

Hunting Working Airedales, Inc

HUNT TEST RULES

UPLAND (FLUSHING)

RETRIEVING

FUR TRACKING/TRAILING

Revised May, 2019

GENERAL:

HWA Hunt Tests are open to purebred Airedale Terriers, who will earn HWA Hunt Test titles on the Junior, Senior and Master levels.

Mixed-breed dogs or breeds other than Airedales may enter For Exhibition Only. For Exhibition Only entries must pay full entry fees, but they are not eligible to earn HWA Hunt Test titles or trophies. In cases in which there may be a question of whether an Airedale is a purebred or of mixed breeding, the Hunt Test Committee shall decide.

Bitches in season shall not be eligible for entry in any Hunt Test, and shall not be allowed on the grounds of the tests.

Any dog, that in the opinion of the Event Committee of the ongoing HWA event, attacks a person or a dog on the HWA event grounds at any time during the event, resulting in injury, and is believed by that Event Committee to present a hazard to persons or other dogs, shall be disqualified.

Entry fees paid for a bitch withdrawn because of coming in season, or for a dog withdrawn because of an injury or illness, or for a dog that dies, shall be refunded in full by the test-giving group. Prior to paying such refund, the club may require an appropriate veterinary certificate. In the event a dog is withdrawn for other reasons, the test-giving group is free to formulate its own policy with reference to refunds:-

Two judges shall judge all Test levels (Junior, Senior, or Master) or division of a Test level.

When both judges grant qualifying scores to a dog that has not passed a particular Hunt Test at a level not previously passed, the dog will earn the title granted for that test.

Judges shall not enter the Test level or a division of the Test level which they are judging, but may enter different Test level(s), division(s) provided there is no interference with the judging assignment. A judge shall not handle a dog in another test level/division until the test level/division that he/she is judging has been completed.

The Hunt Test Committee, whenever feasible in consultation with the judges, shall determine the tests to be given and shall design those tests in order to approximate as nearly as possible the conditions met in true hunting situations. In keeping with this aim, the tests shall be designed and enhanced by utilizing, as naturally as possible, the equipment that would be found in a true hunting situation. The judges will have the ultimate responsibility for approving their tests.

Hunt Tests shall simulate as nearly as possible the conditions met in hunting situations found in the region of the country that the Test is held.

If possible, fields used for Upland Tests should not be used for Retriever Tests. Also if possible, workshops should be held on fields separate from Hunt Test fields, unless the Hunt Tests are completed before the workshops use the field.

In keeping with the aim of simulated hunting conditions, handlers, judges, workers, and other participants shall be attired as they would be in a hunting environment. During the Upland Tests, an outerwear item of blaze orange clothing (minimum of a vest or jacket) shall be worn by marshals, bird

planters, dog handlers, gunners, members of the gallery, and judges. Camo or dark clothing shall be worn during the Retriever Tests. These clothing requirements shall be printed in the Premium List and in the Judging Program and/or catalog.

All cell phones and social media devices shall be silenced during the Hunt Tests.

A gamekeeper shall be appointed by the Hunt Test Committee. The gamekeeper is responsible for ensuring that all live game is humanely contained, fed and watered, and humanely treated during the event.

Judges shall have the authority to disqualify a dog that is not present within 15 minutes after it is called to run by the judges.

Score sheets from all tests may be reviewed by the handlers after the test. Score sheets are the property of HWA, Inc. and shall be turned over to the Event Secretary after the tests. The Event Secretary shall archive the paper score sheets for at least one year after the test.

With the exception of dogs participating in workshops, the Test Committee and the judges shall not permit training or disciplining of dogs on any part of the test grounds during the Test. Further, with the exception of dogs participating in workshops, there shall be no training of dogs on the grounds of the Test within 24 hours of the commencement of the event, or at any time during the event.

With the exception of dogs participating in workshops, dogs on the test grounds shall not wear electronic collars, either dummy or live, as well as prong or pinch collars during the event. Electronic bark collars are permissible while a dog is contained in a vehicle, kennel or enclosure.

The premium list / entry information for each Test shall specify the type of birds and/or fur animals being used for the Tests. The Premium List shall specify the brand of scent used to lay track for the Fur Test.

If a Fur Tracking/Trailing Test is held in a state that does not permit the use of live caged game for such Tests, the Test Committee and judges shall make a decision as to whether to use "roadkill" carcasses, skins, or drags for the quarry. Every effort shall be made to simulate live quarry in a hanging cage. The entry information / premium list shall state if live game will not be used.

In the event the Hunt Test Committee is unsuccessful in acquiring the planned live raccoon for the Fur Tests, the Hunt Test Committee and judges shall make a decision as to whether to use "roadkill" carcasses, raccoon skins, or drags for the quarry. Every effort shall be made to simulate live quarry in a hanging cage. Handlers who do not wish to run their dogs on non-live substitute game may request a refund of their entry fees.

"Off-game," such as opossum, squirrel, rabbit, or any other game, may not be substituted for a raccoon as the target animal of a raccoon-scented track.

Only break-open 20 to 12 gauge double-barreled shotguns shall be used in the Upland and Retrieving Tests. .22 caliber blank pistols or 209 primer pistols shall be used in the Senior and Master Fur Tracking/Trailing Tests.

ENTRIES AND TRANSFERS

A dog may not be entered in more than one level of a Test type (i.e: Junior Fur and Senior Fur) at a Test event.

A dog may be transferred to a higher level class if the handler notifies the Hunt Test Secretary prior to the start of the class. Transfers to a higher level test, such as Masters, will be allowed only if the test scenario has been set up for other entrants at the same level.

Late entries or “walk ups” may be allowed at the discretion of the Hunt Test Committee, pending availability of resources and time. Such entries will be allowed only if the test scenario has been set up for other entrants at the same level.

Each entry form shall be completed in full.

Running order will be posted prior to the Test.

Dogs may be run in a different order than they are drawn if, in the opinion of the judges or Test Committee, the change will result in a reasonable and desirable saving of time in the conduct of the event.

A catalog shall be provided for any National or Regional Hunt Test.

A dog is not required to earn any title as a prerequisite for earning a higher title.

