

# Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedure for Retrievers

Including Standing  
Recommendations of the  
Retriever Advisory Committee  
and the Supplement to the  
Standard Procedure

**Amended to June 2017**

Published by The American Kennel Club



**American  
Kennel Club®**

## THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT

*The American Kennel Club is dedicated to upholding the integrity of its Registry, promoting the sport of purebred dogs and breeding for type and function. Founded in 1884, the AKC and its affiliated organizations advocate for the purebred dog as a family companion, advance canine health and well-being, work to protect the rights of all dog owners and promote responsible dog ownership.*

The American Kennel Club:

- Records the parentage of dogs, but is not itself involved in the sale of dogs and cannot therefore guarantee the health and quality of dogs in its registry.
- Sponsors more than 15,000 dog competitions each year held by licensed and member clubs. Only dog clubs may be AKC® members.
- Supports and promotes the sport of purebred dogs.

Information regarding AKC Retriever Field Trials is also available on our web site located at [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org).

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## FOREWORD

The American Kennel Club was formed principally for the protection and advancement of purebred dogs.

The State of New York by Special Act of its Legislature incorporated The American Kennel Club and granted it a charter in Section 2 of which the objects of the corporation are described to be “to adopt and enforce uniform rules regulating and governing dog shows and field trials, to regulate the conduct of persons interested in exhibiting, running, breeding, registering, purchasing and selling dogs, to detect, prevent, and punish frauds in connection therewith, to protect the interests of its members, to maintain and publish an official stud book and an official kennel gazette, and generally to do everything to advance the study, breeding, exhibiting, running and maintenance of the purity of thoroughbred dogs.”

Section 2 of this charter further states that “for these purposes,” The American Kennel Club, “shall have power to adopt a constitution, bylaws, rules and regulations, and enforce the same by fines and penalties, which it shall have the right to collect and enforce by suit, or by suspension or expulsion from membership, or by a suspension or denial of any or all of the privileges of said corporation.”

Competition in confirmation and performance events can best demonstrate the progress that has been made in breeding for type and quality, and/or for practical use, stamina and obedience. The American Kennel Club has therefore adopted bylaws, rules and regulations to govern and administrate these events the clubs that wish to hold them; and the individuals who exhibit, compete or take part in them. This book contains such bylaws, rules and regulations as affect the above.

## NOTES

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**THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB  
Incorporated**

**Retriever Field Trial Rules  
CHAPTER 1  
GENERAL EXPLANATIONS**

SECTION 1. The word “dog” wherever used in these Field Trial Rules and Regulations includes both sexes.

SECTION 2. The words “United States of America” wherever used in these Field Trial Rules and Regulations shall be construed to include all territories and possessions of the United States of America and all vessels sailing under the American flag.

**CHAPTER 2  
FIELD TRIALS DEFINED**

A MEMBER FIELD TRIAL is a field trial at which championship points may be awarded; given by a club or association which is a member of The American Kennel Club.

A LICENSED FIELD TRIAL is a field trial at which championship points may be awarded, given by a club or association which is not a member of The American Kennel Club, but which has been specially licensed by The American Kennel Club to give the specific field trial designated in the license.

A SANCTIONED FIELD TRIAL is an informal field trial at which dogs may compete but not for championship points, held by a club or association, whether or not a member of The American Kennel Club, by obtaining the sanction of The American Kennel Club.

**CHAPTER 3  
MAKING APPLICATION TO HOLD  
A FIELD TRIAL**

SECTION 1. Each member club or association is entitled to hold one show and/or one field trial a year without payment of a fee to The American Kennel Club, but must pay a fee of fifteen (\$15.00) dollars for each other show and/or field trial which it may hold during the same calendar year.

SECTION 2. Each member club or association which has held a field trial or field trials in any one year shall have first right to claim the corresponding dates for its trial or trials to be held in the next succeeding year.

SECTION 3. A member club or association must apply to The American Kennel Club at least three (3) months prior to the trial date for leave to hold a field trial, stating in the application the day or days upon

which and the place where it desires to hold such field trial. This application will be referred to the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club which will consider the same and notify the member club or association of its approval or disapproval of the dates and place selected.

SECTION 4. The use of a club's name for field trial purposes cannot be transferred.

SECTION 5. If a non-member club or association wishes to hold a field trial it must apply to The American Kennel Club at least three (3) months prior to the trial date, on a form which will be supplied by The American Kennel Club upon request, for leave to hold such field trial, stating in the application the day or days upon which and the place where it desires to hold such field trial and giving to The American Kennel Club such information with regard to the Constitution and Bylaws and the names of the officers and members and the financial responsibility of the applying non-member club or association as The American Kennel Club may demand and shall pay a license fee for the privilege of holding such field trial, the amount of which fee shall be fixed and determined by the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club. This application will be referred to the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club which will consider the same and notify the non-member club or association of its approval or disapproval of the dates and place selected.

If the Board of Directors shall disapprove the application, the license fee will be returned to said non-member club or association.

SECTION 6. **Sanctioned Events.** If a member or non-member club or association wishes to hold a sanctioned field trial, it must apply to The American Kennel Club for leave to hold such field trial, stating in the application the date or dates upon which and the place where it desires to hold such field trial, the names and addresses of the officers of the club or association, and the names and addresses of the Judges. The application will be referred to the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club, which will consider the same and notify the club or association of its approval or disapproval of the dates, place and Judges selected. No fee is charged by The American Kennel Club for holding a sanctioned field trial.

Sanctioned field trials shall be governed by such simple rules and regulations as from time to time shall be determined by the Board of Directors.

SECTION 7. **Conflicting Events.** The Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club will not approve applications for field trials where dates conflict and the locations of such conflicting trials are less than 200 miles apart.

**SECTION 8. Advertising.** Clubs may only advertise corresponding dates, locations and stakes, plus club contact information, prior to an event receiving AKC approval. Clubs may not advertise an event prior to AKC approval if the dates or location differ from the previous year's corresponding event. Premium lists cannot be made available nor can entries be accepted until the event and judges panel have been approved by the AKC.

**SECTION 9.** If circumstances prior to the first day of a trial require a club to change the approved location or to cancel an approved licensed or member field trial, the club must notify the Performance Events Department of The American Kennel Club as expeditiously as possible, giving good and sufficient reasons for the proposed location change or cancellation.

Should circumstances during a trial preclude prior AKC notification of a change in location or the cancellation of the trial, a full report on such action(s) must be made to the AKC within 7 days.

## **CHAPTER 4 RIBBONS AND PRIZES**

**SECTION 1.** A club holding a licensed or member field trial shall offer prize ribbons or rosettes of the following colors in the regular stakes:

First Prize — Blue

Second Prize — Red

Third Prize — Yellow

Fourth Prize — White

Judges' Award of Merit — Dark Green

Junior Handler Prize — Dark Green with Orange  
Center Streamer

**SECTION 2.** Each ribbon or rosette at a licensed or member field trial shall be at least 2 inches wide and approximately 8 inches long and shall bear on its face a facsimile of the seal of The American Kennel Club, the words Field Trial, the name of the prize, the name of the club holding the field trial, and the date of the trial.

**SECTION 3.** If ribbons or rosettes are given at Sanctioned Field Trials, or in non-regular stakes at licensed or member field trials, they shall be of the following colors:

First Prize — Rose

Second Prize — Brown

Third Prize — Light Green

Fourth Prize — Gray

Special Prize — A combination of any of these colors.

**SECTION 4.** All prizes which may be offered shall be accurately described or the value stated. Stud services shall not be accepted as prizes.



## CHAPTER 5 JUDGES

SECTION 1. Persons judging field trials are not required to obtain licenses and a field trial club may submit the name of any reputable person who is an amateur, in good standing with The American Kennel Club. Such approved Judges may run dogs in any stakes in which they are not judging, except as the rules applying to trials for particular breeds may provide otherwise.

Judges Qualifications are explained in Section 23 of the Standard Procedures.

SECTION 2. A substitute Judge may be appointed by the club holding the trial if it is impossible for an advertised Judge to fulfill or complete his assignment. Such substitute or additional Judges shall be persons who are amateurs and in good standing with The American Kennel Club. Prompt notification shall be sent to the AKC, in advance of the trial if possible, of any substitute or additional Judges officiating at a licensed or member trial, and of the reasons for the change.

SECTION 3. The decisions of the Judges shall be final in all matters relating to the field trial performance of the dogs. Full discretionary power is given to the Judges to withhold any or all awards for want of merit.

*As a matter of general policy, this Section means that Judges may withhold all placements, or any placements following placed dogs, provided vacant placements do not occur between placed dogs, or between placed dogs and Judges Awards of Merit. Whenever a placement is withheld, no additional placements or Judges Awards of Merit (including Reserve) can be awarded after the withheld placement.*

SECTION 4. **Apprentice Judges.** Upon receipt of a request any field trial club may, with the approval of the designated stake judges, authorize a person who is an amateur in good standing with the American Kennel Club and who has not previously judged an all-age stake to participate as an "Apprentice Judge" at an all-age stake. Such person shall, at his or her own expense, listen to and observe all aspects of the all-age stake including the entire set-up day; the conduct of the stake itself including call backs and the placement process as well as all mechanical aspects of the stake. *An Apprentice judge may not serve either on the Event Committee or as the Event Secretary.* The report of the Field Trial Secretary to the American Kennel Club shall include the name and address of any Apprentice Judge and the identity of the stake observed. No person may participate as an Apprentice Judge in more than one all-age stake at any given field trial. The assigned judges must sign the Apprentice Judge Form included in the event kit if they are in agreement that the individual has successfully completed the Apprenticeship assignment. Judge qualifications may be found under Standard Procedures, Section 23.

## CHAPTER 6

### APPOINTMENT OF FIELD TRIAL SECRETARY, APPOINTMENT, RESPONSIBILITIES AND AUTHORITIES OF FIELD TRIAL COMMITTEE

SECTION 1. A club that has been granted permission by The American Kennel Club to hold a licensed or member field trial must appoint a Field Trial Secretary and submit his or her name to The American Kennel Club for its records on a form that will be supplied by the AKC. Any qualified person who is in good standing with The American Kennel Club may act as Field Trial Secretary.

No one serving as a Field Trial Secretary or member of the Event Committee shall judge at that event.

SECTION 2. A club that has been granted permission by The American Kennel Club to hold a licensed or member field trial must appoint a Field Trial Committee which will have complete responsibility for the planning and conducting of the trial. This committee shall be comprised of at least five members of the club and may include the Field Trial Secretary.

SECTION 3. The Field Trial Committee and Field Trial Secretary shall be held responsible for compliance with all of the Field Trial Rules and Procedures except those coming under the sole jurisdiction of the Judges, and must provide themselves with copies of the latest edition of this book.

When a dog is seriously injured or dies in connection with an event, the Event Committee must conduct a preliminary investigation to determine if negligence or the willful conduct of an individual caused the injury or death. If the preliminary investigation determines that there was no negligence or willful conduct causing the injury or death, then a written report of the findings of the preliminary investigation must be submitted to the AKC (Attn: Executive Secretary), 260 Madison Avenue, Fourth Floor, New York, NY 10016 within five (5) days. If the Event Committee determines that negligence or willful conduct may have caused the death or serious injury, the Event Committee must hold an Event Hearing.

SECTION 4. The Field Trial Committee of a club holding a licensed or member trial shall have the authority to decide upon any matter arising during the running of the trial, except a matter coming within the jurisdiction of the Judges, but such committee decisions must be made in accord with these Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedures.

SECTION 5. **Disqualification by Event Committee:** Any dog that, in the opinion of the Event Committee or

The American Kennel Club, attacks a person or a dog at an AKC event resulting in injury and is believed by that Event Committee or The American Kennel Club to present a hazard to persons or other dogs shall be disqualified. When the dog is disqualified by the Event Committee pursuant to this section, a report shall be filed immediately with the Executive Secretary of The American Kennel Club. The disqualified dog may not again compete at any AKC event nor be on the grounds of an AKC event unless and until, following applications for reinstatement by the owner to The American Kennel Club, the owner receives official notification in writing from the AKC that the dog's eligibility has been reinstated.

## **CHAPTER 7 PREMIUM LISTS, ENTRY FORMS, CLOSING OF ENTRIES, DRAWING OF ENTRIES**

SECTION 1. After a club has been granted permission by The American Kennel Club to hold a licensed or member field trial and before its premium list is printed, it must send to The American Kennel Club, for approval, one copy of an Event Application Form (supplied by the AKC) which will give the exact location of the trial, the dates on which it will be held, and set forth in detail the stakes to be run and their conditions; a complete list of the money, ribbon prizes and other prizes which it wishes to offer; a list of the names and addresses of the Judges and the stakes they are to judge; the names and addresses of the officers of the club, including the Field Trial Secretary; the name and address of the Chairman and the names of the other members of the Field Trial Committee; the date, hour and place of the closing of entries; and the date, hour and place of the drawing of entries.

The place where entries are to be drawn need not be identical with the place where entries are received. Each premium list shall specify that the Field Trial Secretary is to receive entries; *however clubs have the option of using an electronic entry service. Online entries are subject to the same requirements as mail entries. Additional requirements or conditions may be imposed by the online service. Such service or club shall accept paper entries from those not wishing to enter electronically. A club using an on-line service to accept entries must so stipulate in the premium list and must provide an address for paper entries as well as the website address for online entries. There should be only one address for paper entries, and that address may be that of the entry service company. Any service fee imposed by the online entry service must be clearly stated in the premium list. All online entry instructions should be clearly written. The running order, for those clubs which choose to use an*

*electronic service, will be determined by the Dow Jones method as described in Chapter 14, Section 4(b) of this rule book.*

The purpose of the Premium list is to set forth the conditions of an event in which a participant is entering. It shall contain all the information specified on the Event Application Form as submitted to the American Kennel Club. *A club may not price similar stakes in an unreasonably different manner in order to effect how participants choose to enter.* The conditions of an event may not be changed by the host club unless approved by the AKC Performance Events Department for legitimate reasons as determined by the AKC. The premium shall be from 5½ x 8½ inches to 6 x 9 inches.

*Note: When a Club elects to use an entry service, the Club is still ultimately responsible for ensuring that the AKC Performance Events Department is provided premium lists prior to the event and that the Rules pertaining to premium lists are followed.*

SECTION 2. Every premium list shall contain one or more copies of the official American Kennel Club® entry form as approved by the Board of Directors of the AKC. Any club may obtain a sample of the official entry form applicable to the particular type of trial to be held. Requests should be in writing, addressed to the Field Trial Department of The American Kennel Club.

