

STANDARDS TO
FIELD TRIAL PROCEDURE,
JUDICIAL PRACTICE,
HANDLER AND BIRD DOG
PERFORMANCE

Amateur Field Trial Clubs of America, Inc.



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FOREWORD

Ever since the emergence of pointing dog field trials, both as a recognized sport and a test of the capabilities of the contestants, there has been constant demand from field trial groups for some form of standards that would make for better judging and administration of the sport. In this evolutionary process, various attempts were made and accepted.

In 1948 a committee of members of the AFTCA created “Standards of Judicial Practice and Field Trial Procedure.” This undertaking, though completed, never received endorsement by the Board of Trustees of the AFTCA, but was eventually printed and later endorsed by The American Field. It served the sport along with a later edition as the only available guide based on a consensus of respected opinions of noteworthy participants. To that end, it provided a foundation for the subsequent edition “Guidelines to Field Trial Procedure and Judicial Practice” published in 1988, which has served the sport for the past 30 years.

A process of canvassing leading judges, handlers and authorities was applied in the previous publications. As is always the case, few questions can be posed to any audience and receive universal acceptance or rejection. There is always a dissenting minority. Of interest is the fact that of the 76 questions considered in 1948 and reconsidered in 1988, the conclusions of the forty experts polled in 1988 were almost identical to the 1948 panel. This clearly supported the correctness of the procedure followed. No reason presented itself to re-evaluate their well-thought-out conclusions for this 2019 edition.

Time does not necessarily change all things but rather calls for modification. In January 1948 the AFTCA and The American Field jointly established the Minimum Requirements for the conduct of recognized trials. It remains the intent of this new publication to follow the established form of standardization in the judging and conduct of pointing dog field trials. These standards shall not be construed as rules, except when rules are quoted from the By Laws and Running Rules of the Amateur Field Trial Clubs of America.

“Standards to Field Trial Procedure, Judicial Practice, Handler and Bird Dog Performance” has changed very little in content from the previous edition. With the acceptance of recovery devices and advent of cellular devices, the rules for accepted usage have been updated in the AFTCA’s Running Rules when necessary over the past years as technology changed and advanced. In this 2019 edition, these technologies are given a section to further clarifying their accepted usage in field trials.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to the many people whose work entailed the translation into book form the compiled knowledge and experience, that is the foundation of these Standards. Deep appreciation is given to each member of the past committees for their efforts. Their willingness, time and energy put forth can obviously never be fully repaid. The effort to publish this current, first digital edition of Standards to Field Trial Procedure, Judicial Practice, Handler and Bird Dog Performance by all involved is merely the dues we all owe to the sport of field trialing.

Special thanks is given field trialers, many no longer with us, for their unique contributions including: John O'Neill, Jr., for his dedication and editorial expertise that enabled the AFTCA to publish a more perfect document. Special thanks to Parke Brinkley for his contribution of standards for Shooting Dogs; John O'Neill, Jr., and Collier F. Smith for their contribution of standards for All-Age dogs; Barry H. Saunders and H. O. Price for their contribution in regards to field trial reporting; Alvin Nitchman for standards on judges; Bill Beyer, Richard Quackenbush and Bruce Hollowich for their contribution of standards for Walking Shooting Dog stakes; and Mrs. Robert P. Knowles for permission to print the article, "Winning at Field Trials" by Dr. Robert P. Knowles.

A deep debt of gratitude is owed to both the 1948 and 1988 Committee Members:

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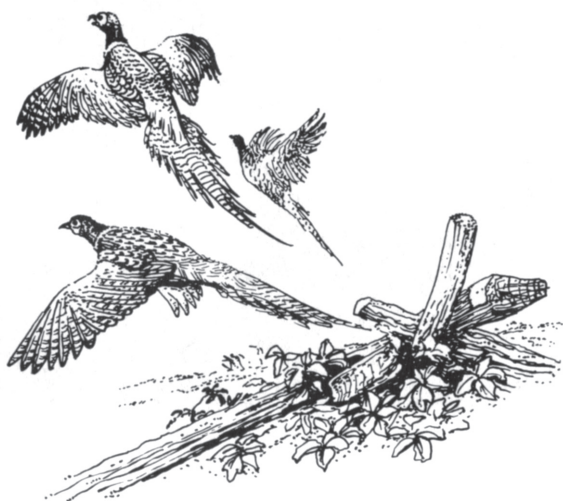
PREFACE TO THE FIRST EDITION

This book is dedicated to all the young and new people interested in participating in the sport of bird dog field trialing. The intent is to set forth in a systematic fashion guidelines for conducting and judging of field trials. The need for such a document arose from the recognition of the lack of a current, ready source of information which went beyond that contained in the Running Rules and Minimum Requirements of the AFTCA. It is hoped that in accomplishing this endeavor it will result in a more uniform conducting and judging of field trials which will ultimately be more satisfying to all.

These guidelines were prepared with the expectation of providing a sound foundation upon which future generations of field trialers may build to perpetuate our sport.

It would be unrealistic to expect the product of this endeavor to be perfect. That would be impossible. It represents, however, a giant undertaking with the participation of over forty well-respected amateurs and professionals representing all parts of our country and Canada with the combined field trial experience of over 1,000 man years. The combined opinions of this group, once collated, were further defined, refined, expanded and then adopted by the Board of Trustees. This book represents the most current consensus of opinion which exists today.

Angelo G. Lurus, M.D.
President AFTCA, 1986 - 1988
Spokane, Washington



PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

It has been just over three decades since the previous edition of this publication was last edited in any fashion. At its core, this handbook contains ageless advice that is every bit as relevant today as it was 30 years ago.

Obviously, adjustments have occurred in the sport during the past 30 years. Some have been intentional, others consequential and still others unavoidable. Because recovery devices are allowed in competition and communication devices in general have become so sophisticated, they pose a challenge to one of the most important elements of exceptional bird dog performance...the ability of the handler and dog to communicate in a natural and highly developed way without any artificial aid. Situations have been added to this book to address the most commonly asked questions in managing recovery and communication devices during a competition.

This handbook provides a foundation, an exceptional resource, and a standard for performance by the handler and dog, and sound direction for judges and member clubs. There is no sport in which the athletes are not driven to reach a standard of excellence. Attaining excellence is a worthy goal for all involved in a challenging sport that requires an unparalleled relationship with the handler's teammate, a dog.

Take the time to read this resource and refer to it often. Bring it with you to competitions, club events, meetings and anything bird dog. It reminds us all of what this sport expects of us and how to define the "Standards of Field Trial Procedure, Judicial Practice, Handler and Bird Dog Performance."

Rick Stallings
President AFTCA, 2019 - 2021
Montgomery, Alabama



STANDARDS TO FIELD TRIAL PROCEDURE PART I

Field Trial Judge Attributes

What attributes should be sought after when selecting a field trial judge?

