

The New AKC Hunt Test

2008 Changes to the Game

Why?

- Inconsistent standards between areas
- Complaints of low performance standards
- Quality of judging complaints
- As an event, the hunt test is 20 years old and in need of standards review

Restatement of Purpose

- “The purpose of the Pointing Breed Hunting Test program is to afford an opportunity for a person to demonstrate a dog’s ability to perform the task for which they were originally bred. Testing gauges the dog’s natural hunting ability and training against these standards of performance – Junior Hunter, Senior Hunter and Master Hunter. “

Major Areas of Change

- Judge's qualifications
- Back course requirements
- Performance standards
- Call back clarifications
- Tracking collars allowed
- Other changes

Judge's Qualifications

- Apprentice Judge
 - Ø Must attend AKC Hunt Test Seminar
 - Ø Must handle a dog to at least 1 qualifying leg at the level to be judged or higher

Judge's Qualifications

- Approved Judge
 - Ø Apprentice twice at the level to be judged or higher
 - Ø Pass written test
 - Ø Handle a dog to 3 qualifying legs at that level or higher
 - Ø Field Trial judges exempt from 3 qualifying legs but must apprentice & pass test

Judge's Qualifications

- Maintain Eligibility

- Ø By 12/31/09

- Ø Attend seminar OR pass written test within past 5 years

- Ø Example – my last seminar date is 2002 so I'm outside the 5 year limit (Larry Sandusky)

Judge's Qualifications

- Judges at each level must have a combined record of having judged at least 8 previous tests
- Must have 4 assignments at the same level of higher

Back Course

- Back course must be planted consistently throughout all levels
- ATV's may be used to plant back course, but may not be used in bird field

Performance Standards

- All Levels – Junior, Senior, Master
 - Ø AKC Field Rep may be in bird field
 - Ø 5 minute rule at the start line
 - Ø No training collars of any kind, including:
 - ü Collars with prongs
 - ü Electronic collars
 - ü Head collars
 - ü Muzzles

Performance Standards

- All Levels – Junior, Senior, Master

Ø New Hunting Requirement – “A dog that lacks independence to the extent that it seldom leaves its handler’s side, needs constant direction as to where to hunt or is directed into a bird(s) had not demonstrated adequate hunting ability and cannot receive a qualifying score”.

Note: this addresses the “no mistakes”,
underperforming dog

Performance Standards

- Junior Hunter

- Ø Minimum 6 minutes in bird field

- Ø Minimum 15 minutes total test time

- Ø Must point at least 50% of birds encountered

- Ø Normal gunshot range requirement to be tempered with practical considerations such as distance from handler when point established

Performance Standards

- Senior Hunter

- Ø Minimum 8 minutes in bird field

- Ø Minimum 30 minutes total test time

- Ø Must be steady to wing on ALL pointed birds

- Ø Must remain until the shot or is released

- Ø Impossible retrieve consideration

- Ø Must honor each time

- Ø Cannot be heeled into an honor

Performance Standards

- Master Hunter

- Ø Minimum 8 minutes in bird field

- Ø Minimum 30 minutes total test time

- Ø Must be steady to wing & shot on ALL pointed birds and retrieve ALL to hand

- Ø Impossible retrieve consideration

- Ø Must honor each time

Performance Standards

- Master Hunter

- Ø Pointing – clarification that “Cautioning, if any, is expected to be quiet and infrequent. No intimidation or physical restraint shall be permitted”

- Ø Use of “imitation” long-barreled gun permitted

- Ø May not be commanded on stop to flush

- Ø Blank must be fired on stop to flush

Performance Standards

- Master Hunter

Ø Honoring – clarification that a dog must honor “but cannot be commanded to do so. A dog requiring restraint, either physical or verbal, while establishing an honor cannot receive a qualifying score. A dog that steals its brace mate's point cannot receive a qualifying score.”

Call Backs

- Clarifications to improve call backs
 - Ø Use of dog requiring a retrieve used for honor
 - Ø Use of “set up dog” permitted if necessary

Tracking Collar Use

- May use at club's discretion
- If allowed must be in premium
- Judge carries receiver
- NOT permitted in a callback situation
- May not be removed during brace
- 2-collar limit

Other Changes

- Misconduct rules must be on site
- Premium must contain map AND directions
- Guidance for brace mate selection
- Submission of official catalog OR judge's books
- Retention of entry forms for one year

This summary of 2008 changes to the AKC
Hunting Test is provided courtesy of
Idaho Brittany Club & Larry Sandusky, 2/08