SECTION 3. One copy of the premium list must be mailed to AKC, Performance Events, 8051 Arco Corporate Dr., Suite 100, Raleigh, NC 27617-3390 or emailed to: [fieldtrials@akc.org](mailto:fieldtrials@akc.org) at the time of mailing to prospective entrants.

SECTION 4. Field Trial Committees may make such regulations or additional rules for the government of their field trials as shall be considered necessary, provided such regulations or additional rules do not conflict with any rule of The American Kennel Club. Such regulations or additional rules shall be printed in the premium list, and violations thereof shall be considered the same as violations of the Rules and Regulations of The American Kennel Club.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **ELIGIBILITY OF DOGS FOR ENTRY, FULL COMPLETION OF ENTRY FORMS**

SECTION 1. No dog shall be eligible to be entered in a licensed or member field trial unless it is an eligible breed that is at least six (6) months of age and is either individually registered with the AKC or individually registered with a foreign registry organization whose pedigrees are acceptable for AKC registration. Dogs from eligible breeds that have been granted lim-

ited registration or conditional registration are eligible to enter Retriever Field Trials. Spayed and neutered dogs are eligible. Dogs recorded in the purebred alternative listing program (PAL) and bitches in season are not eligible to enter Retriever Field Trials. For a list of eligible breeds, visit [www.akc/events/field\\_trials/retrievers/eligible\\_breeds.cfm](http://www.akc/events/field_trials/retrievers/eligible_breeds.cfm).

A dog that is individually registered with a foreign registry organization whose pedigrees are acceptable for AKC registration may be entered in licensed or member field trials that are held not later than 30 days after the date of the first licensed or member field trial in which the dog was entered, but only provided that the individual foreign registration number and the name of the country of birth are shown on the entry form, and provided further that the same name, which in the case of an imported dog must be the name on the foreign registration, is used for the dog each time.

SECTION 2. No individually registered dog with a foreign registry organization that has not been individually registered with The American Kennel Club when first entered in a licensed or member field trial shall be eligible to be entered in any licensed or member field trial class that is started more than thirty (30) days after the first entry in a licensed or member field trial unless the owner has received from The American Kennel Club an extension notice authorizing further entries of the hound for a specified period of time with its foreign registration number. No such extension will be granted unless the owner can clearly demonstrate, in a letter addressed to the Performance Events Department of The American Kennel Club requesting such extension, that the delay in registration of the Hound is due to circumstances for which he is not responsible. Any such extension notice will be void upon registration of the Hound or upon expiration of the period for which extension has been granted, but upon application, further extensions may be granted.

SECTION 3. Every dog must be entered in the name of the person who actually owned the dog at the time entries closed. The right to enter and run a dog cannot be transferred. A registered dog which has been acquired by some person other than the owner as recorded with The American Kennel Club must be entered in the name of its new owner at any field trial for which entries close after the date on which the dog was acquired. For a dog to be eligible to enter an owner-handler stake, the handler must be the owner at the time entries close. Application for transfer of ownership must be sent to The American Kennel Club by the new owner within seven days after the last day of the trial. The new owner should state on the entry form that transfer

application has been mailed to The American Kennel Club or will be mailed shortly. If there is any unavoidable delay in obtaining the completed application required to record the transfer, The American Kennel Club may grant a reasonable extension of time provided the new owner notifies the Performance Events Department of The American Kennel Club, by mail within seven days after the trial, of the reason for the delay. If an entry is made by a duly authorized agent of the owner, the name of the actual owner must be shown on the entry form.

SECTION 4. Each entry form must be completed in full and the information given on the form must be that which applies to the entered dog. Each entry form must be signed by the owner or his agent duly authorized to make the entry.

SECTION 5. No entry shall be accepted from any person who is not in good standing with The American Kennel Club on the day of the closing of the entries. Before accepting any entries, a list of persons not in good standing must be obtained by the Field Trial Secretary from The American Kennel Club.

SECTION 6. No entry shall be made under a kennel name unless that name has been registered with The American Kennel Club. All entries made under a kennel name must be signed with the kennel name followed by the word "registered." An "entrant" is the individual, or, if a partnership, all the members of the partnership entering in a field trial. In the case of such entry by a partnership every member of the partnership shall be in good standing with The American Kennel Club before the entry will be accepted; and in case of any infraction of these rules, all the partners shall be held equally responsible.

SECTION 7. Owners are responsible for errors made in entry forms, regardless of who may have made such errors.

SECTION 8. No dog shall be eligible to compete at any field trial, no dog shall be brought into the grounds or premises of any field trial, and any dog which may have been brought into the grounds or premises of a field trial shall immediately be removed if, it

(a) shows clinical signs or any contagious/communicable disease as determined by the field trial committee, or their designated advisor;

(b) is known to be a carrier of any contagious/communicable disease.

SECTION 9. **Entry Fees/Special Inducements.** Any field trial-giving club which accepts an entry fee other than that published in its premium list or entry form, or in any way discriminates between entrants, shall be disciplined.

No club or member of any club shall give or offer to give any owner or handler any special inducements, such as reduced entry fees, rebates, allowances for expenses or other incentive of value for a certain number of entries or shall give or offer to give in consideration of entering a certain number of dogs, any prizes or prize money, except the officially advertised prizes or prize money, which prize money shall be for a stated sum or a portion of the entry fees. Except a club, at its discretion, may allow for a reduced entry fee for dogs handled by juniors. The reduced entry fee may only apply to specific stakes or may apply to any stake in the trial. The reduced entry fee shall be published in the premium list. A junior is defined as someone less than 18 years of age on the first day of the event. The junior must handle the dog in the event to qualify for the reduced entry fee. If the dog is entered under this provision but the junior does not handle the dog, the owner must pay the regular entry fee as published. All persons found guilty of paying or receiving any monies, special inducements or allowances in violation of the foregoing shall be disciplined, even to the extent of being deprived of all privileges of The American Kennel Club for a stated time or indefinitely.

SECTION 10. A Field Trial Committee may decline any entries or may remove any dog from its trial for cause, but in each such instance shall file good and sufficient reasons for so doing with The American Kennel Club.

SECTION 11. Any dog entered and present at a field trial may be withdrawn from Competition by its handler upon notification to the stake marshal without loss of the dog's eligibility to compete in any other stakes in which the dog was entered. The entry fee for the stake entered and withdrawn shall be forfeited.

SECTION 12. **DQ by Event Committee.** Any dog, that in the opinion of the Event Committee of the American Kennel Club, attacks a person or dog at an AKC event, resulting in injury, and is believed by that Event Committee of the American Kennel Club to present a hazard to persons or other dogs shall be disqualified. When the dog is disqualified by the Event Committee pursuant to this section, a report shall be filed immediately with the Executive Secretary of the American Kennel Club. The disqualified dog may not again compete at any AKC events nor be on the grounds of an AKC event unless and until, following application for reinstatement by the owner to the American Kennel Club, the owner receives official notification in writing from the AKC that the dog's eligibility has been reinstated.

## **CHAPTER 9 CANCELLATIONS OF AWARDS**

SECTION 1. If an ineligible dog has been entered and run in any stake at a licensed or member field trial, or if the person or persons named as owner or owners on the entry form are not the person or persons who actually owned the dog at the time entries closed, or if a dog is run in a stake for which it has not been entered, or if its entry form is deemed invalid by The American Kennel Club under these rules, all resulting awards shall be canceled by The American Kennel Club, and such dog shall not be counted as having been in competition in determining championship ratings.

SECTION 2. If the win of a dog shall be canceled, the dog next in order of merit shall be moved up, and the win of the dog moved up shall be counted the same as if it had been the original award.

SECTION 3. If the win of a dog shall be canceled by The American Kennel Club, the entrant of the dog shall return all prizes for such win to the Secretary of the field trial-giving club within ten (10) days of receipt of notice from The American Kennel Club of said cancellation.

## **CHAPTER 10 PROTESTS AGAINST DOGS**

SECTION 1. Any person who is a member of a member club of The American Kennel Club, or who owns a dog entered in the field trial, or who handles a dog competing in the trial, may make a protest to the Field Trial Committee against any dog competing in the trial, either before or after the dog has been judged, alleging that it is ineligible to compete in the trial or in the stake in which it is entered. Such a protest shall be in writing, shall identify the dog protested and specify the basis for the protest, shall bear the signature and address of the person who makes it, and shall describe his qualifications for making the protest. It shall be filed with the Field Trial Secretary or with the Chairman of the Field Trial Committee before the closing of the trial, and shall be accompanied by a deposit of \$10.00 which shall be returned if the protest is sustained, or which will be retained by the club if the protest is not sustained.

SECTION 2. If such a written protest is received, the Field Trial Committee shall hold a meeting as soon as possible. In order to ensure impartiality, no person who owns or co-owns the dog being protested or a dog that will move up in the placements if the protest is sustained, or any member of their household, and no professional trainer who has trained or handled these dogs within the past year, may serve on the Committee hearing the



protest. The Committee may vote to excuse anyone from the Committee if there are unique situations that cause the Committee to question an individual's ability to be impartial. The person who has made the protest must be present, and the Committee shall give all parties concerned an opportunity to be heard and to present witnesses and evidence. The Committee may call for additional evidence from other qualified persons present at the trial. After hearing all of the evidence, the Field Trial Committee shall consider the matter and shall, if possible, reach an immediate decision and inform the persons involved.

A report of the meeting, giving all of the essential evidence and the Committee's decision, together with the original written protest, must be mailed to The American Kennel Club within 7 days of the trial.

SECTION 3. A written appeal to The American Kennel Club from a decision of a Field Trial Committee on any such protest may be made by either the owner of the dog protested or the person who made the protest. The appeal must be received by The American Kennel Club Performance Events Department within 30 days after the date of the Field Trial Committee's decision, and must be accompanied by a deposit of \$50.00 which shall be forfeited if the decision is sustained.

SECTION 4. For a protest concerning the amateur status of a person handling a dog in an amateur stake, if the Committee determines the person is not an amateur, the Committee's decision shall initially apply to that field trial only. If no written appeal is filed within 30 days, the person shall be considered not an amateur and shall be ineligible to enter future amateur stakes. If a written appeal is filed, the person's status shall not be finalized until the AKC Performance Events Department has reviewed the information and made a determination.

## CHAPTER 11 FIELD CHAMPIONS AND AMATEUR FIELD CHAMPIONS

SECTION 1. A dog that has completed the requirements for a Field Championship or Amateur Field Championship as described in the various Chapters of these Rules, when registered in the AKC Stud Book, will be recorded a Field Champion or an Amateur Field Champion by The American Kennel Club, and a championship certificate will be issued to the owner.

A Field Champion may be designated as "Dual Champion" if it has also been recorded as a show Champion.

Any dog which has been awarded the titles of Champion of Record, Obedience Trial Champion and Field Champion may be designated as as "Triple Champion."

## **CHAPTER 12 JUDGES' AWARD OF MERIT**

At any licensed or member field trial the Judges may make a "Judges' Award of Merit" in any stake to any unplaced dog for particularly excellent work. The name and registration number of each dog to which such an award is made shall be noted on the back of the page in the Judges' book for the stake in which the award was made.

## **CHAPTER 13 WHAT HAS TO BE SENT TO THE AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB AFTER A FIELD TRIAL**

At the conclusion of the judging of each stake, a club holding a licensed or member field trial shall provide, for the Judges' signatures, a judging sheet of the stake judged, showing full particulars of all dogs placed. At the conclusion of the trial, the Field Trial Secretary shall certify the Judges' signatures on each judging sheet and shall certify the number of entries and starters in each stake. *A marked catalog can be submitted in place of the Judges' sheets.*

The judging sheets, inserted in the covers of the judging book, and a full report of the trial, shall be sent to The American Kennel Club so as to reach The American Kennel Club no later than seven days after the closing date of the trial. Penalty for non-compliance is twenty-five dollars (\$25.00), and five dollars (\$5.00) for each day's delay beyond the deadline, and other such penalties as may be imposed by the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club.

The trial report shall contain a list of the names of all members of the Field Trial Committee who were present at the trial, the names and complete addresses of all the Judges, and the name and address of the Field Trial Secretary, and the full names and addresses of all persons present at the draw.

At every licensed or member club field trial held under the Rules of The American Kennel Club, an event service fee of \$3.50 per entry is required. The event service fee is to help defray expenses involved in maintaining the records and administrating the events.

The Board of Directors shall determine, from time to time, whether a recording fee/event service fee shall be required and the amount of it.

## **CHAPTER 14 RULES FOR RETRIEVER TRIALS**

SECTION 1. Wherever used in this Chapter and in the Standard Procedure for Non-Slip Retriever trials, the word Retriever shall be deemed to include the several breeds of Retrievers and/or Irish Water Spaniels.

Field trial clubs or specialty clubs formed for the improvement of any one of the several breeds of Retrievers may give field trial stakes in which one of said breeds only may compete, or in which more than one of said breeds may compete together.

Championship points may be awarded where two or more of said breeds compete together in a mixed stake as well as where a separate stake has been provided for each breed.

**SECTION 2.** Only purebred Retrievers over six months of age may be entered in field trials.

The owner or agent entering a dog in a trial does so at his own risk, and agrees to abide by the Rules of The American Kennel Club.

A dog is not eligible to be entered or to compete in any licensed or member trial in any stake, if a Judge of that stake or any member of his family has owned, sold, held under lease, boarded (except as a veterinarian incidental to veterinary care), or trained the dog, or handled the dog at more than two trials, within one year prior to the starting date of the field trial, or if a Judge or any member of his family holds a direct financial interest contingent upon the dog's performance.

*For purposes of this SECTION, the words "any member of his family" shall include a spouse, a sibling, a parent or a child, whether natural or adopted, of the judge in question; but shall not extend to other blood or legal relationships.*

No post entries will be accepted and entries shall close not later than the time of the drawing, which drawing shall take place at least three days before the first day of the trial.

*Judges, acting in each instance with the approval of the Field Trial Committee, shall have the power to disqualify any dog which shall not appear within fifteen minutes of the time designated for its turn to be tried.*

**Bitches in Season:** shall not be eligible for competition in any stake, shall not be allowed on the field trial grounds, and must be withdrawn from any stake in which they are competing as soon as it is known that they have come in season. The entry fees of bitches withdrawn at any time because of coming in season shall be refunded.

