friday night prelims, Hunter blew two flawless routines, which qualified him for the finals on Saturday evening. With fire in his eyes, Hunter yet again showed the audience that without a doubt he was the best caller in the world that night by completing his best routine of the entire contest. Adding to an already unprecedented resume, this year's title makes for Hunter's second World title in the last three years. Placing right behind Hunter were close friends, Scott Threinen in second and Drake Field Expert Kyle Rinella closely following in third.



*Drake Field Expert Mitch Hughes puts the final finesse sounds in his championship winning live duck routine.*



*2005 World Goose Calling Champion Hunter Grounds, (right) poses after the contest with his dad, 5-Time World Champion Tim Grounds (far left) and contest chairman, Dave Hagen*

Also that evening, Drake Field Expert Mitch Hughes took home the title of the World Live Duck Champion. Mitch bested out friend and Drake Elite Team member Kelley Powers in a final round tiebreaking call-off. Unlike other traditional duck calling contests, the World Championship Live Duck Calling Contest brings the best callers from around the world to perform true-to-life sounds in a realistic way. The callers, audience and judges listen to a brief recording of live ducks and then it's the

contestants' turn to imitate the sounds. There is no routine format as is in other duck calling contests and the time allowed to call is reduced to 60 seconds rather than 90.

Special congratulations go to John Taylor for winning the World Goose Calling Champion of Champions and John David Stanley for winning the Mason-Dixon Regional Duck Contest. By taking first in the Mason-Dixon Regional Duck Contest, John David is automatically qualified for the World Duck Calling Championship in Stuttgart, Arkansas Thanksgiving weekend.

### **Waterfowl Festival Information**

The Waterfowl Festival was founded in 1971 with the support of Ducks Unlimited. Starting with 50 exhibitors and 4,000 visitors, the first Festival turned a profit of \$7,500 which was contributed to Ducks Unlimited. The Waterfowl Festival Conservation Grants Program distributes the proceeds of each annual Festival to projects that promote and enhance wildlife conservation through habitat preservation, education and research. More than fifty conservation organizations have been involved in carrying out the projects that have been supported by the more than \$4.5 million of Festival funding donated since 1971. The Festival provides an environment for artisans to gather, exhibit and sell their work. 400 nationally recognized artists are invited to participate, exhibiting paintings, sculpture, carvings, photography, decoys, crafts and folk art. The public is provided with the opportunity to view and purchase the finest wildlife art available in the world.

Autumn is the most spectacular time of year for the Eastern Shore and the Waterfowl Festival in historic Easton shows it off at its best. Thousands of geese fly overhead while thousands of visitors stroll the streets. Local hunting traditions and sportsmen's goods and gear are highlighted in addition to the wildlife art, with the World Championship Goose Calling Contest® and the Mason-Dixon Regional Duck Calling Contest taking place, as well as retriever, fly-fishing and shooting demonstrations, a Decoy Auction and much more. 18,000 to 20,000 visitors from throughout the U.S. and other countries attend each year. Art collectors looking for the best in wildlife art, hunting enthusiasts celebrating their traditions and skills, families looking for a weekend getaway, and shoppers seeking the perfect holiday gifts all find something to enjoy at the Waterfowl Festival.

More than 1,500 volunteers offer their time and services to stage each year's Festival. More than 50 committees work year-round to organize the events at 15 exhibit locations throughout the town of Easton. Four paid staff and an eighteen-member volunteer Board of Directors coordinate these efforts.

For complete contest results visit:

[http://www.callingducks.com/news\\_context.aspx?CONTEXT=MAIN&ITEM=33](http://www.callingducks.com/news_context.aspx?CONTEXT=MAIN&ITEM=33)

For more info on the Waterfowl Festival visit: [www.waterfowlfestival.org](http://www.waterfowlfestival.org).

All images courtesy of **(Dave & Joan Hagan, Golden Memories Studio, Inc.)** in White Hall, MD. Visit them on the web at <http://www.goldenmemoriesstudio.com/>