In the Upland Flushing and Retrieving tests, dogs that are qualifying after the land series will be called back for the water series. Dogs not qualifying in the land series may run the water series after all qualifiers have run, at the discretion of the judges.

After a dog has qualified five times at a single level in a particular Test field, he may no longer compete at that level.

TITLES:

Titles may be earned at the Junior, Senior, and Master levels in Upland Flushing, Retrieving, and Fur Tracking/Trailing. A dog completing all three titles at a particular level in a particular Test type will earn the title "Versatile." The titles earned are:

Junior Hunter Fur, Senior Hunter Fur, Master Hunter Fur : (HWA titles) JHFur, SHFur, MHFur

Junior Hunter Flushing, Senior Hunter Flushing, Master Hunter Flushing

JHF, SHF, MHF

Junior Hunter Retriever, Senior Hunter Retriever, Master Hunter Retriever

JHR, SHR, MHR

Junior Hunter Versatile, Senior Hunter Versatile Master Hunter Versatile

JHV, SHV, MHV

Qualifications and titles earned in Fur Tests conducted by the Airedale Terrier Club of America (ATCA) will be considered equivalent to those earned in Fur Tests conducted by Hunting Working Airedales. As such, Fur titles earned in an ATCA Fur Test will count as legs towards HWA Versatile titles and towards awards offered by HWA.

ATCA Fur Titles are: Junior Fur Tracker, Senior Fur Tracker, Master Fur Tracker

JFT, SFT, MFT

Titles earned in Upland (Spaniel) Tests conducted by the American Kennel Club (AKC) will count as equivalent to those earned in Upland Tests conducted by Hunting Working Airedales. Titles earned in AKC Retriever Tests will also count as equivalent to those earned in Retriever Tests conducted by Hunting Working Airedales, Inc. As such, AKC titles will count as legs towards HWA Versatile titles.

FUR TRACKING/TRAILING

GENERAL:

Dogs are hunted alone for this test. Running order shall be decided by a drawing. Dogs handled by the same person shall be separated when possible.

There shall be two judges, a starting line judge and a tree judge.

Scent is to be laid down over varied terrain at least fifteen minutes prior to the test. (Varied terrain could include crossing a shallow creek, finger of a pond, marsh, swamp, etc.) There shall be a one-half hour recess whenever it is necessary to lay new scent along the entire length of the track. At the discretion of the judges, the starting scent pad and the first portion of the dragged track (up to 25 yards) shall be refreshed at more frequent intervals if needed. The one-half hour recess will not be required after refreshing the start of the track. The preferred way to lay down scent is with a commercial-type scented leather drag, or equivalent.

It is permissible to re-scent the track when, in the opinion of the judges, conditions warrant re-scenting the track.

Judges and handlers following the dog shall remain behind the dog, outside of the boundary. This parallel line shall be no closer than fifteen yards to the actual test track, although there are conditions (such as dense woods, steep terrain, creeks, etc.) that may require this line to be closer. When plotting this parallel trail, the judge shall consider the effects wind direction, terrain and cover conditions shall have on the actual track.

The caged raccoon is to be secured on the back side of the tree (out of sight) to prevent the test dog from sighting the game until the dog has followed the trail to its end. The caged raccoon must be secured well out of the reach of the test dogs

The judges shall instruct the handler not to approach within 30 feet of the home tree until so directed by them.

Dogs shall be stock-broke. Evidence of running and/or treeing off-game are all grounds for the dog being disqualified in a Fur Tracking/Trailing test.

In any Test level, at the handler's option, the dog may be run with a flat collar.

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE:

Junior:

The dog shall demonstrate the ability to locate a trail left by furred game over a course of approximately 100 yards, pursue it in a decisive and energetic manner until the quarry is treed, and remain at the tree announcing the location by repeated barking. Multiple false dead-end trails shall be used to simulate true-to-life hunting situations. The handler shall not encourage his/her dog along the track, and shall remain with the line judge, outside the boundary formed by the line flags. Handlers must stay behind the dog at all times.

The dog shall bark "treed" to the satisfaction of the judges within 2 minutes of the dog's arrival at the tree.

Senior:

A Senior dog shall show all of the attributes of a Junior level dog. At this level the dogs will be expected to do everything that a dog at the Junior level shall do, plus the following:

The trail shall be approximately 200 yards in length and shall follow a zigzag path; multiple false dead-end trails shall be used to simulate true-to-life hunting situations. The scent shall touch the bottom of more than one tree, and a crossing trail of another animal scent (examples: deer, fox, mink, groundhog) shall be laid. The dog may investigate the "off" scent but shall quickly return to the test track.

The handler shall not encourage or assist the dog either while on the track or at the tree. The dog shall bark "treed" to the satisfaction of the judges within 2 minutes of its arrival at the tree. The handler shall fire 2 shots from a .22 blank or 209 primer pistol while the dog is barking treed.

Master:

Dogs at this level are finished hunting dogs and will be expected to do everything that a dog at the Senior level is required to do, plus the following:

The track shall be laid over varied and some difficult terrain for at least 300 yards. The dog, handler, and judge shall approach the test track perpendicular to the course and at least 40 yards past the beginning of the track. There shall be at least two crossing trails of other "off" game scent (examples: deer, fox, mink, skunk, opossum) and one of these shall have a caged live animal (examples: mink, fox, opossum, or other furbearing animal native to the locality) secured on the "off" track within fifteen yards of the test track. This caged animal shall be a fur-bearing animal, indigenous to the area of the test. The dog may investigate the "off" scent but shall quickly return to the test track. If the dog discovers the off game animal, the dog shall immediate leave it and return to the raccoon scent. Multiple false dead-end trails shall be used to simulate true-to-life hunting situations.

The dog shall bark "treed" to the satisfaction of the judges. The handler shall fire 2 shots from a .22 blank pistol or 209 primer pistol while the dog is barking treed

STANDARDS FOR GRADING PERFORMANCE:

The dog must locate follow trail, pursue it in a decisive and energetic manner until the treed quarry is found, and remain at the tree announcing the location by repeated barking. The judges score the following five ability categories on the basis of "0" to "10."

Striking Ability: In order to locate a trail left by game, a dog shall show an aptitude to recognize promising locations and demonstrate eagerness to explore the terrain, regardless of hazards or discomfort.