**Refunding Entry Fees:** *This Section intends that entry fees paid for a bitch withdrawn because of coming in season at any time after payment of the entry fee and at any point prior to the conclusion of the stake in which it is entered shall be refunded in full by the trial-giving club. In addition, although not specifically dealt with in the preceding paragraph, the entry fees paid for a dog withdrawn because of injury or illness or for a dog that dies shall be refunded in full by the trial-giving club. Prior to paying such refund, the club may require an appropriate*

*veterinary certificate. If a stake is to be judged by a judge substituted after the premium list has been published, a contestant may withdraw a dog entered in that stake and shall have the entry fee refunded in full by the trial-giving club. Out of courtesy, the trial secretary shall be notified of this withdrawal as soon as possible. No entries may be withdrawn for this reason after the stake has started. In the event a dog is withdrawn for other reasons, the trial-giving club is free to formulate its own policy with reference to refunds provided that said policy shall be fixed in advance of the mailing of the premium for any particular trial.*

Judges shall have the power to exclude from competition any dog which the Judges may consider unfit to compete. The entry fee of all such dogs will be forfeited.

**DQ by Judges.** A dog is not eligible to be entered or to compete in any licensed or member retriever field trial or hunt test if the dog has on three occasions been made the subject of the following report: If a dog, while under judgment, attacks another dog, and if the Judges are unanimously of the opinion that such attack was without reasonable cause, the Judges shall identify the offending dog on the judging sheet, and the name of the offending dog shall be listed in the report of the trial sent to The American Kennel Club.

SECTION 3. Only Amateurs shall be asked to judge licensed or member Retriever trials. In Stakes carrying championship points there shall be only two Judges, and their combined experience should conform to the provisions set forth in numerical paragraph 23 of the Standard Procedure. *Any person asked to judge an Open, Limited, Special or Restricted Stake in which it is likely that a professional with whom the person has had a training relationship for compensation within the preceding year will be handling dogs should use care before accepting the invitation and should, if possible, seek to judge the accompanying amateur all-age stake.*

*No person who serves as a Judge of any stake at a licensed or member club Retriever trial shall handle a dog in any other stake while the stake being judged is in progress.*

SECTION 4. In stakes for Retrievers the order of running shall be decided by lot at the draw with dogs handled by the same person being separated when possible to that extent necessary to avoid delays in the running of the trial. The Field Trial Secretary and the Field Trial Committee shall be responsible for ensuring that the conduct of the draw is public and that the place assigned to each competing dog is determined by random chance insofar as reasonably possible.

In any stake carrying championship points the Judges shall impose a system of rotation that will be applicable to all contestants and will take effect immediately following the completion of the first series. Stakes not carrying championship points (Derby and Qualifying) may also implement this rule if the trial

giving club opts to do so and has clearly advertised its intention in the trial's premium list. The objective of the rotation is to spread the burden or benefit of running early equitably among the competing dogs. The Judges shall select the particular system of rotation to be used, and the system selected shall be publicly announced by the Judges and/or Marshal before the commencement of the stake to which the rotation will apply.

Insofar as practicable dogs shall be run in the order of the draw, or in the order of the draw as rotated in stakes carrying championship points, or in stakes not carrying championship points (Derby and Qualifying) per a club's option to do so; provided that departures from the order of the draw are permitted:

(a) When in the opinion of the Judges or the Field Trial Committee such will result in a reasonable or desirable saving of time in the conduct of the trial, provided, however, that whenever decisions regarding a change in the running order will affect two or more stakes, the Field Trial Marshal may overrule the judges and/or the stake marshal and make the final decision as to such changes in the running order, if any, or — *This subsection contemplates that the Field Trial Committee will be responsible for providing effective means of communication between and among the stakes so that decisions about departures from the order of the draw that have an impact on more than one stake can be made, and conflicts resolved, with proper attention to the priorities among stakes and to the overall needs of the trial. The authority of the Field Trial Committee to make the final decision on departures from the running order in one stake which may adversely impact another stake shall be exercised by the Field Trial Marshal.*

(b) When in the opinion of the Judges such will avoid unfairness or prejudice to any competing dog resulting from an event which has occurred in the particular stake.

Notwithstanding the first sentence of this Section 4, any club may, at its election, provide that the order of running in any one or more stakes at a trial shall be in the order of the draw beginning with the dog with the number given at the draw which corresponds with the last two digits (including digits, if any, to the right of the decimal point) of the closing Dow Jones Industrial Average (the "DJIA Number") on the Tuesday immediately preceding the trial or, if the New York Stock Exchange is not open for business on such Tuesday, then on the most recent day prior to such Tuesday when the New York Stock Exchange is open for business, and continuing thereafter in numerical sequence. If the DJIA Number is 00, the dog given number one at the draw shall be the first running dog. If the DJIA Number is greater than the number of dogs entered in a stake, the number equal to the number of dogs

entered in such stake shall be subtracted from the DJIA Number and such stake shall begin with the dog with the number given at the draw which corresponds with the number resulting from such subtraction (the "Second DJIA Number") and continue thereafter in numerical sequence. If the Second DJIA Number is greater than the number of dogs entered in such stake, such subtraction process shall be repeated as many times as necessary (subtracting from the Second DJIA Number and each subsequent resulting number, if any, the number of dogs entered in such stake) until the number resulting from such subtraction corresponds with a number given at the draw to a dog entered in such stake and such shall begin with such dog and continue thereafter in numerical sequence. Notice of such election shall be included in the premium list sent to prospective contestants by the club.

(c) If a handler with multiple entries in a stake runs one of those entries in an order different than the order required by the draw, the draw as rotated, a departure from the draw mandated by paragraphs (a) or (b) of this Section 4, or a departure from the draw occasioned by a rerun, and the Judges determine that this departure from the order of the draw was a deliberate effort by the handler to gain an unfair advantage, the Judges shall eliminate that dog from the stake and shall ask the Event Committee to conduct an investigation of the handler's conduct. In all other instances of such a departure from the order of the draw, the departure shall be treated as an honest error and no penalty imposed.

SECTION 5. Only stakes that are run on game birds and on both land and water shall be permitted in licensed retriever field trials. Premium lists should specify the kind of game to be used in each stake and unless otherwise specified in the premium list, only pheasants and/or ducks may be used.

SECTION 6. The Field Trial Committee shall select and designate the field trial grounds by reference to ascertainable boundaries and landmarks. These boundaries and landmarks shall be described on the premium list. No competing dog shall be trained on the field trial ground as described from 24 hours prior to the start if the first stake, until the trial is concluded. *Special Training devices that are used to control and train dogs, including but not limited to, collars with prongs, electronic collars used with transmitters, muzzles and head collars may not be used on dogs at AKC events.*

SECTION 7. In the event of the weather proving unsuitable for holding the trials, the Field Trial Committee may suspend or postpone any or all stakes up to three days. Notice of such postponement shall be

forwarded immediately to The American Kennel Club.

Postponement beyond three days must have the approval of The American Kennel Club.

In the event of postponement of 24 hours or more in the starting time of any stake, any competitor shall have the right to withdraw his entries and his entry fees shall be returned to him.

SECTION 8. Splitting of prizes and/or places at a Retriever trial is prohibited. No cash or merchandise shall be given as prizes for placing dogs. There shall be no prizes or trophies of any kind offered to handlers in any stake, except (a) trophies to Amateur Handlers and (b) a trophy to the handler of the winning dog in the National Championship Stake.

SECTION 9. The following regular stakes may be offered at a Retriever trial: Derby, Qualifying, Owner-Handler Qualifying, Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, Restricted All-Age, Amateur All-Age and Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age.

SECTION 10. A **Derby Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for dogs which have not reached their second birthday on the first day of the trial at which they are being run. For example, a dog whelped May 1, 1983, would not be eligible for Derby Stakes at a trial starting May 1, 1985, but would be eligible at a trial the first day of which was April 30, 1985. Derby stake tests are limited to marked retrieves and dogs which are handled on such retrieves shall be eliminated from competition.

A **Qualifying Stake**, or an **Owner-Handler Qualifying Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for dogs which have never won first, second, third, or fourth place or a Judges' Award of Merit in an Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, or Restricted All Age Stake, or won first, second, third or fourth place in an Amateur All-Age Stake, or Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake, or won two first places in Qualifying Stakes at licensed or member club trials. In determining whether a dog is eligible for the Qualifying Stake, no award received on or after the date of closing of entries shall be counted.

An Owner-Handler Qualifying Stake may be run in place of a Qualifying Stake at the election of the trial giving club and shall be open to dogs eligible to run a Qualifying Stake provided that each entered dog is handled by the registered owner or co-owner of such dog or a member of said owner or co-owner's family as defined in Section 2 of the chapter. The handler of the dog must be the owner at the time entries close. At the election of the trial giving club, an Owner-Handler Qualifying Stake may be run without a companion

Derby Stake when it is run in conjunction with a Hunting Test event that includes a Master Hunt Stake.

An **Open All-Age Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for all dogs.

A **Limited All-Age Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for dogs that have previously been placed or awarded a Judges' Award of Merit in an Open All-Age Stake, Limited All-Age Stake, Special All-Age Stake, Restricted All-Age Stake, Amateur All-Age Stake, or Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake carrying Championship points in each case, or that have been placed first or second in a Qualifying Stake or an Owner-Handler Qualifying Stake.

A **Special All-Age Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for dogs that, during the period comprised of the previous calendar year and the current calendar year prior to the date of closing of entries for such trial, have been placed or awarded a Judges' Award of Merit in an Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, Restricted All-Age, Amateur All-Age, or Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake carrying Championship points in each case, or have been placed first or second in a Qualifying Stake.

A **Restricted All-Age Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for dogs that have been previously placed in an Open All-Age Stake, a Limited All-Age Stake, a Special All-Age Stake, a Restricted All-Age Stake, an Amateur All-Age Stake or an Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake, in each case carrying championship points.

An **Amateur All-Age Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for any dogs, if handled in that stake by persons who are Amateurs (as determined by the Field Trial Committee of the trial-giving club).

An **Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake** at a Retriever trial shall be for any dog, if handled in that stake by an Amateur who is the registered owner or co-owner of such dog or a member of said owner or co-owner's family, as defined in Section 2 of this Chapter. The handler of the dog must be the owner at the time entries close.

Any retriever eligible to enter who has been awarded a Canadian Field Championship or a Canadian Amateur Field Championship shall be qualified to participate in any AKC licensed or member retriever field trial stake, including any Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age or Restricted All-Age Stake or any Amateur All-Age Stake subject to the additional requirements of an Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake provided that the Canadian registered dog has satisfied the requirements for admission to the all-age stake in question by achieving the required level of success in either Canadian trials or AKC trials in the same fashion as required for AKC registered dogs. Subject to Chapter 8, Sections 1 and 2.



Any retriever eligible to enter who has been awarded a Canadian Field Championship or a Canadian Amateur Field Championship is not eligible to be entered in an AKC Qualifying Stake.

**SECTION 11. Number of Trials/Stakes.** At any field trial, there shall not be more than one of the following stakes: Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, or Restricted All-Age Stake.

In a two-day trial, when one of the above stakes is held, not more than two other stakes shall be held unless more than one stake is run at the same time under different Judges. *A club may not hold a field trial with only one stake except in the case of the National Championship, National Amateur Championship or an Owner-Handler Qualifying stake held in conjunction with a Retriever Hunting Test that includes a Master level test.*

No more than one Amateur All-Age or Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age may be offered at any one field trial, and no club may hold more than two stakes for Amateur handlers in any calendar year. However a club may apply to the AKC to run a third all-age trial within a single calendar year consisting of an Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, or Restricted All-Age, and an Amateur All-Age or Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age together with minor stakes. Such applications will be approved by the AKC provided it appears that this third all-age trial will either conflict with another trial or otherwise serve to reduce the entry size of the all-age stakes. A club may not offer amateur stakes without offering an open stake, except the National Amateur Championship.

**Amateur All-Age Only Trial.** However an Amateur All-Age stake, run without an Open All-Age Stake, may be selected by a field trial club provided that club has held two all-age trials consisting of both Open and Amateur All-Age only stakes in the previous calendar year. This Amateur All-Age only stake is available to qualified clubs on an every other year basis and must be accompanied by two minor stakes.

*A club may hold up to three Derby stakes and three Qualifying stakes (any combination of Qualifying and Owner-Handler Qualifying) per calendar year. These may be held in conjunction with an all-age trial or as stand-alone trials. No more than one Derby stake and one qualifying stake may be offered at any one field trial. An Owner-Handler Qualifying stake may be held in conjunction with a Retriever Hunting Test that includes a Master level test. The same club may hold back-to-back stand-alone Derby/Qualifying trials (two separate event numbers).*

Anytime a trial giving club finds that the number of starters in its Amateur All-Age Stake or its Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake is likely to exceed 65 in number, the club may elect, at its option, to move the starting time

of the stake to not earlier than 9:00 AM of the first day of the trial. Regardless of whether this change is made by the club with or without a contingency stated in the premium, any handler who cannot for whatever reason be present at the trial until the original starting time announced in the premium shall be permitted to run after the original starting time stated in the premium. Notice of the decision to begin the Amateur All-Age Stake or the Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stake at the earlier time shall be given to all entrants as soon as possible by the most expeditious practical way available. To the extent that utilization of this procedure will require departures from the run in order mandate of Section 4 of Chapter 14, such departures shall be treated as "a reasonable or desirable saving of time in the conduct of the trial...". The earliest number dog available, (whether by draw or by Dow Jones) will run first at the earlier starting time, and all dogs available for the earlier start will run in order to the extent possible, provided that obvious unfairness, due to the overlapping running of a first series in two All-Age Stakes, should be avoided.

SECTION 12. A National Championship Stake for qualified Retrievers shall be run not more than once in any calendar year by the National Retriever Club under the Rules and Procedures for Retriever trials subject to such modifications of these Rules and Procedures as may be considered necessary by the National Retriever Club. The club may also make special Rules and Procedures as are deemed necessary for the conduct of the stake. Modifications of the Rules and Procedures, as well as such special Rules and Procedures as may be made by the National Retriever Club, are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club. The winner of such stake shall become a Field Champion of Record if registered in The American Kennel Club Stud Book and shall be entitled to be designated "National Retriever Field Champion of 20 \_\_\_\_."