The most important ingredient of a successful field trial lies in the club's selection of qualified judges. Although it is not always possible, and oftentimes impractical, clubs should avoid using judges from its own membership. Early, careful planning will aid in avoiding these circumstances. It should be the obligation of every club to help replenish the supply of qualified judges by encouraging newer, younger, active field trialers to engage in the role of the judiciary. This can best be accomplished by teaming these younger members with older, experienced judges and encouraging them to observe carefully, listen, ask questions, and participate in discussions. Although there is absolutely no substitute for experience, much knowledge can be gained by reading available books and articles on the subject.

The attributes to be looked for in an apprentice judge, minus the requisite of experience, are similar to those of a qualified judge and are listed for both as follows:

1. They should be of strong moral character and integrity, and respected for these qualities in their hometown, business, and field trial community.
2. They should be in good physical condition with the stamina to ride and see all the entries in the stake through to their proper conclusion, and possess keen eyesight to see all of the action as it transpires.
3. They should be of even temperament, blessed with common sense, possess an alert, analytically decisive mind, and have sufficient conviction in their abilities to stand up for their decisions.
4. They should be good horsemen and have full knowledge of the outdoors and an understanding of the behavior of game birds and dogs, and have a rich background of practical bird-hunting experience.
5. They should be familiar with the proper procedure of training and breaking bird dogs and must have successfully run dogs in field trials, and should have "broke" dogs of their own.
6. They should have a thorough knowledge and understanding of the AFTCA's "Standards of Field Trial Procedure, Judicial Practice, Handler and Bird Dog Performance."



7. They should have experience running both All-Age and Shooting Dogs to better understand the difference between these dogs and the different standards of each of these stakes. This knowledge should be applied when decisions are rendered.

Club Obligation to the Judges

What is the clubs obligation to the judges?

When judges do not bring their own horses, they should be provided with good, stout, dependable, smooth, experienced mounts. The Judges should be provided with lodging and reimbursed for all “out-of-pocket” expenses. The club should provide the entire official party with refreshments during breaks between heats. Transportation to and from the grounds should be provided. It is proper to present the judges with some form of gift for the effort and keen attention given the task.

It is the duty of the club to see that the judges are treated courteously and with respect. Should any judicial abuse occur, it should be handled expeditiously by the stake manager. Article I, Section 9 states: “Any person who has, to the satisfaction of the stake manager, impugned the action of a judge officiating at any stake, or who has otherwise annoyed such official in connection with or because of their official action in connection with the trial either during or after the running of a trial, may be barred from further participation in or attendance at such trial by the stake manager, and such disbarment may be made permanent by subsequent action of the Board of Trustees.”

Inquiries from Handlers and Owners

On completion of a stake, should judges be willing to answer inquiries from handlers or owners with respect to their reasons for placements or failure to place?

In most instances, when this is done, the questioner is already upset. They know as well as the judges what their dog has done and that it did not please the judges enough to be a winner. There is nothing to be gained by interrogating the judges. The placements are never changed, and it is not the intent or purpose of the judges to educate the handler on their dog’s performance. However, when properly approached in a polite manner by interested persons, judges should be willing to state their reasons for their placements. A handler or owner, for their education, should be able to ask in a respectable manner and in turn be given a respectable answer. Judges are not required to listen to handler’s or owner’s responses.

Handlers and owners should keep foremost in mind that it is impossible for any judge, however experienced, to evaluate a dog’s

true worth on the basis of thirty or more minutes of observation. All a judge can be expected to do is judge what they see of the dog on that particular occasion and no more should be expected. Short shrift should be given owners or handlers who lose their tempers when they accost a judge. When a handler or owner abuses or otherwise mistreats a judge, immediate and appropriate action should be taken by the stake manager. These types of acts should not be tolerated. Article I, Section 9 (Impugning Judges) states: “Any person who has, to the satisfaction of the stake manager, impugned the action of a judge officiating at any stake, or who has otherwise annoyed such official in connection with or because of their official action in connection with the trial either during or after the running of a trial, may be barred from further participation in or attendance at such trial by the stake manager, and such disbarment may be made permanent by subsequent action of the Board of Trustees.”

It is in good form for the judges to explain the reasons for the placement of the dogs to the reporter. This helps the reporter in the documentation of what was seen by the judiciary in formulating their opinions.

Accidents

What procedure should the judges follow in the case of a very serious accident or the death of a member of the official party during the running of a stake?

If an accident or death is sustained by a member of the gallery or an officer of the club, the best practice is to continue the running of the stake. If sustained by a judge, the officials of the club should decide whether the stake should be continued or canceled. Only under most unusual circumstances should a Championship Stake be canceled. The total responsibility for judging should not be placed on the shoulders of a single judge. Club officials should appoint someone who has ridden and is aware of all the prior braces. The logical person would be the marshal or reporter and a replacement named for them. Another consideration would be to name one of the club officials who has ridden all prior braces.

Stake Manager

What are the responsibilities of a stake manager?

A stake manager (field trial chairman) should be appointed by the club officials for every trial and is responsible for enforcing the Rules and Regulations for Field Trials. (See Article I(e) of Rules and Regulations). The stake manager is in charge of every aspect of conducting a trial except for the judging.

Duties of the stake manager should include: consideration of objections to entries (Article I, Section 4(c); consideration of

disqualification of handlers not conforming to any or all Rules and Regulations (Article I, Section 7); consideration of a verbal complaint made by a handler concerning the conduct of their opponent (Article I, Section 8); consideration of barring any person impugning the action of a judge (Article I, Section 9); and consideration of barring handlers violating the Rules and Regulations on handling dogs (Article I, Section II(a)(b)). Additional duties include appointing one or more field trial marshals for each trial.

In National Amateur Championship Stakes, the stake manager's responsibilities are as stated in Article V, Section 15 (a)(b): "The entire conduct of the running of each championship stake, subject to the Rules and Regulations for Field Trials of the corporation, and subject also to the jurisdiction of the judges, shall be vested in the stake manager. All questions arising, not determined by the Rules and Regulations for Field Trials of the corporation and not within the jurisdiction of the judges, shall be determined by the stake manager, and their decision shall be final unless reviewed by the Board of Trustees. In such event, the decision of the Board of Trustees shall be final.

(a) "The president of the corporation shall be the stake manager for all championships sponsored by this corporation. Should the president not attend a championship, or if in attendance and unable to serve as stake manager, then in their absence or inability to serve, the ranking vice president in attendance shall be the stake manager. If the president or none of the vice presidents are in attendance, then the president may appoint another trustee who will be in attendance to serve as stake manager. Should none of the vice presidents be in attendance and should the president not appoint a stake manager to serve in their place, then the secretary of the corporation shall designate a stake manager."