Tracking Ability: The trail shall be followed in a manner that shows both control and progress. The trail shall be pursued rather than merely followed, and the dog's behavior shall indicate a determined effort to make progress in the surest, most sensible manner by adjusting speed to correspond to conditions and circumstances. A dog may run open or silent. A dog that is called back to the track after leaving it will not qualify. (Example: The commands "Come," "Here," or "Come here" as given in obedience training would be considered calling a dog back to the track. A warning such as "Get back to work" will result in a deduction, possibly up to the point of non-qualifying.)

Treeing Ability: The dog shall mark the location of game by repeated barking. An intelligent and accurate dog will not be misled by any ruse that the game shall employ. The dog shall be confident that it has located the game; the proper use of voice reflects this ability of the dog. The dog shall clearly indicate that he has found the quarry without human assistance.

In the event that target quarry is not live game (that is, a carcass or pelt is used), the dog must clearly indicate it has found the quarry, but barking will not be required.

Staying Ability: After accurately locating the quarry, a dog shall show willingness and determination to continue to mark the location. Repeated intense barking indicates this as well as remaining in restricted proximity of the tree. The dog shall continue barking at the location to the satisfaction of the judge.

Determination: This essential quality shall be observed in all aspects of the dog's performance (striking, trailing, treeing, and staying treed.) Determination is desire in its most intense form. A talented dog shall be less useful if it is deficient in this quality.

SCORING INSTRUCTIONS:

Judges evaluate the performance of dogs and then score the individual dog's abilities on a scale of "0" to "10" in each ability element: striking, trailing, treeing, staying, and determination.

The judges determine the "Official Score." In order to receive a qualifying score, a dog shall not have a score lower than 5 in any ability element. In addition, the overall average of all abilities shall be at least 7.

UPLAND FLUSHING

GENERAL:

The primary purpose of the Upland Field testing is to evaluate the dog's ability to hunt, find, flush, and return birds to hand in a pleasing and obedient manner as quickly as possible; whether a dog accomplishes its primary purpose is determined by evaluating its unique set of both natural abilities and trained abilities.

Dogs shall be run one at a time. Running order shall be decided by a drawing. Dogs handled by the same person shall be separated when possible.

Until called to be tested, a dog must be kept where it cannot see a water retrieve, a hunt dead, or the planting or retrieve of a blind. Violation of this rule may cause the dog to be dismissed from the test.

All courses shall consist of sufficient cover to hold birds and be of adequate size to permit a dog to hunt naturally. A sufficient number of birds shall be released to give each dog an opportunity to show bird work. Courses shall be staked to indicate the perimeter of the field and utilized just as they would in hunting. All courses shall consist of a minimum of five acres.

Trailing, judged under Bird Finding Ability, should be judged at all levels whenever the opportunity occurs. In Master, when a dog is trailing a bird, the handler must be able to stop the dog before it trails it out of gun range. Failure to stop the dog will result in a lower score.

Water retrieves should be laid out to simulate normal hunting conditions. Perfect entries and line of swim are not required as long as the dog efficiently retrieves the bird. Dogs must enter the water and should return through the water. Unnecessary coaxing to make the dog enter the water should be scored low in Trained Abilities. Master dogs must be scored with greater stringency than Seniors and Juniors.

Game birds used in the land portion of the Upland Test, whether pheasant, chukar, pigeon, or similar upland bird, will also be used in the water portions of the Upland Test in order to simulate real hunting situations. The Premium List will state the game birds that may be used.

Mechanical vehicles on the course, such as all-terrain vehicles, shall only be used for the purpose of planting birds.

Handlers must carry bottled water for their dog. Judges will allow handlers to offer the dog water during the test, as long as the water break does not disturb the running of the test.

Guns: Only Official Guns appointed by the Test Committee shall shoot over the dogs. Only break-open 20 to 12 gauge double-barreled shotguns shall be used. Safe gunning practices shall be adhered to at all times. All gunning involving live ammunition shall be performed by adults, age 21 or older. All popper gunning should be by individuals of at least 16 years of age and that individual should have completed a recognized gun safety course. Viewing of the AKC Gun Safety video is mandatory for all members of the event committee and gunners. Alternately, gunners may be certified through an AKC Gunners Program. Judges may not be considered as Official Guns.

In the Master Hunt Test land and water series and the Senior water Test, the handler must carry an empty shotgun or facsimile shotgun. These handlers should, when appropriate, shoulder the gun and follow the flight of a bird as if a shot were to be fired. Handlers at the Junior level are not to be required to handle a gun at any time during any part of the testing. Handlers in the Senior land test are not required to handle a gun.

It shall be the responsibility of the test-giving Club or group to provide an empty break-open shotgun or facsimile shotgun for the handler.

There shall be no more than 2 Official Guns per dog in any testing element, and judges shall have complete authority over the gunners and all shooting. The Guns represent the handler and shall attempt to follow the handler's movements.

The judges determine the positioning of the gunners, keeping them close enough to the handler so that they are not used by the dog as a quartering guide. Gunners do not flush game, nor are they responsible for locating game for the handlers.

The Official Guns shall shoot their game in a sportsmanlike manner, as they would in a day's shoot. The proper functioning of the Official Guns is of the utmost importance. The Guns represent the handler up to the time the game is shot, and shall not interfere in any manner with his/her work or that of the working dog. They are, if possible, or unless otherwise directed, to down cleanly and consistently the game flushed by the dogs, at a point most advantageous to a fair and natural test of the dog's abilities, with due regards to the dogs, handlers, judges, gallery and other contingencies. Birds must not be shot on the ground unless ordered by the judges.

Care shall be taken not to shoot so that the game falls too close to the dog. If this is done it does not afford a chance for the dog to show any good retrieving ability and often results in a bird being destroyed. The Guns shall stand perfectly quiet after the shot; otherwise they may interfere with the dog and handler. When a dog makes a retrieve, no other birds or game shall be shot unless ordered by the judge. The Guns shall also keep themselves in the correct position to the handler and others.

Marshals: The Test Committee shall appoint a Marshal whose duty it shall be to assist the judges and to carry out their instructions, including regulating and controlling the gallery, and ensure the gallery is kept separate from and behind the judges, and that no one in the gallery talks to the judges while a dog is working. The Marshall shall also advise the handlers and judges as to the boundaries of the course.