SECTION 13. A National Amateur Championship Stake for qualified Retrievers shall be run not more than once in any calendar year by the National Amateur Retriever Club under the Rules and Procedures for Retriever trials subject to such modifications of these Rules and Procedures as may be considered necessary by the National Amateur Retriever Club. The club may also make special Rules and Procedures as are deemed necessary for the conduct of the stake. Modifications of the Rules and Procedures, as well as such special Rules and Procedures as may be made by the National Amateur Retriever Club, are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club. The winner of such stake shall become an

Amateur Field Champion of Record if registered in The American Kennel Club Stud Book and shall be entitled to be designated “National Amateur Retriever Field Champion of 20 \_\_\_\_.”

SECTION 14. A National Retriever Derby Championship stake for qualified Retrievers shall be run not more than once in any calendar year by a club or association formed for that purpose. The club or association shall file an application for permission to run the event under the AKC Rules and Procedures for Retriever field trials. The club or association may also make special Regulations and Procedures as are deemed necessary for the conduct of the trial including the qualifications required to enter the test. Such special Regulations and Procedures are subject to the approval of the Board of Directors of the American Kennel Club. The winner of the National Retriever Derby Championship stake shall be awarded the title of “National Retriever Derby Champion of 20 \_\_\_\_.” This shall be a prefix title designation by NDC.

SECTION 15. Non-regular stakes may be held at Retriever trials subject to the approval of The American Kennel Club, and provided the premium list sets forth any special conditions regarding eligibility for entry, and any special conditions regarding the method of conducting or judging the stake. Such stakes will not carry championship points or be considered as qualifying a dog for any other stake.

SECTION 16. A Retriever shall become a Field Champion of Record, if registered in The American Kennel Club Stud Book, after having won points in Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age or Restricted All-Age Stake at field trials of member clubs of The American Kennel Club or at field trials of non-member clubs licensed by The American Kennel Club to hold field trials.

SECTION 17. A Retriever shall become an Amateur Field Champion of Record, if registered in The American Kennel Club Stud Book, after having won points in Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age or Restricted All-Age Stake when handled by an Amateur (as determined by the Field Trial Committee of the trial-giving club) and in Amateur All-Age Stakes or Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age Stakes at field trials of member clubs of The American Kennel Club or at trials of non-member clubs licensed by The American Kennel Club to hold trials.

SECTION 18. The total number of points required for a championship, the number of places in a stake for which points may be required, the number of points to be acquired for each place, and the number of starters

required and their qualifications for eligibility to acquire points in each stake shall be fixed and determined by the Board of Directors of The American Kennel Club.

At each trial having an Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, an Amateur All-Age, an Owner-Handler Amateur All-Age or Restricted All-Age Stakes the Field Trial Secretary in his or her report must certify whether at least twelve (12) of the starters in each of those stakes were eligible to compete in a Limited All-Age, Special All-Age or Restricted All-Age Stake.

At each trial having an Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, or Restricted All-Age Stake, the Field Trial Secretary in his report must specify which handlers of placing dogs, if any, in either such stake are determined to be Amateurs by their Field Trial Committee.

*At present, to acquire an Amateur Field Championship, a Retriever must win:*

*(1) a National Championship Stake, handled by an Amateur, or a National Amateur Championship Stake or (2) a total of 10 points in Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age or, Restricted All-Age stakes, or a total of 15 points in Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, Amateur All-Age, Owner-Handler All-Age, or Restricted All-Age Stakes which may be acquired as follows:*

*In each Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, Restricted All-Age, Amateur All-Age, or Amateur Handler All-Age Stakes there must be at least 12 starters, each of which is eligible for entry in a Limited All-Age, Special All-Age Stake or Restricted All-Age Stake, and the Handler must be an Amateur (as determined by the Field Trial Committee of the trial-giving club), and the winner of first place shall be credited with 5 points, second place 3 points, third place 1 point, and fourth place ½ point, but before acquiring a championship, a dog must win a first place and acquire 5 points in at least one Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, Amateur All-Age, Owner-Handler Amateur, or Restricted All-Age Stake open to all breeds of Retriever, and not more than 5 points shall be acquired in trials not open to all breeds of Retriever.*

*At present, to acquire a Field Championship, a Retriever must win:*

*(1) a National Championship Stake or (2) a total of 10 points, which may be acquired as follows: In each Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, or Restricted All-Age Stake, there must be at least 12 starters, each of which is eligible for entry in a Limited All-Age, Special All-Age or, Restricted All-Age Stake, and the winner of first place shall be credited with 5 points, second place 3 points, third place 1 point, and fourth place ½ point, but before acquiring a championship a dog must win first place and acquire 5 points in at least one Open All-Age, Limited All-Age, Special All-Age or Restricted All-Age Stake, open to all breeds of*

*Retriever, and not more than 5 points of the required 10 shall be acquired in trials not open to all breeds of Retriever.*

**SECTION 19. Junior Handlers:** A junior handler is defined as any person who is at least 9 years of age and has not reached 18 years of age as of the first day of the licensed trial in issue. Such junior handler may, with proper authority, enter and handle a non-competing retriever over six months of age in a Derby and/or a Qualifying stake regardless of the age or level of ability of the dog or other restrictions on entry that may be set forth in other provisions of these Rules. Such a junior handler entry shall be tested in the same manner and under the same provisions governing performance that apply to all other competing dogs and handlers in the stake. Any dog handled by a junior handler under these provisions, who completes all tests in the stake in a manner satisfactory to the judges shall be awarded a JHE (Junior Handler Excellent), applying the general standards of performance that would result in a Judges' Award of Merit for a dog not competing under these junior handler provisions. A JHE ribbon (dark green with orange center streamer) shall be given to the successful junior handler and the award shall be certified by the judges and reported to the AKC as part of the official results of the trial.

**SECTION 20. QA2 Title.** (Qualified All-Age 2) A Retriever shall be eligible to be awarded the suffix title QA2 if on two occasions it has met the requirements to participate in a Limited All-Age stake. The owner of a dog that is eligible for the QA2 title shall submit a title application form developed by the Performance Events Department along with a nominal processing fee. Once the qualifications have been verified, the title shall be added to the dog's record. The title will appear on the dog's pedigree. The submittal of the title application form is up to the discretion of the owner. The QA2 title application form can be found on the AKC website at [www.akc.org/events/field-trials/retrievers](http://www.akc.org/events/field-trials/retrievers).

## **STANDARD PROCEDURE FOR NON-SLIP RETRIEVER TRIALS**

In order that trials may be conducted as uniformly as practicable, standardization of objectives is essential and, therefore, all Judges, guns, contestants and officials who have a part in conducting trials should be familiar with and be governed so far as possible by the following standard:

### **BASIC PRINCIPLES**

1. The purpose of a Non-Slip Retriever trial is to determine the relative merits of Retrievers in the field. Retriever field trials should, therefore, simulate as nearly as possible the conditions met in an ordinary day's shoot.

Dogs are expected to retrieve any type of game bird under all conditions, and the Judges and the Field Trial Committee have complete control over the mechanics

and requirements of each trial. This latitude is permitted in order to allow for the difference in conditions which may arise in trials given in widely separated parts of the United States, which difference may well necessitate different methods of conducting tests.

*No live game bird, or any other species of bird or fowl, shall be used in a test while under any form of restraint or physical impairment at any sanctioned, licensed, or member club event for Retrievers.*

2. The function of a Non-Slip Retriever is to seek and retrieve "fallen" game when ordered to do so. He should sit quietly on line or in the blind, walk at heel, or assume any station designated by his handler until sent to retrieve. When ordered, a dog should retrieve quickly and briskly without unduly disturbing too much ground, and should deliver tenderly to hand. He should then await further orders.

Accurate marking is of primary importance. A dog which marks the fall of a bird, uses the wind, follows a strong cripple, and will take direction from his handler is of great value.

#### TRIAL PROCEDURE

3. The Judges, with due regard to the recommendations of the Field Trial Committee, shall determine the tests to be given in each series — and shall try to give all dogs approximately similar tests in the same series. *While the Judges are solely responsible for the nature and content of the tests in the stake they are judging, it is the duty of all judges to inquire of the Field Trial Committee for information about any special conditions, hazards or problems that may be present in the trial grounds, to make due allowance for such conditions, hazards or problems and to cooperate with the Field Trial Committee in conducting tests that will not unduly delay or hinder the timely completion of the trial. Judges should not insist on the use of grounds at an inconvenient distance from other running stakes or grounds that have difficult and time consuming problems of access or tests of excessive length in light of the time available and the resources of the club.* The Judges may discontinue any test before it has been completed, provided that another test is substituted therefor. *Once the final dog is sent the test is considered complete and another test may not be substituted.* The performance of a dog in a test which has been discontinued shall not be considered for any purpose in the evaluation of the work of that dog in the stake.

4. At the end of the first series, and every series thereafter, the Judges will call back all dogs which they wish to try further, and will cause them to be run in additional series until the stake is decided.

5. Judges shall in their discretion determine the number of dogs that shall be worked or kept on line simultaneously. In at least one test involving the retrieve

of a marked fall in all stakes, except Derby, every dog shall be kept on line off leash while another dog works. If a dog has failed the test and is asked to remain on line to honor the work of the next running dog, the Judges may direct that the dog honor on lead or off lead as they deem appropriate.

6. When coming to line to be tested, and while on line, the dog and handler should assume such positions as may be directed by the Judges.

Dogs should be considered under judgment from the time they are called to come to the line until they have left the line and are back of all the Judges and on leash.

Leashes and collars shall be used as follows:

(a) In stakes carrying championship points, dogs shall be brought to the line and taken from the line off leash and without collar and remain without collar while under judgment; in these stakes collars and leashes may be put on the dogs after they leave the line and are back of all the Judges.

(b) In Qualifying Stakes the procedure shall be the same as in stakes carrying championship points except:

(i) Dogs shall be brought to and taken from the line on leash and wearing collars if all handlers are instructed by the Judges to do so, and

(ii) When handlers are instructed to pick up dogs because of missed birds or other conditions under which the dogs are expected to return on the line, collars or leashes may at once be put on dogs on line.

(c) In Derby Stakes, solely at the handler's option, dogs may be brought to the line and taken from the line on leash or off leash, the leash and collar being removed from the time of arrival on line until departure.

No dog should run with bandages or tape of any kind without the approval of the Field Trial Committee. The Committee should inspect the injury for which the bandage or tape is being used unless, of their own knowledge, they already possess such information, or unless they are furnished with a veterinarian's certificate setting forth this information to their satisfaction.

7. The dogs shall be shot over by Official Guns appointed by the Field Trial Committee.

*Gunners firing live ammunition must be 21 years of age or older. Gunners firing popper loads must be a minimum of 16 years of age and if less than 21, must have successfully completed a Hunter/Gun Safety course. It is recommended that all gunning be accomplished with breaking type shotguns and that the guns be broken or in gun stands when not in use. The AKC strongly recommends that gunners wear appropriate hearing and eye protection.*

*Host clubs must be aware of government regulations on the type of shot allowed at the trial location.*

8. On marked retrieves, a dog should be able to see each bird in the air and as it falls, and the Guns shall be

so stationed as to be conspicuous to and easily identified by the dog. No Dry Guns should be stationed in the field and visible to the dog while a marking test is run, or while the marking portion of a combination mark/blind test is run. Guns may be requested to shoot twice at every bird. After birds have been shot, all Guns shall remain quiet and shall not move their positions unless and until so instructed by the Judges. Judges may instruct Guns and their associated bird thrower to retire from the sight of the dog, or dogs, on line provided that every reasonable efforts must be made to insure that the movement of retired Guns is only permitted at a time and under conditions to minimize the chance that the running dog will be distracted by such movements.

The permitted movement of retired Guns and their associated bird throwers should be limited to the minimum distance required for effective concealment. Such retirement should be in a direction away from the direction in which the bird is thrown.

Retired Guns and throwers should be concealed by a blind that provides complete coverage, adequate space, and natural camouflage to conceal the distinctive shape of the blind and in no event shall gunners or throwers be instructed to lay down on the ground in layout blinds or like configurations for hiding purposes. The blind must be so located as to minimize the development of a trail that will lead the running dog away from the area of the fall. In no circumstances should the judges have the guns move to another position to mislead dogs in their marking. No blinds shall be placed in the field in a marking test except in accordance with the provisions set forth in this paragraph or for the purpose of protecting the running dogs from injury by unseen hazards.

9. 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 should be accomplished quietly and promptly.

10. When on line, a handler shall not place his dog or himself so that the dog's full vision of the bird is blocked as it falls. This applies to the working dog and the honoring dog. Violation of this provision, if determined by the Judges to be deliberate, is sufficient cause to justify elimination from the stake.

11. Unless otherwise instructed by the Judges, no dog should be sent to retrieve until his number has been called by one of the Judges.

12. Judges should call the number of the dog ordered to retrieve rather than the name of the handler or dog.

13. If, when a dog is ordered by the Judge to retrieve a fall, another dog breaks for the same fall and interferes with the working dog to the extent of causing him in any



way to make a faulty performance, the dog interfered with should be considered as not having been tried and given a chance for another performance.

14. If there is an occurrence which makes for a relatively unfair test for a dog, the Judges shall exercise their discretion in determining how to form a judgment of the quality of the work of the dog in the series notwithstanding the unfairness. In forming such judgment the Judges may decide that it is necessary or unnecessary to re-run the dog. If they decide the latter, they may waive delivery to hand of the mark or blind in which the unfairness occurred; if they decide the former, the dog shall be picked up immediately and tested on a new set of birds, if practicable, after waiting behind the line until several other dogs have been tested.

The re-run of a mark or blind which was not previously completed shall be scored by taking into consideration the combined performances of the dog prior to the point of unfairness in the initial run and after the point of unfairness in the re-run. If there shall be more than one re-run of that mark or blind, the Judges shall exercise their discretion in determining how to score it fairly.

The re-run of a mark or blind which was previously completed shall be scored on the first completion and faults committed on such re-run shall be ignored except that if the dog (1) does not complete that portion in accordance with the Judges' instructions for the test or (2) commits any of the faults set forth herein as usually justifying elimination from a stake, he shall be penalized in the same manner as the Judges would penalize him regardless of the re-run.

Notwithstanding the last sentence of Standard Procedure 8, a handler is not free to select marked falls in a re-run in an order different from the order in which they were selected in the initial run, and if the handler deliberately attempts to do so the dog shall be eliminated from the stake.