(b) "The stake manager is empowered to order any person in attendance at the trial removed from the field trial grounds and to prevent their return during the attendance of the stake if, in their judgment, such person has been guilty of conduct unbecoming a gentleman/woman or has in any manner interfered with the running of the stake, and any such person may be permanently barred from attending future trials of this corporation by subsequent action of the Board of Trustees."

Field Trial Marshal

What are the responsibilities of the field trial marshal?

The field trial marshal has three primary responsibilities. The first responsibility is to have a complete and thorough understanding of the location and direction of the courses as well as an understanding

of any obstacles such as fences, barriers, streams, etc., which may be encountered on the courses.

The second responsibility is to show the handlers and the judges the direction of the courses and pilot them over the planned courses. They must be able and constantly in the position to answer all questions from the handlers as to directions and serve as the courier of messages from the judges to the handlers. The field trial marshal should give their undivided attention to assisting the handlers as to direction of the courses and giving sufficient advanced warning of turns and changing of direction of the courses.

The third responsibility is to take active charge of the held trial gallery from the time it leaves the field trial headquarters until it returns. It is up to the field trial marshal, who rides/walks toward the front of the gallery, to keep them on course and in compact order and prevent crowding of the judges or interference with the work of the dogs. If the need arises, a second marshal may be deputized to assist. One of the responsibilities of a second marshal would be to ride the rear and ascertain that no dogs roaded behind the gallery are worked on game.

When point is called, and the judge and the gallery leave to ride/walk to the point, the marshal should proceed on course with the other handler and judge. If both dogs are pointing off to the side, or otherwise off course, the marshal should remain on course thereby giving direction to the returning handlers, judges, and gallery. Upon completion of a brace, the marshal should direct the party to the starting point of the next course. Article I, Section 12 states: "One or more field marshals shall be appointed by the stake manager, and the field marshal or marshals shall have the full authority to control the movement of the gallery or other spectators. The field marshal shall prevent interference with the judges, handlers, and dogs."

Field Trial Reporter

What are the duties and responsibilities of a field trial reporter?

The field trial reporter should keep accurate and timely notes, whether written or voice recorded. All action, as it occurs in each brace, should be briefly described with consideration given to the dog's ground pattern, style, pace and special detail on game contacts as to poise, intensity and manners. If need be, the reporter should consult with the judges to obtain details of any action missed while covering a find, should something have occurred that they might have missed. The notes should always be factual with no hint of conjecture.

A reporter should conduct themselves in a manner akin to that of a judge. The reporter should not discuss dogs or details of the

running with anyone other than the judges. Should any discussion occur with someone other than a judge, the reporter should relate the facts as they know them and should never volunteer an opinion or evaluation of the performers. The reporter's behavior should be sober and at all times proper, and they should be able to ride/walk every brace to insure complete accuracy in the report. A reporter's job is a strenuous one, for they must try to cover all the action, and they should have the mental and physical abilities to withstand the rigors of long hours in the saddle or walking and harsh weather. It is preferable that a reporter keep current on a day-to-day basis with the writing of the report.

The venue, pertinent history, club officials and various participants, along with social events, including persons and locale, should be included in a report, as a reporter is responsible for a word picture of the entire event for the reader. Some reporters also take photos during the running.

The reporter is just that, a recorder of the facts, and they should always be presented in that context. A reporter must remember that they are not judging. If the facts differ from a judicial decision, so be it, but opinion should never enter a reporter's article. Should the facts differ from a judicial decision, that decision should not be demeaned, merely reported in the context of the running.

The relationship between the judges and reporter is a special one, and the reporter should take great care to preserve it on the best of terms. It should be remembered that two people from different vantage points can see the same occurrence differently.

Last, but not least, a reporter's job is not over until their report is published in *The American Field*. The report should be submitted as rapidly as possible. A copy or copies should be retained by the writer. A follow-up to insure that the original report has been received by *The American Field* is always a good procedure.

Each individual has their own journalistic style and canine-field trial acumen to incorporate in a report; however, the basics apply always. The report of each particular trial should be created concisely keeping in mind the constraints of the publisher, *The American Field*.

Conduct of the Gallery

What is the expected conduct of the field trial gallery?

The socialization, the camaraderie, the outdoors, and the enjoyment of horseback riding and watching the performance of class bird dogs are some of the expectations of attendees at a field trial. There are, however, certain considerations which must be observed by those

in the gallery in order that the natural progress of a trial not be hindered or interfered with. The gallery should ride/walk as a tight-knit group under the direction and control of the field trial marshal. The gallery should refrain from crowding the judges and do or say nothing which would detract from the performance of the dogs, giving both handlers equal opportunity. They should refrain from straying away from the field trial party. Members of the gallery should refrain from talking to or in any way distracting the judges during the running of a heat or making comments directed at influencing the judges. Members of the gallery should respect the property upon which the trial is being held, whether it is private or state land. Smoking in the gallery during the dry season should be discouraged, and trash should not be strewn on the course. Prevention of accidents is an absolute priority. Young children (under twelve) should not ride in the gallery unless accompanied by a parent, and no more than one rider to the horse should be permitted. The field trial gallery is no place for young or unfinished horses who could suddenly become excited, "blow" and cause injury to the rider, members of the gallery, and possibly interfere with the performance of the dogs. Horses known to be "kickers" or unruly should not be ridden in the gallery. Wild and foolish riding by members of the gallery, which could result in an accident or injury, should not be permitted.

Amateur members of the gallery may aid in calling the flight of birds, calling point of a dog, or pointing out lost dogs. During the running, a member of the gallery may be deputized by the judges to take over the handling of a dog in the absence of the designated handler until the handler returns, or assist the handler should the scout be absent until the designated scout returns. A member of the gallery may also be appointed to flush if the handler is unable to dismount and accomplish this task. On occasion, a member of the gallery may be asked by the judges to round up a loose dog on the course and look after the dog until they can be placed on the dog wagon.

Participant's Conduct

What are the proper actions to be taken in dealing with judicial discourtesy, abuse, and acts of unsportsmanlike conduct?

Discourtesy and abuse of judges and acts of unsportsmanlike conduct are totally unacceptable and should not be tolerated by the field trial fraternity. Any person, (handler, scout, owner, or spectator) who conducts themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner should be dealt with harshly by the club sponsoring the event. Chapter 3, Article I, Section 9, states: "Any person who has, to the satisfaction of the stake manager, impugned the action of a judge officiating at any stake, or who has otherwise annoyed such official in connection with or because of their official action in connection with the trial either during or after running of a trial, may be barred from further

participation in or attendance at such trial by the stake manager, and such disbarment may be made permanent by subsequent action of the Board of Trustees, also Section 16, (Conduct Unbecoming A Gentleman/woman).

Receivers

What is a receiver?

