



TRACKING JUDGES' NEWSLETTER JULY/AUGUST 2008

In the last newsletter, we asked for any comments or suggestions for future topics that we could include in the newsletter. Here are some of the suggested topics.

WHAT PAPER WORK IS NEEDED AT THE TIME OF CERTIFICATION?

The owner should supply the AKC registered name and number. If the registration has not been completed, the litter registration number may be used.

SOLUTIONS TO TRACKLAYER ERRORS ON THE DAY OF THE TEST:

- A tracklayer misses a flag and goes to the next flag (turn)
 - If the track still meets the requirements for length and turns, the dog can still run.

- An article was not dropped or an article was dropped at the cross-track
 - The alternate track should be used. If one has not been plotted and there is time after all other tracks have been run, one of the judges may walk a track provided the judges and committee member can stay until the track can be run. If the article was dropped on the cross track, judges should be informed as soon as possible. If the article was dropped on the cross-track, judges should be informed as soon as possible. It may be possible to change the location of this cross-track to another location on the track.
 - One possible solution to an article not being dropped for a VST (and possibly a TDX) test is to have the tracklayer place an article in a plastic bag. Have someone who did not walk the track the day of plotting place the article on the track by simply dumping the article out of the plastic bag. For all practical purposes, this person is a pedestrian.

These problems can be minimized by having the judge watch the tracks being walked, carrying walkie talkies or cell phones, and having tracklayers walk the track the day of plotting to be sure they are confident of their track.

AN ARTICLE IS MOVED THE DAY OF THE VST TEST:

- The article is picked up and placed on a chair beside the track, or the article is placed next to a curb and is blown onto the curb. Should the dog be expected to find these articles?
 - While this will be a judgment call, if the articles are close to the track, the dog should be expected to indicate the articles. With dogs missing plastic and metal more easily than cloth or leather, it would be difficult to determine if the dog missed these articles because of difficulty on these materials or simply because the article was missing.

- An article is blown from where it was placed close to another leg and the dog is drawn off the track to the article. As a result, the dog misses part of the leg.
 - This will be a judgment call based on how much of the track was missed if the dog did not recover and begin working the track near where it was drawn off.
- If the final article has disappeared/cannot be found and the dog actively searches for the article and the judges have marked to dog “passes,” what happens if someone finds the article about 20 feet from the original drop point?
 - If the judges have made the decision that the dog has passed, the decision is final even if a spectator finds the article. It is the responsibility of the judges and tracklayer to search for a possible lost article

ARTICLE LOCATION

Knowing the exact location of articles can determine if the dog passes, fails, or gets an alternate track. For TD and TDX, if an article is missing and cannot be found by the judges and if, in the opinion of the judges, the dog actively searches the area where the article was dropped, the dog is given credit for the find. If the dog does not actively search and the judges cannot find the article, the dog is given an alternate track. Finding an article dropped in high cover can be very difficult. For VST, if the article is missing and the judges and tracklayers cannot find the article, the dog is given credit provided the dog worked continuously and intently along the actual track. Note that it is up to the judges to find the articles in a TD or TDX test while for VST, the judges or tracklayers may find the articles. Spectators do not count.

To help better pinpoint article location, select a location that can be triangulate. As you approach an article drop, begin looking to either the right or left to find two objects like a tree and post that can be lined up. You will notice that a step back or forward will change the way these two objects line up. If you find that the dog has not indicated an article and you check that location and it is not there, line up the two objects you selected during plotting. Move off the track and start walking towards these objects, keeping them lined up. Check the ground regularly. It is critical that judges know the exact location of all articles so that they can be located before the dog and handler have proceeded too far down the track. Even if the dog has completed the track and the judges or tracklayer find a missing article, a decision should not be made until the judges have conferred.

KEEP IN SHAPE

With summer comes a lull in tracking tests. It is also the time to start walking a little extra to keep in shape. Judging involves a lot of walking and if not in shape, one can get very tired quickly. Get a comfortable pair of shoes and start walking.

TRACKING ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

The final draft of the TAC recommendations will soon be ready to present to the fancy for your input.

THE TRACKING JUDGES NEWSLETTER

If you know of a tracking judge who is not getting the newsletters, please have them contact Lisa Strickland at 919-816-3816 or lms2@akc.org

COMMENTS, QUESTIONS, OR SUGGESTED TOPICS

Please feel free to send any comments or suggestions for future topics to tracking@akc.org.