The Marshal has the responsibility and authority to control the gallery and shall excuse anyone who does not comply with his or her instructions. The Marshal has the authority to insist the gallery must minimize any loud conversations and/or noises that may distract the dog, handler or judges.

Other Marshals may be appointed by the Test Committee to supervise the immediate and humane disposal of game, and assist in all other matters necessary for the smooth and expeditious running of the Test.

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE:

Junior:

A hunting dog shall show a desire to hunt in an enthusiastic manner and ability to retrieve. It is not necessary that a dog be steady to wing and shot. The dog shall show boldness to cover and a reasonable response to commands (whistle, hand, or verbal,) while maintaining a decent working distance from the handler.

The Junior dog shall hunt in a bold and aggressive manner and find and flush two birds. Though not steady to wing and shot, the dog shall not show uncontrollable chasing in a missed bird situation. The dog shall have an opportunity to retrieve a bird on land. That bird shall be flushed by the dog, and then shot by the Official Guns in order for the dog to have an opportunity to be shot over and to demonstrate the Retrieve.

If birds are missed or cannot be shot with safety, then a dead bird shall be thrown and a gun fired for the dog to make the retrieve.

The Junior dog shall complete all retrieves within reach to the handler, but need not retrieve completely to hand. Handlers shall control their dogs by hand, whistle, and/or verbal signals only in the quiet manner that would be used in the field

Junior dogs must perform a water retrieve. This is a single mark, approximately 25 yards in open water (dead bird, blank shot fired.) The dog may be restrained gently on the line in this water retrieve.

Senior:

The dog shall show true boldness to cover, a pattern addressing the course objectives and an intense desire to hunt. A proper working distance, and a cooperative, but independent hunting attitude shall be maintained. The Senior dog need not be steady to wing and shot.

At the Senior level, dogs will be expected to do everything that is required of a dog at the Junior level, must demonstrate stronger skills, plus the following:

Senior dogs shall retrieve to hand.

Handlers shall be able to call a dog off a missed bird. (No uncontrolled chases will be permitted.)

A Senior dog must also complete a "hunt dead" on land at a distance that does not normally exceed forty yards, but is at least thirty-five yards. A dead bird will be planted in this area and the dog will be expected to hunt the area, find the bird, and retrieve it to the handler. "Hunt Dead" is defined as a situation in which a dead bird, unseen to the dog, lies in the general area of the hunter/handler and the dog is expected to hunt the area carefully and thoroughly in order to retrieve the bird. A shot is not fired in hunt dead situations. The hunt dead situation shall be set up to run on course or it shall be run separately. In either case, the handler casts the dog and may walk to within approximately one-half the distance to the objective. Dogs shall be handled in a hunt dead. Markers, including flags, ribbons, tape, etc., shall not be used to indicate the location of the bird. A dog that takes the most direct line to the general area of the fallen bird shall be scored the highest. A senior Hunting dog should require no more than 5 minutes to find the bird and return it to hand

Senior dogs that require a “recast” on the hunt dead shall not receive a qualifying score. A recast occurs when a dog is sent to make a retrieve, but stops within a short distance of the castaway point or goes to the area of the downed bird and then returns or is recalled to the handler’s side. The dog is then realigned and sent again to make the retrieve.

Senior dogs must also demonstrate the ability to retrieve from water. The dog will perform a one single retrieves of a bird to hand with a shot fired. The retrieve should not normally exceed a distance of 35 yards nor should it be shortened by more than five yards. Dogs must be steady on line at the water, but a controlled break will be permitted. In the Senior water test, the handler must carry an empty shotgun. The handler should, when appropriate, shoulder the gun and follow the flight of a bird as if a shot were to be fired.

Master:

Master dogs are finished hunting dogs. This means that they shall stop on command when the bird is flushed and remain steady until sent for the bird by its handler. The dog shall exhibit a very definite hunting pattern in the field and at all times be under control. All retrieves shall be made to hand.

A Master dog shall show a keen enthusiasm to hunt, shall have a bold and attractive manner of running, and demonstrate not only intelligence in seeking objectives, but also excellent ability to find game. The dog shall hunt for its handler at all times at a suitable gun range, showing a fine hunting pattern and experienced cooperative hunting independence. The dog shall locate game, show a bold aggressive flush and be absolutely steady to wing and shot. Intelligent use of the wind and terrain in locating game, accurate nose, and intensity are essential. After the shot, a Master hunting dog shall demonstrate its steadiness to wing and shot. The handler shall not command or signal the dog to retrieve until the steadiness has been demonstrated.

The handler shall carry an empty break-open shotgun or facsimile shotgun. When appropriate, the handler shall shoulder the empty shotgun and follow the flight of the bird as if a shot were to be fired.

At this level, dogs will be expected to do everything that a dog at the Junior and Senior levels shall do, plus Master dogs are required to display a finished performance. The following is also required:

The Master dog must also perform a land hunt dead. Distance should be 55-60 yards. Dogs shall take a line, stop on command and take casts. The hunt dead shall be run in areas where the dog is visible to both the handler and the judges at all times. . A dog that takes the most direct line to the general area of the fallen bird shall be scored the highest. A Master Hunting dog should require no more than 5 minutes to find the bird and return it to hand.

Master dogs that require a “recast” on the hunt dead shall not receive a qualifying score. A recast occurs when a dog is sent to make a retrieve, but stops within a short distance of the castaway point or goes to the area of the downed bird and then returns or is recalled to the handler’s side. The dog is then realigned and sent again to make the retrieve.

Distances shall not exceed those normally encountered in hunting.

Master dogs must also be line steady at water and retrieve one bird to hand from water with a shot

fired. The distance which should be at least forty yards but should not normally exceed forty-five yards. [Master dogs requiring a recast on the water mark or the water blind shall not receive a qualifying score.

In addition, a Master hunting dog must be tested on a water blind (a shot is not fired). The “water blind” in the Master is defined as a test designed to exhibit a dog’s ability to take not only a line across a body of water but also to take direction at a long distance across a body of water. Further, a dog that obediently stops on command then looks back and takes direction from the handler should be scored highly as this is the intent of this test. The water blind should not normally exceed forty yards but shall be at least thirty yards in distance.