- a) A Recovery Receiver is a device designed to receive the signal transmitted from a device worn by the dog.
- b) Any device, such as a cellular phone, that is capable of communicating with another device, is considered a receiver.

Recovery Receivers in the Gallery

Who is allowed to have their Recovery Receivers in the ON position while riding in the gallery?

No one, with the exceptions of a handler or designee from a prior brace may use the Recovery Receiver during the running of a subsequent brace to recover their lost dog.

Carrying a Recovery Receiver during the Running

Can a handler or scout carry a Recovery Receiver on their body or horse even though it is in the OFF position when they are handling or scouting a dog in competition?

No handler or scout may carry a Recovery Receiver on their body or horse during a brace in which they are performing.

Handler Hands Judge Recovery Receiver

What is the judge's responsibility should a handler hand them a Recovery Receiver encased or not visible to the judge?

It is the handler's responsibility to protect themselves and show the judge, club designee or stake manager the receiving unit is OFF when handing them the Recovery Receiver. It is the judge and/or stake manager's responsibility to randomly check the status of Recovery Receivers in their custody. If the judge or stake manager discovers the unit is ON during the running and they were not shown it was OFF when given the unit, the trial chair must disqualify that handler and that dog from that stake. The handler's remaining dogs entered in that stake may be run by a designated handler of their choosing. The host club must report the violation in writing to the American Field/Field Dog Stud Book to protect the club's good standing.

The Handler Requesting the Recovery Receiver

Who can request the Recovery Receiver from the judges and when does judgement cease?

Only the handler can request the Recovery Receiver unit from the judge while the dog is still in contention. Once the handler makes the request, judgement ceases immediately, whether the handler actually has the unit in hand or not.

Communication Devices

Can other communication devices be used during a brace by gallery or participants?

No. Cellular phones, notepads, watches and other devices capable of communication must be OFF or in Airplane Mode, thereby disabling their ability to communicate with other devices during the running of a brace. Once the device is in Airplane Mode, other features of the device may be used during the brace.

Exceptions to receive or make calls can be made for those (other than performing handler or scout) who may have special situations (medical, family emergencies, critical business needs, etc.) given prior to the running by the stake manager.

Communication on phones and devices may occur in-between braces once all dogs are out of contention.

Professionals Riding in the Gallery

Should professionals riding in the gallery be permitted to call out the location of a dog or assist in the running in any way during the trial?

Professionals should be permitted and encouraged to ride in the gallery during a trial, but in no way should they assist in the running of a dog in an amateur event whether it be calling out the location of a dog or any other similar activities.

Professional and Amateur

What is the definition of a professional and an amateur handler?

Article II, Section 1 of the Rules and Regulations states: "Any person who receives or has received, either directly or indirectly, compensation for training or handling dogs, including handling of dogs on a plantation or shooting preserve, or who has accepted a cash prize or prizes, or other valuable consideration, for handling dogs other than their own in field trial competition, or any person who works for or has worked for a professional handler in the training of dogs, or any member of the family of a professional handler, age 15 or over, who assists them in the training of dogs, is classified within

the meaning of these Regulations as a professional handler. All handlers, not so classed as professional shall have amateur standing.

Amateurs Accepting Cash Purses in Amateur Stakes

Can an amateur accept a cash purse in an amateur stake?

It is permissible for an amateur to accept a cash purse in an amateur stake conducted by an AFTCA member club, provided they are the owner of the winning dog. It is not permissible for an amateur handler to accept a cash purse in an amateur stake if they are not the owner of the winning dog. Such acceptance would be grounds for declaring them a professional. If a cash purse is accepted by the owner of a winning dog in an amateur stake, an AFTCA certificate cannot be issued for that win. If the cash purse is refused, an AFTCA Win Certificate will be issued if the club attests that the purse was refused.

Amateurs Accepting Cash Purses in Open Stakes

Can an amateur accept a cash purse in an open stake?

It is permissible for an amateur owner to accept a cash purse in an open stake. It is not permissible for an amateur handler who is not the owner of the winning dog to accept a cash purse. Such acceptance would be grounds for declaring them a professional. If an amateur owner refuses a cash purse in an open stake conducted by a member club of the AFTCA (All-Age, Shooting Dog, or Derby), an AFTCA Win Certificate will be issued for such win, provided the win is reported by the club and the club attests that the purse was refused.

Awarding of Cash Purses

Can an amateur club award cash purses in amateur stakes?

Yes. This is governed by Article I, Section (g) which states: "That after July 1, 1972, Win Certificates will not be issued by this corporation for wins in amateur or open stakes where a cash purse is accepted by the handler, owner or owner's agent of a dog awarded a placement."

Cash awards cannot be given in Regional Championships and is governed by Article III, Section 3 (Reward to Winners) which states: "The rewards to go with the title of Regional Champion and Runner-Up must be trophies. Money as an award is prohibited, and no sanction may be issued to any regional group which proposes a cash award."

Advertising Starting Hours of Stakes

Is it desirable to advertise the day and hour each stake will start, thus dividing the trial into allocated daily programs?

No. The proper way to advertise a field trial is to set the day and hour that the trial will start and the order in which the stakes will be run, and advertise the fact that each stake after the first will start immediately upon the conclusion of the previous one. This practice will frequently save from a half day to a full day and permit the running of more dogs per day or will enable everyone to start for home earlier at the conclusion of the running and hence make a return visit to that particular trial more likely.

Advertising of Derby Stakes

How should clubs advertise Derby Stakes?

Each club's ad for a forthcoming trial should state plainly whether a Derby Stake, amateur or open, is to be judged on Shooting Dog or All-Age standards. In the past, prior to the advent of so many Shooting Dog Stakes, including a Derby Stake automatically meant it would be judged on All-Age standards. This is no longer the case, and for the sake of clarity, the ad should now state which set of standards is to be observed.

Walk or Ride Stakes

Is it permissible to advertise and run Shooting Dog Stakes where the handlers are permitted to either ride or walk, and if so, how should such a stake be drawn and conducted?

Yes, it is permissible, but not a good practice. Bracing walking and riding handlers together works a hardship on both parties. The club is better advised to have either a walking or riding stake, or both. Where a walking/riding stake is conducted, the following rules should be observed:

1. In such stakes, the mount shall be used only as a means of conveyance on the course route, and not as an active aid in handling.
2. The judges shall set the pace to accommodate a walking handler.
3. Where birdfields are provided, the dog must be handled from foot (mounted handler should dismount).
4. No mounted scouting shall be permitted.

How to Conduct a Drawing

What is the proper manner in which to conduct a drawing?