15. When ordered to retrieve, the handler shall direct his dog from any position designated by the Judges.

16. Retrievers should perform equally well on the land and in the water, and shall be thoroughly tested on both.

17. During at least one water test in all stakes, dogs should be worked over artificial decoys, anchored separately. The use of electronic, mechanically operated, or wind powered decoys is not permitted.

18. Until called to be tested, a dog must be kept where it cannot see the location of a fall for another dog, or see the planting or retrieve of a blind, unless such be in compliance with instructions of the Judges as in a test in which the dog is required to honor before being run. Violation of this section shall cause the dog to be eliminated from the stake. If the Judges or the

Field Trial Committee believe the violation to have been deliberate, the occurrence shall be deemed to have been a display of unsportsmanlike conduct by the handler, and the penalties prescribed by Standard Procedure 40 shall also be applicable. If the incident occurs while the dog is under judgment the Judges shall decide whether or not there has been a violation of this section and whether or not it was deliberate; otherwise, these decisions shall be made by the Field Trial Committee.

19. Nothing should be thrown to encourage a dog to enter the water or direct a dog to the fall. Violation of this provision is to be considered sufficient cause for elimination from the stake.

20. In stakes carrying championship points, and in a Qualifying Stake there shall be at least one handling test or blind retrieve — and preferably two, one on land and one in water.

**Diversion Bird:** A diversionary bird or birds, (but not more than two) may be used as a diversion in a blind retrieve, but only if the diversionary bird (or birds) is/are thrown or shot so that the running dog has a clear view of each such diversionary bird as it is thrown or shot. No bird which the running dog does not see may be placed and hidden on the general path to a blind. Nothing in this provision precludes the use of visible flyer crates, bagged birds, placed at the location of previous gun stations, or bird throwers as diversions from the blind.

21. Tests or retrieves which are not to be considered by the Judges at the final summing up should not be held.

## JUDGING

Because of its concise statement of purpose, Section 2 of the Standard Procedure is repeated here:

2. The function of a Non-Slip Retriever is to seek and retrieve “fallen” game when ordered to do so. He should sit quietly on line or in the blind, walk at heel, or assume any station designated by his handler until sent to retrieve. When ordered, a dog should retrieve quickly and briskly without unduly disturbing too much ground and should deliver tenderly to hand. He should then await further orders.

Accurate marking is of primary importance. A dog which marks the fall of a bird, uses the wind, follows a strong cripple, and will take direction from his handler is of great value.

22. The Judges must judge the dogs for (a) their natural abilities including their memory, intelligence, attention, nose, courage, perseverance and style, and (b) their abilities acquired through training, including steadiness, control, response to direction, and delivery. Decisions to eliminate a dog from a stake as a result of faulty performance must be the consensus of the Judges.

23. **Judges Qualifications.** To be qualified to judge,

a person must pass a written test with a score of 85% or better. In stakes carrying championship points, the experience of the two Judges shall be such that their combined experience includes the judging of 8 stakes carrying championship points.

In a Derby and Qualifying Stake the experience of the Judges selected shall be such that their combined experience satisfies at least one of the following standards: (a) the judging of two stakes carrying championship points; (b) the judging of one stake carrying championship points and the judging of three minor stakes; or (c) judging five minor stakes.

No person who has not previously judged an all-age stake shall be approved to judge a stake carrying championship points unless that person has satisfied at least one of the following requirements: (a) completion of two assignments as an Apprentice Judge; or (b) completion of one assignment as an Apprentice Judge and experience as the judge of two, or more, minor stakes; or (c) experience as the handler of a dog in fifteen or more all-age stakes in the previous three years resulting in the award of a judges' award of merit or a place in, at least, one such stake.

The process to become an Apprentice Judge and their responsibilities are explained in Chapter 5, Section 4 (page 7).

#### LINE MANNERS

24. When called to be tested, a dog should come tractably at heel and sit promptly at the point designated by his handler and remain quietly where placed until given further orders. Retrievers which bark or whine on line, in a blind or while retrieving, should be penalized. Loud and prolonged barking or whining is sufficient cause to justify elimination from the stake.

25. No handler shall (1) carry exposed any training equipment (except whistle) or use any other equipment or threatening gestures in such a manner that they may be an aid or threat in steadying or controlling a dog; (2) hold or touch a dog to keep him steady; or (3) noisily or frequently restrain a dog on line, except in extraordinary circumstances, from the time the handler signals readiness for the birds to be thrown until the dog's number is called. Violation of any of the provisions of this paragraph is sufficient cause to justify elimination from the stake.

During the period from the moment when the handler signals readiness for the birds to be thrown until the dog's number is called, the handler of the working or honoring dog shall remain silent. Also, in all marking tests during such period, the handler's hands shall remain quietly in close proximity to his body. A handler who projects his hand during such period, whether for the purpose of assisting his dog to locate a

fall or otherwise, should be considered to have used a threatening gesture, and his dog penalized accordingly.

**26. Movement on Line:** In an All-Age stake, if a dog makes a movement which in the opinion of the Judges indicates a deliberate intent to retrieve without having been ordered to do so, that dog shall be deemed to have broken and shall be eliminated. In any stake other than an All-Age stake, if a dog makes a slight break and is brought immediately under control, the dog need not be eliminated, but shall be penalized for unsteadiness.

After the running dog comes to the line in a test that includes marks, the judges shall allow a reasonable time for the handler of the running dog to identify the locations of the guns and bird boys and to line up the dog. After such time the judges may notify the handler that the birds are about to be called for and thereafter signal for them. When so notified the handler may immediately verbally steady the dog prior to the birds being thrown.

If a dog on line creeps or jumps forward short of breaking as birds are shot and no effort is made by the handler to stop and restrain him, the Judges should not interpret such as a deliberate intent to retrieve, since nothing was done to stop the dog. On the other hand, if the handler does make an effort to stop the dog, the Judges should assume that the handler believed the dog intended to retrieve and should deal with such infraction accordingly.

The Judges may require that dogs which have so jumped or crept forward be brought back to heel before being sent for their birds. A handler so ordered should bring his dog to a position satisfactory to the Judges and remain with him in such position until his number is called. In tests including honoring, care should be exercised to treat creeping, on the part of either dog, in a manner not grossly unfair to the other.

In all stakes, after the Judges have directed that a dog be ordered to retrieve, that dog is entitled to run in and retrieve and shall not be accused of breaking, or penalized for breaking, even though the Judges did not see or hear the handler send the dog.

When a dog that is still in a stake, but not on line under judgment, breaks for a fall for a dog under judgment, in such a manner that the dog or his handler interferes, in the opinion of the Judges, with the normal conduct of the stake, that dog shall be eliminated from the stake.

When the handler of a dog under judgment is ordered by the Judges for any reason to pick up his dog, he is under judgment until he is back of all the Judges with his dog on leash, and all provisions of this section shall apply until that time.

**27.** After delivering a bird to his handler, a dog should stand or sit close to his handler until given further orders.

## THE RETRIEVE

28. When ordered to retrieve, a dog should proceed quickly and eagerly on land or into the water to marked falls, or on the line given him by his handler on falls he has not seen. He should not disturb too much ground or area and should respond quickly and obediently to any further directions his handler might give him. 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, is sufficient cause to justify elimination from the stake.

A dog which pays no attention to many whistles and directions by his handler can be said to be "out-of-control," and, unless in the opinion of the Judges there exist valid mitigating circumstances, should be eliminated from the stake.

29. In marking tests, a dog whose handler gives him a line in the direction of the fall, provided that such lining is accomplished briskly and precisely, should not by reason of such lining be outscored by a dog not so lined. However, conspicuously intensive lining is undesirable and should be penalized.

30. In marked retrieves, if a dog, after having been sent to retrieve, (1) returns to his handler before finding the bird, with or without having been called in, except in those cases of confusion of the dog as to whether he was really ordered to retrieve; (2) stops his hunt; or (3) fails to pick the bird up, actually leaving it after finding it, it shall be sufficient cause, unless there exist in the opinion of the Judges valid mitigating circumstances, to justify elimination from the stake.

31. A dog that goes to the area of a fall, hunts, fails to find and then leaves the area to hunt for another fall, or that drops a bird he is retrieving and goes for another, shall be considered to have "switched." Unless in the opinion of the Judges there exist valid mitigating circumstances, this fault constitutes sufficient justification for elimination from the stake.

32. A dog which fails to find a bird which, in the opinion of the Judges, he should have found, shall be eliminated from the stake.

33. A dog that returns to and systematically hunts the area of a marked fall previously retrieved should be eliminated from the stake, provide, that where the area of the previously retrieved fall overlaps the area of a subsequently retrieved fall, no elimination penalty should be incurred for hunting the area of the overlap.

34. Repeated evidence of poor nose is in itself sufficient justification for elimination from the stake. Because scenting conditions are affected by so many factors, Judges should exercise extreme caution in invoking this penalty.

35. A dog retrieving a decoy shall be eliminated.

36. Upon finding the game, he should quickly pick it up and return briskly to his handler.

A dog should not drop his game on the ground, but distinction should be made between deliberately dropping a bird and readjusting a bad hold or losing his grip because of a struggling bird or running over uneven terrain.

37. Upon returning, he should deliver the bird promptly and tenderly to his handler. A dog sitting to deliver should not outscore a dog making a clear delivery without sitting to do so. A dog that is unwilling to release a bird on delivery should be penalized, and if compelled to do so by severe methods shall, unless in the opinion of the Judges there exist valid mitigating circumstances, be eliminated.

38. A dog shall be eliminated for hard mouth or badly damaging game, but, before doing so, all Judges should inspect the bird and be satisfied that the dog alone was responsible for the damage.

#### GENERAL

39. A dog sent on a blind retrieve shall at once proceed in the general direction of the line given by the handler. A dog that fails to do so shall, in the absence of unusual extenuating circumstances, be eliminated from the stake.

40. Any handler who displays unsportsmanlike conduct or who is seen to kick, strike or otherwise roughly manhandle a dog while on the grounds of a field trial at any time during the holding of a trial, may be expelled from competition in a stake, or from competition at the trial, by the Field Trial Committee.

It shall be the duty of the Committee to investigate, at once, any report that is made to it of alleged unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of a handler, or a report that a handler has been observed kicking, striking or otherwise roughly manhandling a dog. If a Field Trial Committee, after investigation, determines that a handler is in violation of this section, it shall promptly notify the handler of its decision, specifying whether the handler is expelled from a particular stake or from further competition at the trial.

The Judges of a particular stake shall have the authority to expel a handler from any further competition in the stake if they observe unsportsmanlike conduct on the part of the handler or see the handler kicking, striking or otherwise roughly manhandling a dog while the judging of the stake is in progress. It will be the duty of the Judges to promptly report to the Field Trial Committee the expulsion of a handler from a stake, and the Field Trial Committee may then expel the handler from all remaining competition at the trial, if in the Committee's opinion such further action is warranted.

Whenever a handler is expelled from a stake or from competition at a trial under this section, the dog or dogs that he is handling may continue in competition with one or more other handlers.

The Field Trial Secretary of a trial shall submit to The American Kennel Club, with the records of the trial, a report of any action taken under this section by either the Field Trial Committee or the Judges.

41. Judges shall have the power to turn out of the stake any dog which does not obey its handler and any handler who interferes willfully with another handler or his dog.

42. No dog shall be given a place in a stake unless the dog has competed in all tests held for any dog in such stake, except a test which has been discontinued.

43. The awarding of a Judges' Award of Merit to dogs which have passed every required test in a stake and have shown themselves to be well trained and qualified retrievers, should be encouraged.

In any stake where more than one Judges' Award of Merit is awarded, the Judges must designate a Reserve Judges' Award of Merit, and that dog shall be moved up to the next lowest placement in the stake should one or more of the placing dogs be found to have been an ineligible entry. In any stake where only one Judges' Award of Merit is awarded, that award shall be designated the Reserve Judges' Award of Merit.

#### GENERAL PROVISIONS

44. All field trial-giving clubs shall clearly recognize that Open, Limited or Special All-Age Stakes are of the first importance and that all other stakes are of relatively lesser importance, and are requested to adjust the timing of stakes so that time shall be available for a fair test in those stakes.

45. It is essential that all spectators attending a trial should be kept far enough from the line to enable the dog working to clearly discern his handler, and nothing shall be done to distract the dog's attention from his work. A handler has the right to appeal to the Judges if the gallery is interfering with his work in any way, and the Judges in their discretion may, if they believe the dog has been interfered with, give him another test.

46. There shall be no practicing or training on any part of the field trial grounds from the start of the trial until its conclusion.

47. In sanctioned trials or non-regular stakes, any sections of this Standard Procedure may be relaxed or eliminated, but all contestants should be advised in what respects this is true.

#### STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE RETRIEVER ADVISORY BOARD

The American Kennel Club has approved the following recommendations from the Retriever Advisory Committee which are applicable to all retriever trial-giving clubs, including a Supplement to the Standard Procedures that deals in more detail with the conduct and judging of these trials.

Judges and officials of trial-giving clubs should make themselves familiar with these recommendations and the supplement.