STANDARDS FOR GRADING PERFORMANCE:

Dogs exhibiting any of the following traits shall not receive a qualifying score: Severe hard mouth, gun shy, out of control, failed or refused retrieves, obvious blinking or ignoring game, obvious viciousness, refusal to flush.

Hard mouth is one of the most undesirable traits, but Judges must exercise caution before failing a dog for this fault. Hard-mouth should only become the verdict when proven. Torn skin or flesh is usually not sufficient proof. Damage may be caused in several ways, such as by sharp sticks and stones, etc. Dogs can unintentionally damage birds when retrieving from heavy cover, and by their fast, positive pickup. At certain times of the year, birds are particularly susceptible to such damage. Crushed bone structure usually can be accepted as evidence of hardmouth, and the only such proof, in the absence of obvious, flagrant, and unjustified tearing of flesh. Other behaviors are frequently confused with hardmouth, although they are entirely separate and distinct from it, even though the dog may actually be hardmouthing. A hardmouthing dog may have a gentle delivery. A reluctant or “sticky” delivery does not necessarily imply hardmouth. Rolling a bird or mouthing it, while making the retrieve, may be erroneously associated with hardmouth even though the bird may not be damaged. Such mouthing does not necessarily call for lowering a Retrieving Ability score. Judges should remember that a dog either does or does not have a hardmouth, and, if it does, its Retrieving Ability is scored “0,” and the dog cannot qualify.

The 5 categories of ability in Junior, Senior and Master Hunting Tests must be graded on a scale of 0-10. In order to receive a Qualifying score in Junior, Senior and Master Hunting Tests, a dog must acquire a minimum average of not less than 5 on each of the categories of abilities listed on the Score Card, with an overall average score of not less than 7

Hunting Ability: Includes desire, courage, perseverance, independence and intelligence.

Bird Finding Ability: Includes bird sense, response to wind and scenting conditions, and use of nose.

Flushing Ability: Boldness.

Trained Abilities: Includes range, pattern, gun response, response to commands.

Retrieving Ability: Includes marking, enthusiasm and mouth trainability. The dog shall be rated highest for a bold flush, however a soft flush or momentary stopping is acceptable if the dog forces the bird into

flight within a very brief period. Passed birds are not grounds for failing a test unless it becomes evident that the dog is blinking or ignoring game. A bird that flushes wild has no bearing on the dog's evaluation, except for the behavior after the flush (e.g. chasing) and unless the dog is obviously ignoring game.

The Hunting Test Committee shall supply each Judge with a scorecard (score sheet) for every dog entered under that Judge. When the Judges' scorecards are not in agreement on the score of one or more abilities, the Judges may average the scores that are not in agreement. However, both Judges must agree on which dogs will qualify and which dogs will not qualify. In the event of a disagreement, the dog cannot receive a Qualifying score. The scorecards shall be available for owner/ handler inspection at the conclusion of the test level.

RETRIEVING

General:

Dogs are run singly, and the running order shall be decided by a drawing. Dogs handled by the same person shall be separated when possible.

Pheasants, chukar, quail, or ducks are preferable. However, if another game bird shall be used, it shall be consistent with hunting in the local area. The Premium List will state the game that may be used. Ducks, if available, are to be used for water portion of the Retriever tests.

In Senior and Master level tests, at least one live flyer should be used unless the use of live ammunition is deemed unsafe in given hunt test situations by the chairs of the Hunt Test Committee; or prohibited by law or policy of the land managing organization at the testing location; or due to other extenuating circumstances.

The judges shall use hidden and/or visible guns.

Until called to be tested, a dog shall be kept where it cannot see the location of a fall for another dog, or see the planting or retrieve of a blind. Violation of this rule may cause the dog to be dismissed from the test.

After birds have been shot, all guns shall remain still and quiet and move their positions only if so instructed by the judges. The judges may request the Guns to disappear from sight after the bird is down, but they shall not move them to another position to deliberately mislead the dogs in their marking. The judges shall not specify the order in which the birds are to be retrieved.

Unusual Circumstances, "no birds": If unusual and unplanned circumstances occur during the course of a marking test, the judges can ask the handler to handle the dog, or otherwise compensate for the unanticipated occurrence.

Each judge should be at liberty to call a "no bird" independently when, in their opinion, a hazard or an element of danger exists, or the test conditions are altered.

Handlers must carry bottled water for their dog. Judges will allow handlers to offer the dog water during the test, as long as the water break does not disturb the running of the test.

In Senior and Master Tests, handlers shall always carry and shoulder an empty shotgun except when honoring the working dog or when running a blind. The gun shall not be used as a pointing device to direct the dog's attention to the bird. It shall be the responsibility of the test-giving club to provide an empty shotgun and it shall further be the responsibility of the judges to ensure that the shotgun is unloaded. The judge may take the gun from the handler once the dog is sent for the first mark. It is the responsibility of the handler to make the gun safe (break it open, if possible) before handing it off.

Marking and Retrieving:

No dog shall be sent to retrieve until ordered to do so by the judges. Nothing shall be thrown to

encourage a dog to enter the water.

On marked retrieves, the dog shall be able to see each bird in the air and as it falls, since marking can only be evaluated when the dog has seen the falls. Many factors contribute to a dog's ability to see and mark the falls; for instance, the background against which the bird is visualized in flight and the light conditions, as well as the height that the birds are thrown or that they fly.

When ordered to retrieve, a dog shall proceed quickly and eagerly to marked falls or in the direction given him by his handler for falls it has not seen. A dog shall not disturb too much cover and shall respond quickly and obediently to any further directions his handler might give to him. In water retrieves, bank running shall be considered a fault and penalized according to the judges' discretion.

In marking situations, a handler may give the dog a line in the direction of the fall, provided that such lining is accomplished briskly and precisely. Intensive lining suggests a weak marking ability and the dog shall be graded low in Marking.

On marked retrieves, the order in which birds are to be retrieved shall not be specified by the Judges: the handler is free to select the order in which he directs his dog to retrieve the birds provided that such selection shall be accomplished quietly and promptly.