Before the drawing of any stake the secretary should read aloud a list of all dogs that have been entered; this is for the purpose of making certain that all intended entries are in and all dogs entered will start. After the entries have been publicly verified, all drawings should be conducted by having the name of each entry written on a separate slip of paper. These slips should be folded and placed in a hat or other receptacle, thoroughly stirred and then drawn one at a time by some neutral party. Generally, it is not appropriate to manipulate or seed, except as herein provided, a draw by holding out the name of any dog to be drawn at any particular place in the running. An instance when manipulation is appropriate is in the event of the drawing of a bitch in season (if the running is to be on multiple courses) or the drawing of two dogs handled by the same handler in the same brace. In such event, the dog or bitch in question should be held out until the next available entry to be braced with it is drawn. Another instance is in the case of dogs already competing in other field trials classed as important events.

Right to Run on a Particular Course

Has a handler the right to demand that their dog run on a course on which it would have run had there been no rebracing, interruption by bad weather or by other unforeseen circumstances?

No. Drawing is for the order of running only.

Substitution of Handlers

Should two handlers traveling together be permitted to enter dogs in both names in order to avoid being braced together?

Yes. This applies only to handlers who are helping each other. As a practical matter, two handlers traveling together and helping each other must draw their dogs in separate braces, for they have no other scout or help to assist them. An acceptable practice would be to enter all of the dogs of the two handlers under both names. (example: Handler – Mr. Jones/Mr. Brown). By having all of the dogs under one name or jointly, it insures one person acting as handler and the other person acting as scout with respect to all their dogs entered. The handlers should inform the secretary during or after the drawing which handler will handle which dog in order that the judges' books can be completed.

Bitches in Season

How should clubs handle the matter of bitches in season in multiple-course trials?

Section II of the Minimum Requirements states: "Bitches in season shall not be permitted to run in one-course trials. In multiple course trials, they may start only if, in the opinion of the judges, it can be accomplished under conditions which will ensure absolute fairness to the other entries." In a multiple course trial, a bitch in season should be declared at the drawing in order that she can be paired with another bitch. If the fact is discovered after the drawing is completed and if the braced mate drawn with her is a male, she must be withdrawn from the stake. If the discovery is made by the judges after she has been put down and if her braced mate is a male, she must be ordered up, whereupon the braced mate will continue until the end of the heat.

Bitches in Season and One-Course Trials

Can bitches in season run in one-course trials?

Section II of the Minimum Requirements states: "Bitches in season shall not be permitted to run in one-course trials. In multiple course trials, they may start only if, in the opinion of the judges, it can be accomplished under conditions which will insure absolute fairness to other entries."

Postponement of Drawing

Is it permissible to extend the drawing of a stake from the advertised time to a later date?

This is governed by Section 5 of the Minimum Requirements which states: "A stake must be drawn by lot and numbered in the order drawn, in a convenient and approved place open to the public not later than the night before the day the stake is due to be run." It would be possible to extend the drawing of a stake provided those present at the drawing all agree to such a postponement, and provided also, that the drawing is finally held no later than the night before the stake is run."

Overlapping of Important Events

Overlapping of important events due to unexpectedly large entries or bad weather delaying completion of the earlier stake. How should the drawing be handled?

When drawing a stake to be run on multiple courses in which the heats are one hour or longer, the following procedure is permissible.

If it appears that one or more dogs that have been entered may not be present to run if regularly drawn, due to the fact that they are actually competing in another multiple course stake with heats of an hour or more, amateur or open, the drawing of the dogs whose arrival is so delayed may be handled as follows: viz. the drawing slips

bearing the names of such dogs shall be set aside until such time as a sufficient number of dogs have been drawn in the regular course to absorb the time reasonably necessary; in the opinion of the officials conducting the drawing, to enable delayed dogs to arrive on the grounds. At that point in the drawing, the entry slips of the dogs in question shall be placed in the drawing receptacle and commingled with the remaining slips and the drawing continued. Under no circumstances shall the start of the running of such a stake be delayed pending the arrival of late dogs.

It is believed that to have such a rule apply to all trials would only invite sharp practice, especially one-course weekend events, and violate the spirit, if not the letter, of the Minimum Requirements; hence the rule applies only to important events as described in the rule itself, the language of which would cover all important trials of several days' duration.

This standard shall not be applied where such stakes are advertised on identical dates.

Late or Overlooked Entry

What procedure should be followed when an entry is made and confirmed in time for the drawing, but is, through some oversight by the club's secretary, not included in the drawing?

If mail or an electronic media is used to submit entries, a response mail, electronic media or telephone call from the recipient of the entries must be received to confirm the entries have been submitted to the club prior to the entry deadline and drawing. After proper entry with the club's secretary, it becomes the responsibility of the club to see that such entry is properly drawn. However, if an entry is omitted through fault of the club, it cannot be inserted on day of the running. The only recourse is to re-draw the stake, but redraw must be done on the night prior to running. Minimum Requirements must be followed.



Judges' Books

How should judges' books be made up?

All well-run clubs should provide the judges with books in convenient form in which the braces are indicated. The name of the dog, sex and the name of the handler should be filled in legibly with sufficient blank space on each page to permit a few brief notes.

Entry Fees

How should an owner's refusal to pay an entry fee be handled?

This is governed by Article I, Section 3 which states: "Any owner who refuses to pay an entry fee for their dog shall be subject to being barred from competition in member club trials."

Entering a Dog in a Shooting Dog and All-Age Stake

Can a dog be entered both in a Shooting Dog and All-Age Stake in the same trial?

A dog can be, but this is discouraged. Judges should have clearly in mind the standards and differences of these two stakes. They should be aware of and discourage the practice of riding out Shooting Dogs in All-Age Stakes and excessive riding and over-handling of All-Age dogs entered in Shooting Dog Stakes. The practice of not entering the proper dog in the proper stake tends to lower the quality of the stake. There should be a definite distinction between an All-Age and Shooting Dog, and they should not be melded together. The responsibility to uphold these standards lies in the domain of the judges. The standard applies to Derby Stakes judged on All-Age and Shooting Dog standards.

Hours of Running

Once the stake has begun, is it fair to alter the hours of running during the stake?

No, this should not be done if it can be avoided. Once a stake is begun, it is up to the judges to see that all dogs are given a fair and equal chance. If it is determined that a stake is to be run from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm, it is unfair to begin the stake on another day beginning at 7:00 am, when conditions related to time might be different, such as frost on the ground or visibility obscured by fog, etc. This should only be done after complete agreement of the handlers.

Field Trial Courses

Can the field trial course or courses be changed once a stake has commenced?

No. Customarily, once the running has commenced and the pattern of courses is established, no one should change that pattern unless weather conditions prevent the normal pattern from being run in the said prescribed manner as dictated by the first day's running.

Regional Championships

Is declaring a champion mandatory in a regional championship?

No. Article III, Section 4 states: "It is not mandatory that a champion or runner-up be named, but is left to the discretion of the judges. This corporation will award the winner and the runner-up, if one is designated in such regional event, a certificate commemorative of the win."

Divided Placements

Is awarding of divided placements good practice?