1. *Programs should show all the information about competing dogs that is called for in entry blanks.*

2. *Humane handling and care of game at a trial should be rigidly practiced. It is prohibited to gut, skin, or decimate birds for any purpose.*

3. **Amateur Definition:** *The following definitions and standards should be followed in determining the status of any person to be an Amateur:*

(a) *For purposes of eligibility to judge under Chapter 14, Section 3 of the rules for retriever trials, a person shall be considered an Amateur who during the period of two years preceding the trial in question has not received compensation from the direct training of a dog for hunting, hunting tests or field trials and/or the handling of a dog in the same, and/or the regular and systematic personal instructions of other individuals regarding the above pursuits at any level.*

*Compensation as provided above is defined as money, goods or services to a person or any member of their household.*

*Any person participating in an occasional organized seminar or workshop to improve the training and handling of field trial, hunting test or hunting dogs will be exempt from the above provision as will a person who receives payment for providing educational material (such as books, videos, etc.) to the public on the training and handling of field trial, hunting test or hunting dogs.*

(b) *For purposes of eligibility of a person to compete in an Amateur All-Age stake at a licensed or member retriever trial under Section 10 of Chapter 14, the standard set forth in paragraph (a) above shall apply but the time period applicable shall be one year preceding the trial in question. Professional handlers seeking to enter as an amateur must officially declare their change of status in Retriever News. Handlers will not be charged to place this declaration in this publication. The declaration must clearly state the intention of the handler which is to proclaim their amateur status, their name and specifically the date in which this is effective.*

(c) *No person shall be entitled to status as an Amateur if it is determined that it is inappropriate for such person to judge or to compete as an Amateur by virtue of a relationship or an association with a professional other than as a client. The time periods for any disqualification from Amateur status under this section shall be the same as those fixed by paragraphs (a) and (b) above.*

(d) *The determination of Amateur status under these directives for the purpose of any particular field trial shall be made by the Field Trial Committee for that trial.*

4. *That a minimum of two and one-half live flying game birds per dog be made available for use in the Open,*



*Limited All-Age, Special All-Age, Restricted All-Age and Amateur or Owner-Handler Amateur Stakes in any trial carrying championship points and that a minimum of two live birds per dog be made available for use in the Derby and Qualifying Stakes.*

5. *Any club which, in the preceding field trial year, held a trial in which there were more than 65 starters in Open, Limited, Special or Restricted Stakes may, at its option, apply to hold a Limited, Special or Restricted All-Age Stake, the choice being governed by the club's view of the reduction needed.*

6. *Chapter 14, Section 4 of the Rules charges the Field Trial Secretary and the Field Trial Committee with responsibility for ensuring a public draw using procedures reasonably designed to determine the running order in each stake by random chance. The following procedures are recommended to achieve compliance with the requirements of Section 4:*

(a) *Time and Place: The date, hour and full address of the location of the drawing, together with notice that the drawing is public shall be set forth in the Premium List. A location with room for observers should be selected and a convenient time should be designated to encourage attendance by interested persons.*

(b) *Attendance: It is the responsibility of the Field Trial Secretary to obtain the attendance at the draw of at least two other unrelated persons who are knowledgeable about field trial procedures and Rules to observe and/or assist in the conduct of the draw. At least one such person, other than the Field Trial Secretary, shall be a member of the Field Trial Committee.*

(c) *Procedures: The actual conduct of the draw should include the following procedures, or substantially equivalent procedures:*

(i) *All running dogs should be drawn from a single thoroughly mixed pile of cards. Multiple entries run by the same handler should not be segregated and drawn from a separate pile.*

(ii) *Cards identifying the dog and handler should be prepared and folded so that the person actually drawing a dog cannot observe the name of the dog or handler drawn.*

(iii) *All entries should be drawn before there is any disclosure of the identity of any dog drawn.*

(iv) *When all entries are drawn, the names should be uncovered and arranged in the exact order in which they were drawn.*

(v) *No changes in the running order of the dogs as drawn should be made except as required to separate dogs handled by the same person which have been drawn too close together to permit the efficient, timely running of the stake. To the extent changes are required, such adjustments in the order should be made in a consistent manner for all the handlers of multiple entries. Dogs that must be moved should*

*be moved only the minimum amount necessary to avoid delays in running the stake (normally no more than three intervening dogs), and the relative order in which the entries of a single handler were drawn should not be modified by any move. The objective of any changes made in the original running order is the efficient running of the stake, not the convenience or desire of the handler.*

*(vi) The particular procedures to be used for the conduct of the draw including the procedures for moving dogs after the initial draw should be announced in advance of the draw to all persons present.*

*(d) Report to the AKC: The Field Trial Secretary shall include in the report to The American Kennel Club under Chapter 14 the names and addresses of all persons who were present at the draw.*

*7. That the following "SUPPLEMENT TO THE STANDARD PROCEDURE" be used in the conducting and judging of Retriever trials.*

## **SUPPLEMENT TO THE STANDARD PROCEDURE**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The purpose of this supplement is to clarify The American Kennel Club's "STANDARD PROCEDURE FOR NON-SLIP RETRIEVER TRIALS" for all who are in any way concerned with the conduct of a field trial. Consequently, nothing contained herein shall be considered as altering anything in that "STANDARD," but only as advisory in the interpretation of it.

The *objectives* of this supplement are twofold: *First*, greater uniformity in the conduct of retriever trials; and *second*, greater uniformity in the judging of performances by retrievers at those field trials.

The "STANDARD" has been formulated in such a manner that the Officials of a trial-giving club and the Judges have considerable latitude in the conduct of a trial. This is desirable to allow for variations in conditions that are peculiar to various parts of the country, and also to grant Judges unlimited opportunities for ingenuity in planning tests. This supplement is not intended to be restrictive, either to Officials or Judges, as it presents these interpretations of the "STANDARD."

This supplement has been divided into two sections: (1) Trial Procedure and (2) Evaluation of Dog Work. In respect to *trial procedure*, the supplement presents guidance to Judges, Guns and Officials of the trial-giving club in the conduct of the trial, so that it will be well-planned and smooth-running, in order that all dogs will be given adequate and relatively equal opportunity to display their merits. In respect to *evaluation of dog work*, the supplement presents guidance to Judges in grading the performances of the dogs so that there

will be greater uniformity in the penalties assessed for various faults.

The introductory paragraph of the "STANDARD" states:

"In order that trials may be conducted as uniformly as practicable, standardization of objectives is essential, and, therefore, all Judges, Guns, Contestants and Officials, who have a part in conducting trials, should be familiar with and be governed, so far as possible, by the following standard":

It is essential that all concerned with the conduct of retriever field trials, i.e., Field Trial Committee, Marshal, Guns and Judges, as well as the Contestants, shall have read and shall be conversant with the current editions of The American Kennel Club's "Rules Applying to Registration and Field Trials" and its "Standard," as well as this supplement. Such, alone, would do much in attaining that much-desired greater uniformity in both "Trial Procedure" and "Evaluation of Dog Work."

Section 1, a Basic Principle of the "STANDARD," states:

"The purpose of a Non-Slip Retriever trial is to determine the relative merits of retrievers in the field. Retriever field trials should, therefore, simulate as nearly as possible the conditions met in an ordinary day's shoot.

"Dogs are expected to retrieve any type of game bird under all conditions, and the Judges and the Field Trial Committee have complete control over the mechanics and requirements of each trial. This latitude is permitted in order to allow for the difference in conditions which may arise in trials given in widely separated parts of the United States, which difference well may necessitate different methods of conducting tests."

The final phrase in the first paragraph above: "*the conditions met in an ordinary day's shoot,*" should be interpreted for application to field trials as "*natural hunting conditions.*"

Section 2, the other Basic Principle of the "STANDARD," states:

"The function of a Non-Slip Retriever is to seek and retrieve 'fallen' game when ordered to do so. He should sit quietly in line or in the blind, walk at heel, or assume any station designated by his handler until sent to retrieve. When ordered, a dog should retrieve quickly and briskly without unduly disturbing too much ground, and should deliver tenderly to hand. He should then await further orders.

"Accurate marking is of primary importance. A dog which marks the 'fall' of a bird, uses the wind,

follows a strong cripple, and will take directions from his handler, is of great value.”

While “natural hunting conditions” are subject to great variations in different parts of the U.S.A., the work expected of the dogs should not be subject to similar wide variations. In most instances, there should be little doubt in anyone’s mind as to the type of work which constitutes a perfect performance in a given test. However, there is unlimited opportunity for an honest difference of opinion on the severity of the penalty to assess for any given infraction or deviation from perfect work.

Therefore, there must always be the possibility of owners and handlers being confused and dismayed because their dog is “dropped” from further competition, or not being included in the placings due to faults which other Judges at other trials had not so severely penalized. However, this should be minimized, for everyone has the right to know which particular faults will be penalized severely, moderately, or only to a minor degree. So, some clarification on these points is needed; hence, there has been included at the conclusion of this supplement a suggested *classification of these various infractions*; they have been divided into three categories, namely: “*Serious Faults*”; “*Moderate Faults*”; and “*Minor Faults*.”

## PART I – TRIAL PROCEDURE

*Apportioning Time to the Various Stakes.* This is a first and most important consideration in planning the mechanics of a trial and is the joint responsibility of the Judges and the Field Trial Committee. The premium list scheduled the days of the trial and the hour when the trial will start. Those are fixed, definite factors in planning the mechanics; but a Field Trial Committee could expedite its job considerably, if in the entry form it was recorded that the first stake will start at a specified hour on the first day of the trial, and that each succeeding stake will follow at the conclusion of the stake which preceded it, rather than stating the specific hour at which any stake will start, except the first one.

Section 44 of the “STANDARD” states:

“All field trial-giving clubs should clearly recognize that Open, Limited or Special All-Age stakes are of the first importance, and that all other stakes are of relatively lesser importance and are requested to adjust the timing of stakes so that time shall be available for a fair test in those stakes.”

Hence, in the apportionment of time, obviously an Open, Limited or Special All-Age must be given first consideration, the Amateur All-Age stake merits next consideration, whereas both a Derby and a Qualifying rate less time, because they are of less importance,

although one should not be rated as more important than the other.

The following factors also should be considered in apportioning time: (1) the number of entries in each of the various stakes, (2) the quality and quantity of the facilities available at the field trial grounds, (3) the weather, (4) the proximity of sites for various tests, (5) the ease of moving, and the time involved in moving from one test site to another (here one must not forget about the importance of the size of the gallery), and (6) how the noon-day feeding problem is to be handled, i.e., with or without a luncheon break.

*Inspection of Field Trial Grounds.* It is very important that Judges inspect the field trial grounds with representatives of the Field Trial Committee in advance of the scheduled hour for the trial to start, and seek their counsel regarding any peculiarities of the grounds not readily apparent. At that time, the Judges should select and determine the nature of each test and its location, preferably for the entire trial. Also, the trial-giving club must provide an efficient organization to conduct the mechanics of the trial; such will do much to reduce to a minimum the delays in starting stakes and in starting various tests in those stakes — providing, of course, that the Judges have previously planned and have instructed the Field Trial Committee about the location of the next test, and the requirements for game, guns, bird boys, boats, decoys, etc.

*Planning Tests.* The planning of tests is the responsibility of the Judges; it is also one of their most important responsibilities. With good tests, it is much easier to judge the quality of the performances by various dogs than could be true with tests which are so simple and so easy that most of the dogs turn in almost perfect performances, or with tests which are too difficult and time-consuming, or too “tricky,” hence, apparently designed to produce many failures or eliminations.

Of primary importance, tests should approximate “natural hunting conditions.” Nevertheless, “falls” which are long and out of gun range for the handler are appropriate and proper; they can be justified on the basis either of birds that fly a considerable distance after having been shot, or of those shot by a hunting companion.

On “marked” retrieves, a dog should be able to see a bird in the air and as it falls (see Section 8 of the “STANDARD”), since his memory can be tested only when he has seen the “falls.” Many factors contribute to a dog’s ability to see and mark the “falls”: location of the Guns is important; so, too, are the background

against which the bird is visualized in flight and the light conditions, as well as the height to which birds are thrown or to which they fly.

On "*blind*" retrieves, wherever possible, the Judges should plan their tests in such a way that they take advantage of *natural hazards*, such as islands, points of land, sand bars, ditches, hedges, small bushes, adjacent heavy cover, and rolling terrain. Despite such natural distractions, it should be possible, at least in theory, for a dog to "find" a well-planned blind-retrieve on the initial line from his handler; that he will do so is highly improbable because of those natural hazards, so he must be handled to the "blind." Nevertheless, the test should be so planned that the dog should be "in-sight" continuously. A blind retrieve is a test of control, and a dog which is out of sight for a considerable period cannot be said to be under control. Utilizing natural hazards should obviate the need for Judges issuing special instructions about the manner of completing a blind retrieve, other than to "get the meat" by the shortest, fastest, or most direct route.

Ingenuity on the part of Judges should be encouraged, not only in planning customary tests, but also in devising some which are unusual and quite different from those customarily used at field trials. However, all such unusual tests should conform to "conditions met in an ordinary day's shoot," and they should not require complicated instructions about the desired method of completing the test.

*Changing tests* after a series has been started should be avoided if at all possible. One way of avoiding unsatisfactory tests, or of avoiding unforeseen and unpredictable situations which would vitiate an apparently proper and sound test, is the practice of running a "test-dog" first, in every series — and before any of the competing dogs is brought to line and tested on it. *Use of a "test-dog"* at the start of every series is usual practice by some Judges; a "test-dog" is used by many Judges under conditions wherein they may entertain doubts about the exact way in which the test may actually go. Some believe that use of a "test-dog" is unnecessary and time-consuming; others contend that, in the long run, use of a "test-dog" really saves time; on occasion, it may save embarrassment for Judges. When a test is discontinued after one or more competing dogs have run, the Judges should exercise care to locate the substituted test in an area different from that in which the original test was held in order to avoid favor or prejudice to those dogs which have run the original test.

*Judges' Responsibilities on Line.* Before a trial is started, before each stake is started, and before each series is started, the Judges must reach certain decisions among themselves about various details, such as the following:

(1) *Instructions to the handler*, as he comes to line regarding the position he is to take, the nature of the test, and any special instructions about the desired method of completing it. If special instructions are to be given, great care must be exercised so that each handler receives the same instructions. Such can be accomplished by summoning all handlers to the line, before the series is started, and then announcing those special instructions to the group, once and for all. If it is not possible to assemble all handlers for such a single announcement, the special instructions can be written and given to the Marshal, who, in turn, should show them to each handler, before he goes on-line. Whatever method the Judges decide to adopt, they should be certain that all handlers receive identical instructions.

(2) *Signaling for birds to be thrown*. It is recommended that each set of Guns be signaled separately. This creates more uniform timing between falls and also prevents additional birds being shot if a “fall” is unsatisfactory to the Judges. The signaling Judge should be careful that neither his signaling nor the shadow of it distracts either dog.

(3) *Calling the dog's number* as a signal for the handlers to send his dog is proper, but it is not proper to call the dog's name or the handler's name for this purpose. It makes for greater uniformity, as a rule, if one Judge is responsible for all three of the foregoing duties in each series, with the Judges rotating or taking turns at this duty in different series.

(4) *Each Judge should be at liberty to say “NO,”* and independently, if, in his opinion, any “fall” is such, or any situation develops that makes for a relatively unfair test for the dog under judgment.

Judges should watch the dog being tested, and try to determine whether he apparently saw and marked each “fall.” It is proper and right to give him another set of birds, if he is unable to see the birds and mark the “falls” through no fault of his own, but due to poor flight of the bird, unusual light conditions, striking changes in the background, or any other occurrence which makes for decidedly different conditions from those under which previously competing dogs had been tested in that series. On the other hand, the dog should not be given a new set of birds when failure to mark was of his own doing — either through lack of attention, or because his attention was “frozen” on another set of Guns or a previous “fall.”