Penalties and NQs:

In Junior, Senior and Master Hunting Tests, a dog shall come tractably at heel and sit promptly at the point designated by its handler and remain quietly where placed until given further orders. Dogs that bark or whine on line, in a blind, or while retrieving shall be scored low in Trainability. Loud and prolonged barking or whining is sufficient cause to justify grading a dog "0" in Trainability.

In Junior, Senior and Master Tests, marking and memory of birds are of primary importance. While dogs may be handled in all three levels of testing, this is undesirable in marking tests and should be utilized only as a last recourse to get a bird out of the field. A dog that goes to the area of the fall, establishes a hunt and finds the bird unaided must be scored appreciably higher than a dog that has to be handled to the bird.

A dog who pays no attention to the many whistles and/or directions by his handler shall be considered weak in response, and unless mitigating circumstances exist in the opinion of the judges, the dog shall be graded low or receive a grade of "O" in Trainability.

A dog retrieving a decoy shall be graded "0" on Trainability. A dog should not drop its game on the ground, but distinction shall be made between deliberately dropping a bird, and readjusting a bad hold or losing its grip because of a struggling bird or running over uneven terrain.

In marked retrieves, after the dog has been sent to retrieve, if it: (a) returns to his handler before finding the bird, without having been called in; (b) stops his hunt; or (c) fails to pick the bird up, actually leaving it after finding it; that shall be sufficient cause to grade the dog "0" in Marking or Perseverance.

A dog that fails to find a bird which, in the opinion of the judges, should have been marked and found, shall be graded "0" in Marking.

Nothing shall be thrown during any of the Retrieve elements (Junior, Senior, or Master) to encourage a dog or to direct a dog to a fall. Violation of this provision is to be considered sufficient cause for the dog not to receive a qualifying score.

Every bird retrieved and delivered to the handler must be inspected by one of the judges. Failure to inspect retrieved birds is carelessness, and as an undesirable practice. It is unfair to the dog whose abilities are being evaluated - not only in respect to the question of "hard-mouth," but more particularly, since it may furnish the explanation for a slow pick-up or some other oddity in the dog's pick-up. Any unusual condition of a bird should be brought to the attention of the judges. If birds are being re-used, those that are damaged should not be used again. A dog that renders a bird unfit for human consumption cannot receive a qualifying score, but the judges shall agree that the dog alone was responsible for the damage.

In Senior and Master hunt tests a dog that goes to the area of a fall, hunts, fails to find the bird, and then leaves the area to hunt for another fall, or that drops a bird it is retrieving and goes for another, shall be considered to have switched. A dog that switches shall be scored "0" in Perseverance in Senior and Master hunt tests.

A dog that returns to the area of a fall or a blind that it has previously retrieved and establishes another hunt shall be considered to have returned to an old fall. Unless in the opinion of the judges there exist valid, mitigating circumstances, a dog that returns to an old fall shall be scored low in Perseverance and/or Marking.

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE

Junior (Land):

Note: All retrieves shall normally be within 75 yards on land.

Dogs shall be tested with two single marks.

On consecutive singles from the same retrieving line, the line to the falls should not be less than 90 degrees.

Judges shall instruct the bird throwers to shoot, throw a dead bird, and then shoot again. Judges will indicate that the handler may release the dog by calling the dog's number or other agreed-upon word.

Dogs shall be steady but may be brought to the line on leash with a flat buckle collar. The dog is under judgment when it leaves the holding blind. A Junior dog that is not under control when brought to the line (jumping, strongly tugging, etc.) even though it is on a leash shall risk receiving a lower score in trainability including zero in extreme cases. Dogs may be restrained gently with a slipcord looped through the flat buckle collar, or held gently by the flat buckle collar until sent to retrieve.

Dogs may be sent to retrieve more than once on a mark, but shall not be sent more than twice.

A Junior dog must retrieve to hand. Failure to do so merits a grade of "O" in Trainability.

Junior (Water):

All retrieves shall normally be within 50 yards in water.

Junior dogs shall be tested with two single water marks.

Judges shall instruct the bird throwers to shoot, throw a dead bird, and then shoot again. The judges will release the handler by calling the dog's number or other agreed-upon word.

Dogs shall be steady but may be brought to the line on leash with a flat buckle collar. The dog is under judgment when it leaves the holding blind. A Junior dog that is not under control when brought to the line (jumping, strongly tugging, etc.) even though it is on a leash shall risk receiving a lower score in trainability including zero in extreme cases. Dogs may be restrained gently with a slipcord looped through the flat buckle collar, or held gently by the flat buckle collar until sent to retrieve.

Dogs may be sent to retrieve more than once on a mark, but shall not be sent more than twice.

A Junior dog must retrieve to hand. Failure to do so merits a grade of "O" in Trainability.

Senior Hunting Test. Dogs shall be tested in a minimum of four hunting situations that shall include one land blind, one water blind (that may be run as a double blind on land and water), one double land mark, and one double water mark. In Senior tests, a double mark is defined as two marks presented before the dog is sent to retrieve. Blinds shall not be run between marks in Senior.

Senior dogs in their land and water series shall be brought to the line and taken from the line off-lead and without collars. Collars and leashes may be put on the dogs after they leave the line and are in back of all the Judges. Dogs shall be considered under judgment from the time that they are called to come to the line until they have left the line and are in back of all judges.

The handler of the Senior dog shall remain silent from the time handler signals for the first bird to be thrown until the Judges release the dog. The handler shall not hold or touch a dog to keep it steady, or verbally restrain a dog on line, except in extraordinary circumstances, from the time the first bird is being thrown until the dog's number is called. Violation of any of the provisions of this paragraph is sufficient cause to justify a lower score in Trainability for the Senior Dog.

Senior (Land):

There shall be 2 land marks that shall be a double with each mark no more than 100 yards in length. The birds shall fall in moderate cover..

Dogs shall be steady, but a controlled break-will be permitted.

Birds shall be retrieved to hand.

Senior dogs shall also perform a land blind of no more than 100 yards in length. A diversion shot shall be fired in the direction of the hidden bird as the dog is set up at the line for the blind.

The handler shall give the dog a line to the blind.

Senior (Water):

There shall be two water marks that shall be a double, each mark normally within 100 yards. One of the marks may be a live flyer.

Dogs shall be steady, but a controlled break will be permitted. Birds shall be retrieved to hand.