No. They are no longer recognized and recorded.

Birdfields

Is the use of birdfields an acceptable practice?

Yes. This practice, however, should be avoided if at all possible. Some clubs, because of the limitation of adequate grounds, employ birdfields. Although this practice is not ideal, the situation can be improved upon by also planting birds in logical coverts throughout the course. By doing so, it helps equalize the opportunity to find game on the part of a dog who hunts the entire course versus a dog who runs more or less directly to the birdfield.

Selecting Birdfields

What should be the controlling factors in selecting a birdfield?

A birdfield should be large enough so that the dogs do not have to be severely hacked. It should have grass or other ground cover thick enough to hold birds, together with patches of higher cover here and there to attract the attention of a searching dog. A really adequate birdfield should contain ten acres or more; the larger, the better. While it is desirable that the gallery be able to view the field, its convenience is a secondary matter. A field trial is primarily a contest for dogs and only secondarily a spectacle.

Considerations in Liberating Birds

What are important considerations in liberating birds in one-course and multiple course trials?

Every facet of a trial should be made as fair as possible for all concerned. One of the most important factors is the proper release of game for such events. During the trial, there should be a regular and steady release of birds, brace-by-brace. There is sometimes a tendency to release birds only at odd times or for certain braces, which makes the process unfair for those not favored. Some of the grounds have rather high populations of "resident" released birds

at feeders, and the club will depend almost entirely on such birds. This is all well and good, but often these birds are driven from the vicinity by one or more braces, leaving those following with little or no chance for game contact. Even in such situations, there should be a continuous and steady release occurring, brace-by-brace.

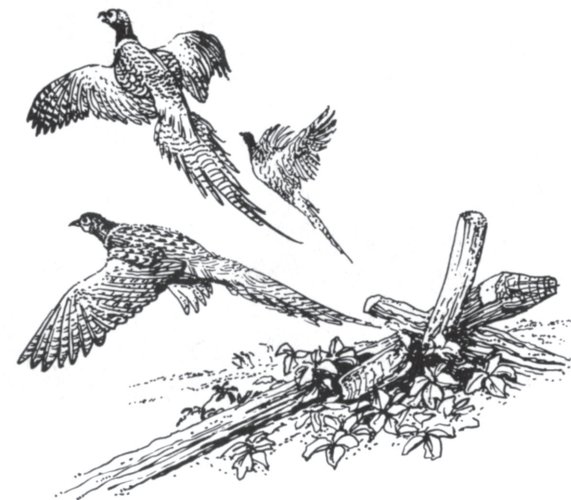
The use of a birdfield should be discouraged, and the birds released all around the course in logical coverts. Depending upon the type of birds being released, at least four birds should be released on 30-minute courses and at least six birds per brace on one-hour courses. This will ensure everyone at least a fair chance to contact game. This also contemplates that a large number of birds, perhaps at least eight on the 30-minute course, be released prior to the first brace of the day.

Liberation of Birds

What is considered the proper method of liberating birds in one-course and multiple course trials?

It is highly preferable to have an ample supply of strong, mature and full plumaged birds planted in logical coverts over the entire course. The course should be of adequate size with cover sufficiently dense to hold birds. During the process of planting birds, the following principles should apply:

- Bird planters should always wear gloves.
- Birds should be handled as little as possible.
- Many smart dogs will not point, or at least not point with normal intensity and/or style, a bird on which human scent is apparent.





- Pheasant, if used, should be taken from the crates by their legs and be put immediately into a small bag or other container and so carried into the course.
- If necessary to dizzy the bird, it should preferably be done while the bird is still in the bag, but always with gloves on and with a minimum of handling.
- Planters should put down their birds as far apart as possible, and wherever possible in or near a logical objective.
- Birds should not be placed under piles of brush, straw, grass or other artificially created release spots, easily identified by handlers and wise dogs.
- If cover is too light for pheasants, quail should be used. The choice should depend on what bird the dogs can handle best under the conditions of terrain and cover, not on the desirability of restocking nearby covers or other factors not vital to the contest.
- Birds should be down and the planters entirely out of the area before the dogs, judges or handlers come in sight. The longer the birds are down, the better the quality of bird work.



- If quail are used they can be pushed with a minimum of handling from shipping crates into small release boxes or cartons. These can have a drop door thus permitting birds to walk out naturally. If they make a short flight so much the better. Liberated quail seldom fly far. Some experienced planters carry quail in a small, coarse-meshed bag, the size of a sock. This prevents them from struggling without the necessity of squeezing the bird. Bird planters should never:
 - Handle a bird without gloves
 - Cuddle birds in their arms or carry them against their bodies.
 - Release near the gallery
 - Place birds in a hole
 - Twist or tie stems of grass around the birds' legs, or otherwise impede their ability to run or fly.
 - Clubs should never buy cheap, poor quality birds.

If a birdfield is used, the quality of the trial will be improved if birds are also released at regular intervals on the back course.

For regulations with respect to manner of releasing birds in One-Course Amateur Regional Championships see By-Laws and Running Rules of Amateur Field Trial Cubs of America, Inc.

STANDARDS TO JUDICIAL PRACTICE
Part II

Field Trial Judge Responsibilities

What are the responsibilities of a field trial judge?

The responsibilities of a field trial judge are varied and unique. They can be divided into two main categories. One is to oversee the proper running of the dogs, and the other is to render an unbiased decision based entirely on performance in that stake. A field trial judge is a person selected by their peers with the expectation that they will discharge these responsibilities with an irreproachable degree of honesty and fairness. In order to meet these expectations and discharge these responsibilities, a field trial judge must strive to meet the following objectives:

1. A judge should give 100 percent attention to every entry, until such time they are convinced that the entry would be incapable of placing, whereupon they, out of courtesy, should inform the handler. The decision to pick a dog up is the prerogative of the handler; unless the dog or the handler has committed a fault serious enough to merit disqualification. (Examples: interfering with a brace mate such as: refusing to back, fighting, trailing, knocking and chasing birds.) It is not sufficient reason for a dog to be ordered up during a heat if the judge finds the dogs performance to be boring or uninteresting.
2. A judge must keep foremost in their mind the selection of the best dog or dogs to win the trial and they should endeavor to find the best overall performance for the placement(s).
3. A judge, while judging, should be "all eyes" to observe as well as possible all the action personally, and everything transpiring beyond their observation, reported by other people, other than the other judge, must be disregarded.
4. A judge should ride/walk at a reasonable pace and be in a reasonable place to see. A judge cannot judge what they do not see and they should always know, never guess or assume. A judge is not obligated to follow a handler at all times, but they should ride/walk and take advantage of the terrain, such as a hill, to see what the dog is doing. Laying back with the gallery and following in horse tracks on a course is not an acceptable performance of a judge.
5. A judge, along with their companion judge, should set the pace of the running which should be at a reasonable hunting speed.
6. A judge should be observant of all factors influencing fairness and

equal chance of the running of a trial. For example, when weather conditions deteriorate and are too inclement to allow the dogs a fair and equal chance in the competition, the running should be halted until conditions improve. No trial should be run simply to get the trial over.