(5) *Every bird retrieved*, and delivered to the handler, *should be inspected* by one of the Judges, preferably not the one who is calling numbers. Failure to inspect retrieved birds must be cataloged as carelessness, and as an undesirable practice. It is unfair to all dogs that are being tested — not alone 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 a dog's performance. Any unusual condition of a bird, such as being badly "shot-up," etc., should be brought to the attention of the Judges. If the same birds are to be used again, those that are injured should be set aside and not used again.

(6) *If a dog is to be picked up and eliminated* for a faulty performance, instructions to that effect should be given by the Judge who is calling the numbers.

(7) *Running crippled birds or "runners"* are always a problem; they create a lack of uniformity in the "falls." Dogs should be able to follow and "find" a "runner," but until a method has been devised whereby all dogs will be tested equally on "runners," an occasional "runner" can create a gross inequality in the test. Judges may agree that they will treat a "runner" as a "break of the game" and expect that a dog finds the birds shot for him. Or they may agree that a dog is to be picked up as soon as it is recognized that a bird is a "runner," even though he may have already retrieved the other bird or birds in that particular test, and be tested again on a new set of birds; or they may agree to extend the opportunity to get a new set of birds only to dogs whose work up to the time of reaching the "original fall" of the running bird justifies such consideration.

In any case, the Judges should decide in advance how they will deal with the problem of "runners," should it arise.

(8) *The encountering of wild birds, rabbits, or other game by the working dog* also presents a problem, and sometimes creates great inequalities. Dogs, particularly in All-Age stakes, should ignore such distractions or be sufficiently under control to be "handled" to the "fall." Judges should decide, in advance, how they will deal with such a problem, and, as in the case of "runners," they may agree to pick up the dog and retest him at a later time, provided they feel that such a distraction was responsible for a faulty performance.

(9) *The Judges should agree in advance* as to the extent of movement which shall be considered "creeping," short of breaking, and whether working dogs so offending shall be ordered brought to heel before being sent to retrieve.

Also, in the minor stakes, where "controlled" breaks are permissible, the Judges should reach an agreement about the degree they will consider a "controlled" break in contrast to one which will eliminate the dog from further competition; also, they should be in agreement about the severity of the penalties to assess for various degrees of "controlled" breaks.

(10) *Instructions given to the Marshal and the Guns* should be by agreement of the Judges; of course, these



may vary from series to series.

Unless otherwise instructed, the *Guns* should remain quietly and not move their position after their bird is down. Guns should volunteer information to the Judges only: (a) if they suspect that their bird may be a “runner” (b) if a dog is returning with a bird other than the one that had been shot for him, and (c) if there is a significant change in the cover, which may not be apparent to the Judges.

The *Marshal* should call the dogs to-line, and announce to the Judges the number of the dog about to be tested. He should call back to-line any dog which was picked up and was to be retested at a later time — how long such a dog shall be allowed to wait behind the line before retesting shall be by prearrangement with the Judges, and the handler should be told when he is to run again at the time he is picked up.

He shall also obtain the callbacks for the next series from the Judges, and announce them.

Further, the *Marshal* is responsible for enforcement of Section 43 of the “STANDARD”:

“It is essential that all spectators attending a trial should be kept far enough from the line to enable the dog working to clearly discern his handler. . . .”

(11) *Judges should keep sufficiently detailed notes* on each dog’s performance to enable them to recall it completely, or at least its outstanding features. Each fault should be noted, even those that are minor. Although the latter may not require that the dog be penalized at that time, repetitions of that fault or commission of various other faults, in succeeding series, may cause the total of faults to assume serious proportions.

(12) To the extent that time permits, *Judges should be generous in their “callbacks”* for additional series. No dog should be eliminated from further competition unless it is the consensus of the Judges that it would be impossible for him to “place” in the stake, even though his work in all succeeding series was perfect. For example: Other things being equal, a specific fault, such as failure to mark the “area of the fall,” should merit the same penalty in a late series as had been assessed for it in an early series. Actually, the fault committed in the first series may not justify elimination, as there is no certainty at that time that every other dog may not commit an equally serious fault before the stake is completed. However, commission of that fault in the first series, alone, may conceivably justify his elimination before the last series is begun, simply because there are several other dogs in competition which, thus far, have not committed any faults and many others whose fault

was less serious. Because so little additional testing is contemplated in order to complete the stake, the Judges would be justified in concluding that such an error in the first series, alone, would preclude all probability of that dog being placed in the stake.

(13) Before arriving at their final placings in any stake, the *Judges should make direct comparisons, series for series, between all of their dogs under consideration for those places.* Such comparisons permit each Judge to be certain that the dog placed first has given a relatively better performance throughout the stake than the second-place dog, etc. The fourth-place dog should be compared directly with all that are unplaced, and on a similar basis, Judges should be reminded of Section 41 in the "STANDARD" wherein they are encouraged to make a "Judge's Award of Merit" to those dogs which have completed all series, and which show evidence of being well trained and thoroughly qualified retrievers. However, in stakes where a Judge's Award of Merit qualifies a dog for a Limited or Special All-Age stake and, thus, makes him a starter eligible to enter future stakes carrying championship points, such awards should not be given unless the dog's work merits this recognition.

Finally, *scoring systems on each series* are of assistance, in general, for preliminary classification of the performances by the various dogs still in competition. They help immeasurably in arriving at a prompt decision after the conclusion of each series, in respect to which dogs should be called back for the next series. However, in the final summation and analysis of the various performances, a direct and detailed comparison of the work by one dog versus the work of another may produce some different conclusions from those suggested by the scores alone. Careful comparisons are heartily recommended, as they are most likely to achieve the true purpose of retriever field trials defined by the "STANDARD" as a method "to determine the relative merits of retrievers in the field."

## PART II – EVALUATION OF DOG WORK

Judging can never be precise; it is not an exact science, merely an art, and simply because there are so many shades of gray between black and white. At the risk of over-simplification, it might be stated that the primary purpose of a retriever is to get the birds to hand as quickly as possible in a pleasing, obedient manner and all faults stem from a deviation from this.

The "STANDARD PROCEDURE FOR NON-SLIP RETRIEVER TRIALS" clearly defines the responsibility of Judges, in the first sentence of its "Basic Principles," namely: "to determine the relative merits of retrievers

in the field . . .” and, further, while they are performing tests which “simulate as nearly as possible the conditions met in an ordinary day’s shoot.”

It is recommended that a Judge should have clearly in mind, and for each test, precisely what type of performance he expects, since such work will merit a high rating in his records. Then he should observe, and record, in what respects and to what degrees the performances by individual dogs have either exceeded or fallen short of that previously established “par,” in each test. Hence, when the stake is completed, several Judges will arrive at their final decision about placings on the basis of which dog, relatively, did better work than another in each of the several series.

Therefore, much of a Judge’s responsibility is to determine how much weight he shall give to certain types of exceptional performance and how much penalty to assess because of various individual faults, or repetitions of the same fault or combinations of various faults. Some faults in and of themselves are sufficiently serious to *justify elimination* from a stake. Others may justify either a *moderate penalty*, or only a *minor penalty*; and some of the latter may be so minor that, on occasion, they are relatively so unimportant that, for practical purposes, they can be ignored. On the other hand, minor faults can summate into moderate or serious faults, and moderate into serious, through repetition or through combinations of several types of faults; such multiplicity of various faults frequently indicates a “failing” or a habitual tendency and results in a performance that is neither a “finished” job nor pleasing to the eye.

Much can be achieved in attaining greater uniformity of judging through a uniformity in definition of the various serious, moderate and minor faults. Tables are included at the end of this section, wherein most of the various faults demonstrated by retrievers are cataloged as: (1) Serious Faults; (2) Moderate Faults; and (3) Minor Faults. However, the personal equation cannot be eliminated completely since each Judge must determine the relative seriousness of individual faults, repetition of faults, or combinations of faults, which occur in the performance by dogs in a particular trial.

Section 22 of the “STANDARD” states:

“The Judges must judge the dogs for (a) their natural abilities, including their memory, intelligence, attention, nose, courage, perseverance and style, and (b) their abilities acquired through training, including steadiness, control, response to direction and delivery.”

*Natural abilities* are of great importance in *all stakes*, whereas abilities acquired through training are of less

importance in the Qualifying stake than in those carrying championship points, and are of comparatively minor importance in the Derby stake.

### Natural Abilities

(1) *Accurate marking, or memory of "falls" is of paramount importance.* However, this does not imply that dogs which excel in marking shall not be severely penalized, or even eliminated, for deficiencies in, or a lack of the other required "abilities." However, in Derby stakes the ability to "mark" is all-important and dogs that are handled on a mark in a Derby Stake shall be eliminated. Even in our most exacting stakes, tests are usually so devised that "marked" birds constitute a large percentage of the retrieves by which each dog's performance is judged.

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 in it, then quickly and systematically "hunts-it-out," has done both a creditable and an intelligent job of marking. Such work should not be appreciably out-scored by the dog that "finds" or "pinpoints" on his first cast. However, a dog which consistently, i.e., during an entire stake, marks his birds in a closer area, hence, more accurately than another dog, should be judged accordingly. All things are relative, and, conceivably, such differences in markings alone might be sufficient to determine the final placings in a particular stake.

Even with "marked" birds, a handler may be able to render great assistance to his dog by giving him "a line" in the direction of the "fall"; however, there is nothing he can do, short of handling, to aid the dog in recognizing the "depth of the fall." Often a dog gives definite indication of "memory," and of his marking ability, at or after delivery of a first bird, by aligning himself toward, or by looking eagerly in the exact direction of an unretrieved "fall"; at times, even leaving at once or leaving on command, but without benefit of a precise line to the "fall" given to him by the handler. There is no invariable method by which the relative merits of such perfect completions can be judged. Reference is made to Section 29 of the "STANDARD" with respect to the undesirability of conspicuously intensive lining.

What precisely constitutes the "area of the 'fall' " defies accurate definition; yet, at the outset of every test, each Judge must arbitrarily define its hypothetical boundaries for himself, and for each bird in that test, so that he can judge whether dogs have remained within his own concept of "area of the 'fall,' " as well as how far they have wandered away from "the area" and how much cover they have disturbed unnecessarily. In determining these arbitrary and hypothetical boundaries

of the "area of the 'fall,' " due considerations should be given to various factors: (1) the type, the height and the uniformity of the cover, (2) light conditions, (3) direction of the prevailing wind and its intensity, (4) length of the various falls, (5) the speed of individual dogs, (6) whether there is a change in cover (as from stubble to plowed ground, or to ripe alfalfa, or to machine-picked corn, etc.) or whether the "fall" is beyond a hedge, across a road, or over a ditch, etc., and, finally, and most important, (7) whether one is establishing the "area of the 'fall' " for a single, or for the first bird a dog goes for, in multiple retrieves, or for the second or the third bird, since each of these should differ from the others.

In general, the "area of the 'fall' " for a single should be relatively small; the area for a first retrieve in a "double" should be smaller than for the second bird, and both of these should be larger in a "triple," and larger still for the third bird in it. Also, "the area" for short retrieves should certainly be smaller than for longer retrieves. Since there are so many conditions and variables to be taken into consideration, it is obvious that each Judge, and for every series, must attempt to define for himself a hypothetical "area of the 'fall' " for each bird, and then judge the dogs accordingly. However, the penalties inflicted should vary in their severity, depending on the distance which individual dogs wander out of the area, the frequency of such wanderings, the number of birds mismarked in a given test, and by the amount of cover disturbed in these meanderings.

Dogs which disturb cover unnecessarily, clearly well out of the area of the "fall," either by not going directly to that area, or by leaving it, even though they eventually find the bird without being handled, should be penalized more severely than those handled quickly and obediently to it.

(2) *Intelligence* is a quality not often tested intentionally, since few tests can be designed for that specific purpose. Nevertheless, on occasion, dogs may have an opportunity to demonstrate an unusual degree of intelligence, or lack of it, through the manner in which certain performances are completed. When those occasions arise, and usually they develop by chance rather than by intent, each dog must be credited or penalized on the basis of the intelligence demonstrated.

(3) *Attention* is displayed, even as a dog comes "on-line." His eagerness and general attitude when coming on-line, his alertness in locating the "Guns," in acceding to his handler's commands, and in his zeal for the hunt, are highly desirable traits. Conversely, lack of attention and lack of interest should be penalized.

(4) Most retrievers have a "good nose," and, as a rule, they have numerous opportunities to demonstrate this

all-important quality at every trial. Usually it is something in his work which suggests that a dog *lacks a good nose* that attracts the Judges' attention. Such suspicion should be recorded, so that it can be verified or eliminated by his performance in subsequent tests. On the other hand, scenting conditions are so mysterious and are so little understood, although obviously affected by many factors, such as type of cover, wind, frost, rain, location of "fall," acidity of soil and apparently many other conditions, that extreme caution must be exercised before a dog is charged with a "poor nose" and penalized accordingly.

(5) *Courage*, too, is a trait which cannot be tested at every trial. It may be displayed by a willingness to face, and without hesitation, rough cover, cold or rough water, ice, mud, or other similar conditions which make the going rather tough, *and of doing it repeatedly*. The facilities of trial grounds, or the weather, do not often supply the proper situation for a series specifically designed to test the dogs' courage. Because the facilities or weather necessary for such a test are often limited, such tests should usually come late in a trial, unless there are reasonable grounds for assumption that all dogs will receive comparable tests. When such tests can be arranged, they are frequently of great value to the Judges in evaluating their relative merits in this highly desirable trait which all retrievers should possess.

(6) *Perseverance* is shown by a dog's determination to stick-at-it and complete the task at hand — i.e., systematically, aggressively and without faltering, to search for and make the "find" of the bird he has been sent to retrieve. A lack of perseverance may become apparent whenever: (1) he returns to the handler, voluntarily, and before finding the bird; (2) he either stops his hunt, or continues it in a slow, lackadaisical, disinterested manner; (3) the dog "pops-up" or looks back to his handler for directions on a "marked fall" and before he has hunted for a considerable time; (4) he "switches birds," and (5) he "blinks" a bird, i.e., fails to pick it up, actually leaves it after making the "find."