Senior dogs shall also perform a water blind. The handler shall give the dog a line to the blind. The Senior land and water blinds may be run as a double blind on land and water.

Master Hunting Test. Dogs shall be tested in multiple land marks, multiple water marks, a land blind and a water blind (at least one that may be a double blind in any combination).

Master dogs in their land and water series shall be brought to the line and taken from the line off-lead and without collars. Collars and leashes may be put on the dogs after they leave the line and are in back of all the Judges. Dogs shall be considered under judgment from the time that they are called to come to the line until they have left the line and are in back of all judges.

The handler of the Master dog shall remain silent from the time handler signals for the first bird to be thrown until the Judges release the dog. The handler shall not hold or touch a dog to keep it steady, or verbally restrain a dog on line, except in extraordinary circumstances, from the time the first bird is being thrown until the dog's number is called. Violation of any of the provisions of this paragraph is sufficient cause to justify "0" in Trainability for the Master Dog.

Master (Land):

These shall be finished hunting dogs. This means that on all marks they shall be absolutely steady. No controlled breaks are permitted.

There shall be three land marks. Marks shall normally be within 100 yards. A double will be thrown using dead birds, and when delivering the second bird to the handler, a diversion bird will be shot or thrown and then retrieved. All birds must be retrieved to hand by the working dog.. No penalty on marking shall be assessed for handling on the diversion birds in the Master test.

Master dogs may be handled on marks but must be scored with greater stringency than Senior Hunting dogs in Marking and/or Perseverance. Once a dog is handled on a mark the handler must continue to handle the dog to the mark. A dog that goes to the area of the fall and finds the bird unaided shall be scored appreciably higher than a dog that must be handled to a bird.

Master Hunting dogs that require excessive handling on marks and blinds, that refuse voice or whistle commands, or appear unwilling to perform their work must be viewed in a different light than Senior Hunting dogs where a degree of tolerance is necessary for those not-so-seasoned Senior dogs. Master Hunting dogs must exhibit those qualities expected in a truly finished and experienced hunting companion. .

In the Master Tests, every dog shall honor in at least one hunting situation involving the retrieve of a marked fall(s) by remaining on the line off-lead while the working dog retrieves, unless otherwise

directed or until dismissed by the Judges. Only one dog at a time may be required to honor the retrieve of the working dog. The honoring dog must be in an area designated by the judges. The specific positions (sitting, lying down, etc.) of the honoring dog will be determined by the handler provided the honoring dog is positioned to clearly see all the marks without having to reposition itself. The handler of the honoring dog may speak quietly to the honoring dog provided the handler does not interfere with other handlers, the working dog(s) or the Judges. Judges should be careful in establishing the honoring scenario to maintain adequate distance between dogs. In Master Tests, a dog that is eliminated by the Judges in a series that includes an honor, just prior to or while honoring, will be expected to complete the honor, if requested by the Judges. A dog that is eliminated by the Judges, and is requested to complete the honor, must be held on-lead by its handler.

In Master Test, when a dog is ordered by the Judge to retrieve a fall, and another dog breaks for the same fall and interferes with the working dog to the extent of causing it in any way to make a faulty performance, the dog interfered with shall be considered as not having been tested and given another evaluation.

Master dogs shall also complete a Land Blind. This shall not exceed 100 yards in length. If this test is run in conjunction with land marks, the blind shall not be run between the two marks, and there shall be at least 45 degrees between either of the outside marks of the three land marks and the line to the blind. The dog shall take a line, stop on the whistle, and take casts. The handler is required to handle the dog to the blind. An occasional slipped whistle or cast refusal will not be grounds for disqualification, but if the dog is clearly ignoring its handler and merely stumbles across the bird by accident, it will not qualify.

Master: Water

These shall be finished hunting dogs. This means that on all marks they shall be absolutely steady. No controlled breaks are permitted.

All retrieves shall be to hand.

One of the marks may be a live flyer.

There shall be three water marks. These shall normally be within 100 yards. When delivering the second bird to the handler, a diversion bird will be shot or thrown and then retrieved. All birds must be retrieved by the working dog.

The Master dog will also complete a water blind. The blind may be a double with a land blind.

STANDARDS FOR GRADING DOGS:

The four abilities of a dog shall be graded on a scale of "0" to "10".

In the Junior Retriever Test, in order to receive a qualifying score, a dog shall acquire a minimum score of 5 on each of the abilities listed on the Evaluation Form / Score Card.

To qualify in the Senior and Master Tests, a dog must receive an overall average of at least seven (7.0) for the entire test. Furthermore, it must receive a separate, independent average score of at least five (5.0) in each ability category.

A dog that switches shall not receive a qualifying score.

The judges shall score the dogs on their natural abilities and their trainability, including:

- Marking (memory)
- Style
- Perseverance / Courage / Hunting
- Trainability (steadiness, control, response, delivery).

Marking: Memory is of paramount importance. The ability to mark does not necessarily imply pinpointing the fall. A dog that misses the fall on the first cast, but recognizes the depth of the area of the fall, stays within it, then quickly and systematically hunts it out, has done both a creditable and intelligent job of marking.

Style: This includes

1. An alert and obedient attitude.
2. A fast, determined departure.
3. An aggressive search for the fall.
4. A prompt pick-up.
5. A reasonably fast return.

Perseverance / Courage / Hunting: This represents the dog's determination to stick to the job and complete the task at hand - systematically, aggressively and without faltering, to search for and find the bird it has been sent to retrieve. It is also displayed by a willingness to face without hesitation - and repeatedly - rough cover, mud, or other similar conditions which make for tough going.

Trainability: This factor is defined as steadiness, control, response, and delivery.