7. A judge is the official timekeeper and should have a suitable timepiece (stop-watch or time elapse watch) to accurately control the time.
8. A judge should make certain that the dog to be named winner has run an acceptable race according to the standards of the stake they are participating in. Without this, no amount of bird work should be considered.
9. A judge, when accepting a request to judge, should be sure that there are no constraints upon their availability and time which would prevent a fair and equal opportunity for every entry to run in the stake.
10. A judge should not be prejudiced to one type or breed of dog and should never prejudge a dog based on past performances, as every trial is a new contest.
11. A judge should conduct themselves as a gentleman/woman in the field as well as at evening social gatherings, as respect begets respect.
12. A judge is in control of the field trial during the running and should make certain the running is conducted properly according to the AFTCA Rules and Regulations and adhere as closely as possible to the AFTCA "Standards to Field Trial Procedure, Judicial Practice, Handler and Bird Dog Performance."
13. A judge should judge in a positive vein, looking for the favorable qualities in a dog, rather than negative judging, looking for minor faults to eliminate a dog.
14. A judge should take good notes which will help in considering all circumstances after the fact before final decisions are made. Leaving details to memory results in leaving much to chance.
15. A judge should always, whether judging an All-Age Stake or a Shooting Dog Stake, reward quality over quantity.
16. A judge should, throughout the trial, maintain rapport with their fellow judge and stay in constant communication concerning the performances of the dogs, and along with the companion judge decide the top dog at the conclusion of each brace.

Judicial Ethics

When serving as a field trial judge, what are a judge's obligations in judicial ethics towards a fellow judge?

Once the stake is concluded and the decision is announced, if discussion occurs between one of the judges and another participant, it is the ethical obligation of the judge to respect the confidences between the judges which led to the decision reached. Such discussion is the result of a confidential and privileged deliberation between both judges and neither judge should divulge to anyone any part of the discussion which led to the decision. Extreme care should be taken not to violate the confidences between judges. Of course, respect of a fellow judge and silence with regard to judging the stake must also be maintained toward third parties while the stake is still in progress. It is a judge's ethical obligation to report fully and accurately the performance of each dog they are covering not observed by their fellow judge.

Judge's Ownership of a Dog Running in a Stake

Can a judge have any ownership interest in a stake in which they are a judge?

No judge serving in a stake can have ownership, partial ownership or a current financial interest of any kind in any dog competing in that stake.

All-Age Stake

What is the expected performance of a dog in an All-Age Stake?

"The familiar, capsule description of the All-Age dog, attributed to old-time trainer Jim Avent, declares that he (or she) is a dedicated hunter of upland game birds which 'runs off-but not quite'. The All-Age dog is a free spirit and fills up all the available country (plus a little) in a bold and sometimes reckless manner, yet ultimately acknowledges the control exerted by their handler and courses to the front in such a pattern as to maintain periodic, suitable contact with the handler. The really intelligent and accomplished All-Age dog exhibits the knack of "showing" at strategic, distant, forward points on the course during the progress of their heat. They may frequently pass from view, only to show again after a lapse of time, or to be discovered by handler or scout pointing game.

"The All-Age dog should incorporate the direction of the wind and the lay of the land in their hunting effort, enabling them to range to the fringe of contact with their handler. They must possess a superior nose, allowing them to hunt from objective to objective at a very fast pace. In an ideal All-Age performance there is little or no time for extended probing or rechecking of coverts.

"A successful All-Age dog is not a straight line runner. Despite their

speed, power and extended range, they must be hunting as they go. They must take the edges and apply their superior olfactory powers to pick up vagrant scents that might lead to discovery of game.

"The All-Age dog should exude animation and happiness with the task at hand. They should display loftiness of head and tail in their gait, maintaining this appearance in cover and on bare ground, despite traveling with the utmost speed and drive. They must not be deterred by punishment meted out by cover and weather.

"No matter how far flung and well executed the casts—no matter how beautiful and powerful the stride — no matter how lofty and animated the carriage — no matter how strong and indefatigable the heart — this running machine must have foremost in mind the discovery and near perfect handling of game. They should stand proud, rigid and intense on their birds, showing confidence that they have them pegged exactly, and in front. Quite often they must maintain this posture for many minutes, and remember their training, before handler or scout discovers them on point. They should be fearless at approach of their handler and the field trial party, and they should maintain keen interest, intensity, upright posture and good style while the handler flushes and the shot is fired. If birds cannot be flushed and relocation is required, they should proceed when released with dash and determination to search out and pin running birds, exhibiting powers of nose that takes them straight to the quarry.

"The All-Age dog must voluntarily and cheerfully back on sight a bracemate on rigid point. However, the judges should attempt to see the backing situation through the eyes of the moving dog, taking into account the less acute eyesight of the dog and the possible interference of cover, terrain and background as they approach the scene. The approaching dog should get the benefit of any doubt about their ability to see clearly the pointing dog. In an All-Age performance, a back should be accomplished if the opportunity presents itself and the bracemate is in the vicinity, but a race should not be interrupted and a dog returned from a distant cast in order to achieve a back.

"In the All-Age dog, stamina is a watchword. Regardless of whether the heat is a half-hour or three hours, prime consideration should be given the competitor that can convincingly finish the allotted time with range and speed undiminished. Emphasis should also be placed on the dog's ability to find and handle game in all parts of the heat, but particularly in the latter stages when fatigue may take its toll on olfactory powers." (Quoted from John S. O'Neill, Jr., and Collier F. Smith in "The All-Age Field Trial Dog In America").



All-Age Standard

What should the judges do when no dog in the stake totally meets the All-Age Standard?

In any given All-Age Stake, it may be very difficult to place a dog which totally meets this exalted standard; therefore, out of necessity, there will frequently be a need to accept a dog whose qualities and character can only begin to approximate this standard. The standard, when applied, should examine the total performance of the dog with range being kept foremost in mind. Range is the “sine qua non” of an All-Age dog and it should take precedence over and not be compromised for a short, practical, methodical, uninspiring performance, no matter how immaculate the bird work of the latter.

Scouting in an All-Age Stake

To what extent should scouting in an All-Age Stake be permitted?

Only one scout, selected by the handler and named to the judges at the beginning of the heat, should be permitted out at any one time. An exception might be if the scout is hopelessly lost to the rear and the dog shows and the handler is in dire need of assistance. Under these unusual circumstances an additional scout may be dispatched by the judge, but they must return immediately once the mission is completed. The scout must ride in the gallery, not the rear or flanks, except when ordered out by the handler after permission of a judge has been obtained. Request and permission may be obtained by a simple wave of the arm. A scout is useless to the purpose of winning if they leave the gallery without the handler's and judge's knowledge. This often results in the dog being “ahead,” and the scout being “lost”.

