

FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (FCI) (AISBL)

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GUIDELINES FOR INTERNATIONAL GUNDOG WORKING TESTS FOR RETRIEVERS

1. Introduction

- a) A Working Test (WT) is a competition for the purpose of assessing, without game being shot, the working abilities of the various breeds of Retrievers.
- b) The retriever is the shooting man's indispensable help during a shooting day. The aim of a WT is to select the best dogs having the real gamefinding ability, good temperament, good marking, a good use of nose, showing initiative and being tender-mouthed. Handling is only to be considered as the indispensable complement to these qualities, keeping the dog steady while walking at heel or at the stand, willing to obey the handler's instructions when sent for game, which the dog has not been able to mark.

2. Organisation of the WT

- a) The WT must be designed by a person or persons with experience of dog work under shooting field conditions. Each dog must be given as near as possible, equal opportunity with the element of luck reduced to a minimum.
- b) On the occasion of a WT, the organisers must always try to simulate events that occur on a shooting day. They must also ensure the tests are designed to further good gundog work, and not inhibit dogs from marking or showing natural working ability. It is very important that guns and dummy throwers are positioned with this in mind.
- c) When retrieving, a dog must not be required to pass too close to another retrieve.
- d) Organisers and judges must care for the safety of dogs and must not require them to pass dangerous obstacles.

3. Conduct of the WT

- a) The decision of the judges is final. Those taking part shall not openly impugn the decision of the judge or criticise the host, ground, or helpers.
- b) The organisers shall have the power to exclude dogs from the competition and / or will have the right to refuse an entry.
- c) The organisation may restrict the numbers in the WT, in which case the right to compete shall be decided by ballot.
- d) All judges must have experience of dog work under shooting field conditions.
- e) All handlers must carry out instructions of the judges who are empowered to remove from the WT any dog whose handler does not obey them or whose handler wilfully interferes with another competitor or his dog.
- f) No person attending the WT may allow any bitch in season to be on the WT ground or to foul any ground to be used by competing dogs.
- g) No dog shall wear a collar whilst competing.
- h) No person shall carry out punitive measures or harsh handling of a dog whilst within the boundaries of the WT. Such a behaviour will be punished (after judges decision) by disqualification.

4. Judging

- a) When coming into line the handler must ensure the dog is on the lead, the judge will then explain what is expected. Judges must ensure that spectators are a reasonable distance from competitors in the line.
- b) Judges will give dogs every opportunity to work well by seeing that conditions, as far as possible are in their favour. They will be looking for dogs, which need the least handling and please them most from a shooting point of view.
- c) In all retrieving breeds good marking is essential with a quick pick-up and a fast return. When picking-up and returning, judges will not penalise a dog too heavily for putting down a retrieve to get a firmer grip, but this must not be confused with sloppy retrieving. Dogs showing marking ability and initiative should be placed above those, which have to be handled onto their retrieve
- d) Eliminating faults and faults which lead to zero will disqualify a dog from any awards.
- e) The judges are empowered to withhold any prize or award if in their opinion competing dogs do not show sufficient merit.
- f) Each exercise is judged on points.

5. Specific instructions

- a) At the start of the WT, judges must ensure they have the correct dogs with their correct numbers in the line.
- b) A Retriever must be steady to shot and fall and retrieve on command. Also, whenever possible, all dogs should be tested at a drive, walking up and water. A dog must walk steady at heel.
- c) During the WT only green standard dummies (500 gr) will be used. Exception: Launcher dummies for a dummy launcher.
- d) When dummies are thrown, and gunfire is used, the shot must always precede the thrown dummy, with the gun positioned no further than approximately 35 meters from the retrieve. With unseen retrieves gunfire is optional. If possible shotguns should be used instead of pistols.
- e) The WT should include at least five exercises.
- f) The distance of a retrieve should not exceed more than 150 meters.
- g) **Credit points** (alphabetical order): control - delivery - drive - natural marking and gamefinding ability - nose - quiet handling - speed in gathering retrieve - style.
- h) **Major faults** (alphabetical order): bad control and/or disturbing the ground unnecessarily - bad heeling - bad marking and/or bad memory of the fall - being overdependent on the handler - being restless and asking the handler's attention at the post - noisy handling - sloppy retrieving - working slowly and/or without much initiative
- i) **Faults which lead to zero** (alphabetical order): chasing - hunting with dummy in the mouth - changing retrieve - failing to enter water - failing to retrieve - gunshyness - out of control - running in - whining - barking.
If a dog makes a fault the combination (handler/dog) will get zero (0) points. The combination is allowed to complete the remaining exercises.
- j) **Eliminating faults** (alphabetical order): aggressive behaviour - hard mouth - physical punishment of the dog.
If a dog makes an eliminating fault the combination (handler/dog) is **not** allowed to stay in the competition.

These guidelines were approved by the FCI General Committee in March 2007 in Amsterdam. They are effective from July 1st, 2007. English is the authoritative language.