Retriever Test Listing of Faults

Serious Handler Faults: Serious faults listed cover all those instances where the Rules describes conduct of the handler which in and of itself justifies elimination from the test. *1. Lining a dog in marking situations – in the direction of any fall or any gun station before all the falls are down. 2. Talking to the working dog – the handler must remain silent from the time the handler signals for the first bird to be thrown until the judges release the dog. 3. Talking to the honoring dog – loud enough to interfere with other handlers, the working dog(s) or the Judges. 4. Unsportsmanlike Conduct – abusing or harassing a Judge, official or any other person present in any capacity; or, kicking, striking or otherwise roughly manhandling a dog while the event is in progress; or, deliberately permitting a dog to see the location of a fall for another dog, or to see the planting or retrieve of a blind. 5. Willfully Interfering – with another handler or with his or her dog. 6. Carrying exposed training equipment (except whistle) – (Master and Senior levels). 7. Pulling out leash in front of Judges – (Master and Senior levels). 8. Restraining a dog on line – holding or touching a dog to keep it steady, or verbally restraining a dog (Master and Senior levels).*

I. Serious Dog Faults: Serious faults listed cover all those instances where the Rules describes conduct of the dog which in and of itself justifies elimination from the test. *1. Breaking – by either the working or the honoring dog is a mandatory elimination at Master (as there is no controlled break at Master). 2. Out of control – not paying attention to many whistles and/or directions by its handler . . . unless the existence of valid mitigating circumstances. 3. Failure to deliver to hand. 4. Freezing – refusal to release a bird on delivery for an unreasonable period of time or until compelled to do so by severe methods. 5. Hard Mouth – badly damaging a bird, or making it unfit for human consumption, which in the opinion of the judges was*

caused solely by the dog without justification. 6. Switching birds – giving up after establishing a hunt in the area of the fall for one bird and then going to the area of another fall and establishing a hunt; or, dropping the bird being retrieved and going for another. 7. Returning to an old fall – returning to the area of either a fall or a blind that the dog has previously retrieved and establishing a hunt. 8. Failure to enter – either rough cover, water, ice mud, or any other situation involving unpleasant or difficult going for the dog, after having been ordered to do so several times. 9. Failure to go on a blind – as there can be no confusion by the dog on a blind as to whether it was really ordered to retrieve. 10. Returning to the handler without the bird – before finding the bird, with or without having been called in, except on a marked retrieve where the dog was confused as to whether it was really ordered to retrieve. 11. Stops its hunt. 12. “Blinks” a bird – fails to pick the bird up, and leaves it after making the find. 13. Failure to find a bird – which the dog should have found. 14. Retrieving a decoy. 15. Loud and prolonged barking or whining.

II. Moderate Dog Faults. Infractions in this category may actually be so slight as to warrant their considerations as only a “minor” fault, or they may be so severe as to warrant their consideration a “serious” fault: also, repetitions of a “moderate” fault or a combination of several of these faults may readily convert the total infraction into a “serious” fault

1. Failure to mark the area of the fall – requiring that the dog be handled to the bird; worse on the first bird retrieved than on subsequent birds. 2. Disturbing too much cover – either by not going to the area or by leaving it. 3. Reluctance to enter – rough cover, water, ice, mud or other situations involving unpleasant “going” for the dog. 4. Popping on a marked retrieve – stopping and looking back to its handler for directions on a marked fall before it has hunted for a considerable time. 5. Multiple whistle refusals – not stopping for directions after two or three whistles which the dog should have heard. 6. Multiple cast refusals – failure to take lines and directions, or to hold lines and directions more than a short distance. 7. Moderate whining of short duration. 8. Excessive cheating – going out of the way by land to a “fall” to an excessive degree to avoid going into the water on a water retrieve. 9. Controlled Break – In any Senior test, a slight break after which the dog is brought immediately under control (There are no controlled breaks at the Master level.

III. Minor Dog Faults. Either severe or repeated or combinations of these “minor” infractions may summate into a “moderate” or even a “serious” fault. Also, they may be so slight as not to warrant any penalty at all. 1. *Excessive cheating on return – going out of the way by land from a “fall” to an excessive degree to avoid going into the water on the return from a water retrieve. 2. Lack of attention. 3. Poor line-manners – heeling poorly; not immediately taking and staying in the position designated; dropping a bird at delivery; jumping after a bird; not remaining quietly on line after delivery. 4. Slow pick-up of a dead bird – (except when fluttering or badly shot-up); dropping bird; handling game in a sloppy manner. 5. Unsteadiness on-line, including creeping. 6. Whistle refusal – not stopping at the first whistle that should have been heard, but stopping at the second or third. 7. Cast Refusal – Occasional failure to hold the line or to take the handler’s directions for more than a few yards. 8. Popping on a blind retrieve – where there are no extenuating circumstances such as distance, wind, shallow (running) water or other conditions which make it difficult to hear the handler’s whistle. 9. Slight freezing – reluctance to give up a bird. 10. Slight short whining or one bark – while on the line or on being sent to retrieve. 11. Roughness with game.*

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR JUDGES

The most important element of judging is to have a thorough understanding of the Regulations and to apply them fairly and consistently. Consider the purposes of the three test elements and the levels of Junior, Senior and Master:

- Master tests maintain the quality of the program.
- Senior tests encourage owners to train for advanced work.

- Junior tests encourage people to continue in the program.

When feasible, arrange to be at the grounds at least a day before the event. Work with the Hunt Test Committee to use set-up dogs to design your tests, and always inspect the routes to your falls and blinds for hazards.

Coordinate with the Event Chairperson the day before to be sure that the approved and necessary equipment is on hand.

Be at the grounds at least one hour before starting time. Workers and officials should do the same.

Be sure instructions to bird throwers and gunners are clear.

Inform your co-judge if you score a dog zero on any ability. If both judges give the dog a zero in the same ability, the handler must be informed that the dog can no longer qualify.

If a handler is doing something unusual (for example: giving a line to a dog before a bird is thrown, which might indicate weak marking ability) do not hesitate to advise him or her that the actions can adversely affect the dog's scores.

On marked retrieves, the dog should be able to see the birds in the air and as they fall. Marking can only be evaluated when a dog has seen the falls.

Keep in mind that you cannot evaluate the dogs if you cannot see them.

Make sure the gallery is safely positioned with respect to the guns, and their position does not interfere with dogs or handlers. If possible, position the gallery where they can see the dogs work.

Be sure that game is not left lying around the line or grounds. Marshals and judges should keep game out of sight in bags or other containers.

Always use a test dog before the start of every retrieving series. A good test dog:

- Is not entered in your test.
- Can reasonably be expected to complete the test, but is not overqualified.
- Accomplishes the test.

Always be aware that on the day of a hunting test, you as a judge do not merely represent yourself as an individual. You represent the entire sport.

Judges decisions are final.