"Switching birds" implies that a dog gives up in his hunt after a search, leaves "the area," and goes for another bird, or when he drops a bird he is retrieving and goes for another; however, except in the latter case, a dog should not be judged as "switching" unless he goes to the "area" of a "fall," hunts, fails to find, and then leaves that area to hunt for another "fall." Furthermore, it should *not be considered* as a lack of perseverance, if, while on the way to one "fall," he sees or finds another bird and retrieves it first; or, if on the way to one "fall," but long before he reaches "the area" of that "fall," he changes his direction (for some reason or other) and goes for another bird.

On being sent for a marked fall, a dog which is confused as to whether he was really ordered to retrieve and may then return after a few steps, thus requiring a recast or direction to continue, has not displayed a lack of perseverance, a lack of courage as covered in section (5) above, nor a lack of marking a fall covered in (1) above, and should receive no penalty or a very minor one, except if it happens repeatedly.

(7) *Style* is apparent in every movement of a dog and throughout his entire performance at trials, for example: by the *gaiety* of his manner in approaching the line, by his *alertness* on-line, by his *eagerness* and *speed* on retrieves, by his *water-entry*, by his *pick-up* of birds and by his *return* with them. Style makes for a pleasing performance; together with ability to mark, they constitute the most important factors for placings in Derby Stakes.

In all stakes, in respect to “style,” a desired performance includes: (a) an alert and obedient attitude, (b) a fast-determined departure, both on land and into the water, (c) an aggressive search for the “fall,” (d) a prompt pick-up, and (e) a reasonably fast return. Dogs may be credited for outstanding and brilliant exhibitions of style, or they may be penalized for deficiencies in style — the severity of the penalty ranging from a minor demerit, to elimination from the stake in extreme cases.

(8) Section 37 of the “STANDARD” states:

“A dog should be eliminated for hard-mouth or badly damaging game, but, before doing so, all Judges should inspect the bird and be satisfied that the dog alone was responsible for the damage.”

“Hard-mouth” is one of the most severely penalized faults in a retriever; furthermore, once a dog has been charged with this fault, he carries that stigma for life. Therefore, “hard-mouth” should only become the Judges’ verdict when there is incontrovertible proof of it. Torn skin or flesh, alone, is *not* sufficient evidence, in almost all cases, to constitute such proof, since damage of that type may be caused in a variety of ways, such as by sharp sticks and stones, etc., in the cover; also, dogs can unintentionally damage birds when making retrieves from heavy cover, as well as by their fast, “positive” pick-up. Furthermore, at certain times of the year, birds are particularly susceptible to such damage.

On the other hand, crushed bone structure usually can be accepted as trustworthy and sufficient evidence of “hard-mouth.” This is the only evidence offering such proof, in the absence of a particularly obvious, flagrant and unjustified violation of tearing of flesh.

Other faults are frequently confused with “hard-mouth,” although, in reality, they are entirely separate and distinct from it — even though, in addition, the dog

may actually be hard-mouthed. "Freezing," in particular, falls into this category. A hard-mouthed dog may have a gentle delivery and, certainly, a sticky delivery does not imply hard-mouth. "Rolling-a-bird" or "mouthing" it, while making the retrieve, may be erroneously associated with "hard-mouth" in the opinion of some, even though the bird is not damaged thereby. If such "mouthing" is a fault at all, then it is one of only minor importance.

Judges should remember that a dog is either found to have a "hard-mouth" or he is not so found, and, if guilty, he must be eliminated from the stake — other various types of inconclusive evidence should merely be recorded in the Judges' notes, pending the manner in which birds are handled in subsequent series.

While not required, it is a considerate gesture on the part of the Judges to keep separate any bird for which they are eliminating a dog for "hard-mouth," and show it to the handler of the dog at a later time inconspicuously.

### **Abilities Acquired Through Training**

The other group of attributes to be considered by Judges includes those abilities which dogs acquire through training. The importance of these acquired qualities varies in different stakes, for example: A "reasonable" degree of steadiness and general obedience are the requirements in Derby stakes. A greater degree of steadiness and some degree of the other qualities are expected in the Qualifying stake. There should be expectation of full refinement in "acquired attributes" in those stakes carrying championship points.

(1) *Steadiness* to the extent of defining what constitutes a "break" is clearly presented in Section 26 of the "STANDARD." However, a degree of amplification might be helpful: Dogs on-line sometimes make various types of movements when game is in the air (and/or when it is shot). Such movements may be interpreted as efforts by the dogs to improve their view of the "fall," and some occur through sheer excitement. Except for an occasional change in position in order to better see a "fall," all such movements should be penalized as unsteadiness — the degree of penalty depending on the extent and the frequency of repetition of the offense or offenses. The requirement of steadiness is a very important factor in judging the work of retrievers.

(2) *Control* is closely allied to the dog's response to direction, but it also includes obedience at all times. Control also includes "line-manners," walking tractably "at heel," assuming and staying in any designated position on-line, as well as remaining quietly on-line beside the handler after delivery of the bird to him. When called, a dog should return promptly to his handler — particularly in those instances where Judges



decide that he shall be tested again, at a later time, either because another dog “broke” or due to any one of a variety of other circumstances.

Section 25 of the “STANDARD” provides that noisy or frequent restraining of a dog on-line by his handler, except in extraordinary circumstances, is sufficient cause to justify elimination of the dog from the stake. In less flagrant instances, the degree of the penalty should correspond to the extent and frequency of repetition of the infraction. Although such is not required, it is a considerate gesture by Judges, if they are in agreement, to notify handlers when their methods of restraint are incurring penalties for their dogs.

(3) *Response to direction* is all-important in handling tests, also whenever a dog must be brought back to the “area of the ‘fall,’ ” when he has mismarked. In such response to direction, a dog should take the *original line* given to him by his handler and *continue* on it until he either makes the “find,” or until stopped by the handler and given a new line. He should then continue in this new direction until he “finds,” or is given further directions, etc.

Faults, or justifications for penalties, include the following: (a) not taking the line originally given by the handler, (b) not continuing on that line for a considerable distance, (c) stopping voluntarily, i.e., “popping-up” and looking back for directions, (d) failure to stop promptly and look to the handler, when signaled, (e) failure to take a new direction, i.e., a new cast, when given, and (f) failure to continue in that new direction for a considerable distance.

The seriousness of the penalty for any or all of the foregoing faults varies with the seriousness of the infraction, whether that infraction was repeated and how often, and whether there was a combination of various infractions. However, before inflicting a severe penalty because of a dog’s failure to stop promptly at the whistle, Judges should determine whether the wind, the cover, or the distance seriously interfered with the dog’s ability to hear his handler. In general, the performance in the test should be considered in its entirety; an occasional failure to take and hold a direction may be considered a minor fault, if offset by several other very good responses. A considerable penalty should be imposed for repeated, willful disobedience of the handler’s orders; and less penalty when, after taking the proper direction, he does not continue on it as far as the handler desired. Stopping voluntarily, to look back for directions, in an isolated instance, may be considered a minor fault, but frequent repetition may convert such “popping-up” into the category of serious faults.

*Delivery of the bird* should be made to the handler directly, upon return from the retrieve; it should be given up willingly. A dog should not drop the bird before

delivering it; and he should not “freeze,” or be unwilling to give it up. He should not jump after the bird, once the handler has taken it from him. Penalties for faulty delivery may range from minor, for an isolated minor offense, to elimination from the stake, either for a severe “freeze” or because of repeated moderate infractions.

### Classification of Faults

Classification of the many faults which may be exhibited by retrievers during the course of a trial shall be primarily in terms of generalizations. In the lists which follow, various infractions are cataloged as I. SERIOUS FAULTS, II. MODERATE FAULTS, and III. MINOR FAULTS. Each fault should be considered as a single occurrence, and only to an average degree. However, such infraction may be so minor in degree that it scarcely merits the indicated penalty. Conversely, the degree of a given instance of infraction may be of sufficient gravity to merit a much more severe penalty that is suggested — even to the point of elimination from the stake. Also, in each of these three general categories, all of the faults listed should not be given equal weight, since they are not of equal gravity or importance.

Repetition of a fault, particularly time after time, indicates a “weakness” or a bad habit, and justifies much more penalty than in an isolated occurrence of this fault. The same holds true when there is a combination of different faults.

The listing of individual faults within each category has not been made in the order of their seriousness, but in the order of the foregoing comments about Judging. To these have been added various excerpts from the “STANDARD.”

The faults included in this classification are limited to those which are observed most often at retriever trials. Others may occur and this classification may serve as a helpful guide on such occasions in determining the relative importance of such unusual offenses.

Finally, the primary consideration of Judges in respect to the importance of faults listed here, as well as others which may occur, is to determine the extent to which any and all such infractions would detract from the full enjoyment of “an ordinary day’s shoot.” A Judge may be thoroughly justified in moderating a penalty or even in failing to impose one, if, in his opinion, there have been extenuating circumstances to justify such action.

I. SERIOUS FAULTS. (Serious faults listed cover all those instances where the Standard describes conduct of the dog which in and of itself justifies elimination from the stake. There are in the Standard three descriptions of handler misconduct justifying elimination from the stake *i.e.*, blocking a dog’s view of a mark, throwing objects to encourage water entry and carrying exposed

training equipment and other excessive restraint of the dog. While these are certainly to be enforced, they are not listed here under serious faults demonstrated by retrievers. The failure to list handler misconduct under serious faults in no way means that such misconduct is less serious or does not justify elimination from the stake.)

1. *Repeated evidence of "poor nose."*
2. *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.*
3. *Returning to the handler without the bird where not called in, except on a marked retrieve where the dog was confused as to whether it was sent.*
4. *Stopping the hunt or ignoring a bird when found and leaving it.*
5. *"Switching birds," i.e., giving up after a hunt in the area of the fall for one bird and going to and hunting "the area" of another "fall," or dropping the bird being retrieved, and picking up another.*
6. *"Out-of-control," i.e., paying no attention to many whistles and directions by the handler.*
7. *Extreme "freezing," i.e., refusal to release a bird on delivery for an unreasonable period of time or until compelled to do so by severe methods.*
8. *Retrieving a decoy, i.e., returning to land with it—mandatory elimination under the "STANDARD."*
9. *Breaking mandatory elimination under the "STANDARD."*
10. *"Hard-mouth," or badly damaging a bird, which, in the opinion of the Judges, was caused solely by the dog without justification—mandatory elimination under the "STANDARD."*
11. *Loud and prolonged whining or barking.*
12. *Unauthorized watching of the location of a fall for another dog or the planting or retrieve of a blind—mandatory elimination of the dog under the "STANDARD" and possible elimination of the handler from the stake or trial.*
13. *Failure to find a dead bird which the dog should have found.*
14. *Breaking for a fall for a dog under judgment by a dog still in the stake but not on line under judgment where, in the opinion of the Judges, the breaking dog or its handler interferes with the normal conduct of the stake.*
15. *Returning to the area of an old marked fall and hunting.*
16. *Failure to go when sent on a blind retrieve.*
17. *Handling on a mark in the Derby Stake.*

II. MODERATE FAULTS. (Infractions in this category may actually be so slight as to warrant their consideration as only a "minor" fault, or they may be so severe as to warrant their consideration as a "serious fault"; also, repetitions of a "moderate" fault

or combination of several of these faults may readily convert the total infractions 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. *Hunting in a slow and disinterested manner.*

5. *Poor style, including a disinterested attitude, a slow or reluctant departure, quest for game, or return with it.*

6. *"Popping," i.e., stopping and looking back for directions on a "marked" bird before an extensive search.*

7. *Not stopping for directions, after two or three whistles which the dog should have heard.*

8. *Failure to take lines and directions or to hold lines and directions more than a short distance.*

9. *Moderate whining of short duration.*

10. *Going out of the way by land to a "fall," to an excessive degree to avoid going into the water on a water retrieve.*

11. *In any stake other than an All-Age stake, a slight break after which the dog is brought immediately under control.*

III. MINOR 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. *Going out of its way by land, to an excessive degree, 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. *Not stopping at the first whistle that should have been heard, but stopping at the second or third.*

7. *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.*

8. *Occasional failure to hold the line or take the handler's directions for more than a few yards.*

9. *Slight "freezing," or reluctance to give up a bird.*

10. *Slight short whining or one bark, on being sent to retrieve.*

11. *Roughness with game.*

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## AKC Code of Sportsmanship

*PREFACE: The sport of purebred dog competitive events dates prior to 1884, the year of AKC's birth. Shared values of those involved in the sport include principles of sportsmanship. They are practiced in all sectors of our sport: conformation, performance and companion. Many believe that these principles of sportsmanship are the prime reason why our sport has thrived for over one hundred years. With the belief that it is useful to periodically articulate the fundamentals of our sport, this code is presented.*

- Sportsmen respect the history, traditions and integrity of the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen commit themselves to values of fair play, honesty, courtesy, and vigorous competition, as well as winning and losing with grace.
- Sportsmen refuse to compromise their commitment and obligation to the sport of purebred dogs by injecting personal advantage or consideration into their decisions or behavior.
- The sportsman judge judges only on the merits of the dogs and considers no other factors.
- The sportsman judge or exhibitor accepts constructive criticism.
- The sportsman exhibitor declines to enter or exhibit under a judge where it might reasonably appear that the judge's placements could be based on something other than the merits of the dogs.
- The sportsman exhibitor refuses to compromise the impartiality of a judge.
- The sportsman respects the AKC bylaws, rules, regulations and policies governing the sport of purebred dogs.
- Sportsmen find that vigorous competition and civility are not inconsistent and are able to appreciate the merit of their competition and the effort of competitors.
- Sportsmen welcome, encourage and support newcomers to the sport.
- Sportsmen will deal fairly with all those who trade with them.
- Sportsmen are willing to share honest and open appraisals of both the strengths and weaknesses of their breeding stock.
- Sportsmen spurn any opportunity to take personal advantage of positions offered or bestowed upon them.
- Sportsmen always consider as paramount the welfare of their dog.
- Sportsmen refuse to embarrass the sport, the American Kennel Club, or themselves while taking part in the sport.

## NOTICE

This issue of the Registration Rules and FIELD TRIAL RULES, Standard Procedures for RETRIEVERS and STANDING RECOMMENDATIONS of the RETRIEVER ADVISORY COMMITTEE and the Supplement to the Standard Procedure.

The *italicized* portions of this book are not rules but are either regulations or explanations.

Complete text of booklet available at: [www.akc.org](http://www.akc.org)

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