The scout's sole duty is to locate the dog. If the dog is found pointing, they are to inform the judge in the customary fashion. If the dog is not pointing, they are to heel the dog via the shortest route possible in regaining the front. Once the dog has been brought to the front and the handler regains control, the scout is to return to the gallery, unless the handler elects to water the dog, or in some way care for the dog, at which time the scout may assist. In returning a dog to the front, deviation from the shortest possible route to work coverts likely to have game and delay in any way is not permissible. While scouting, the scout should never be ahead of an imaginary line perpendicular to the front of the field trial party. The scouting privilege should not be abused. Judges must, however, use discretion as to what constitutes excessive scouting. Certain courses as of necessity require more scouting than others, thus the need for varying latitude. Once the stake has started and the judges are familiar with the courses and terrain, the latitude of scouting permitted should be set and kept equal for all participants.

Violation of these practices, such as the use of additional, unauthorized scouts, should be severely dealt with by penalizing the dog involved. Condonement on the part of judges will lead to abuses of the scouting privilege. This standard also applies to All-Age Derby Stakes.

Riding to the Front

To what extent should a handler be permitted to ride to the front?

Excessive, wild riding to the front by a handler should not be permitted. Such riding on the part of the handler forces, out of necessity, the other handler to also engage in such riding or stand the chance of losing their dog. The handler must show their dog to the judges while proceeding at a reasonable pace and at a reasonable distance in front of the field trial party. To do otherwise interferes with the performance of the bracemate and is an unfair and unsportsmanlike tactic. Handlers engaging in such practices should be counseled by the field marshal at direction of a judge; and if a repetition occurs, the dog being handled by the offender could be ordered up, allowing the bracemate to proceed without this interference. Article I Section 7(a) states: "The judges are expected to prescribe and rigidly enforce a strict rule upon the interference of handler, scout, or dog with the bracemate's dog."

Range

To what extent should extreme range be considered particularly if there are plenty of birdy objectives in sight?

Dogs should hunt their way out rather than straightline their way out, with the possible exception of the initial cast which may be excused on the theory that the dogs are at high pitch, as is natural at the start of a heat, and can be excused for burning up some of their nervous energy on the first cast.

A dog should apply their range intelligently and with due regard to cover and objectives rather than with regard only to the distance from the handler. The range at which a dog runs should be in compliance with the standard of the Stake; i.e., Walking Shooting Dog or Shooting Dog or All-Age. When analyzing range, judges should consider carefully whether the dog is as far from the handler as the handler is from the judge. Judges should also consider geography. A dog on the prairie may run wider than a dog in the piney woods, because the objectives are farther and contact with the dog can be maintained for longer distances. This does not excuse, however, a lack of definition between the range of Shooting Dogs versus All-Age dogs in a given milieu.

Shooting Dog Stake

What is the expected performance of a dog in a Shooting Dog Stake?

"A Shooting Dog Stake is held for the purpose of promoting the ideal Shooting Dog, one that will find and handle correctly all game birds on the designated course.

"The superior Shooting Dog is one that excites constant admiration for the quality of their performance and does nothing to displease or annoy. Without giving their handler any unnecessary effort they will, in an artistic and polished manner, give them the most quality bird finds that are to be had on the ground covered.

"The exemplary Shooting Dog displays an intense desire to find birds for their handler, a nose keen to detect the presence of game, and the ability to locate it quickly and accurately by body scent. They show staunchness, intensity, positiveness and lofty style on point, and steadiness to wing and shot.

"In hunting, a Shooting Dog of the first order evidences bird sense, an understanding of the habits of game, and displays the wisdom to use the wind to advantage; they adopt pace and range that is most effective on the ground being worked under the conditions which



exist. They possess speed, properly applied, are industrious and thorough in their search, handle the immediate terrain and do not run past objectives, and have adequate range, which is intelligently directed. They move easily, pleasingly, gracefully, animated and happy while running and manifest lofty head and tail on point. They work independent of continuous direction from the handler and exhibits perfect manners at all times. This includes, when opportunity is afforded, backing a brace mate on rigid point.

“Intelligent patterning of a course, hunting to the front, quickness in locating their handler and in seeing and hearing their commands, prompt obedience, courage and willingness to face unflinchingly heavy or punishing cover plus boldness on game, mark the class Shooting Dog. Proper handing response is paramount.

“The performer that fulfills the requirements naturally and cheerfully is preferable to one that works mechanically, although errorlessly.

“Whenever practicable, the dog may be worked on single birds and should do their work cheerfully and in a natural way.

“It is distinctly understood that a slow dog, one lacking in stamina, or one that is circumscribed in range is not in favor. All the speed and range a dog can well utilize in the hunting field is desired, but it must at all times be applied properly. The bold, snappy, dashing dog will have quick and pleasing response at all times, keeping uppermost in mind the finding and pointing of birds for their handler. A dog should not hunt in straight lines, but exhibit intelligence and true bird-finding ability by hunting the likely places on the course, working for their handler, swinging to the course when the character of the country and cover requires so doing. Instinct, natural qualifications, training and experience equip them for superior work. Exceptional style, beauty of carriage, and grace of movement are important.

“The Standard seeks to glorify the ideal hunting dog which works indefatigably in the interest of the gun, a dog with character and courage which displays all essential qualifications, plus refinements of expert training.” *(Quoted from Parke C. Brinkley in “Standard for The National Open Shooting Dog Championship)*

Shooting Dog Standard

What should the judges do when no dog totally meets the Shooting Dog Standard?

In any given Shooting Dog Stake, it may be very difficult to place a dog which totally meets this exalted standard. Therefore, out of necessity, there will frequently be a need to accept a dog whose qualities and character can only begin to approximate this standard.

The standard when applied should seek out the dog which displays superior bird dog characteristics in the form of natural qualities such as pace, range, bird sense, nose, stamina and style. The contender sought after should render a balanced, biddable performance, search intelligently and exhibit bird finding ability with quality always superseding quantity, manifest accuracy of location, loftiness and intensity on point. Subservience to the handler and proper handling response without the benefit of scouting and excessive handling are the “sine qua non” of a Shooting Dog. Excessive range on the part of a Shooting Dog is not considered desirable. When considering bird work, the judge should be swayed not by the frequency of occurrence but rather by the quality of performance.

Scouting in a Shooting Dog Stake

To what extent should scouting in a Shooting Dog stake be permitted?

Article I, Section 10 of the Rules and Regulations states: “No scouting shall be permitted except by another amateur.” Scouting is permitted in Shooting Dog Stakes provided permission from the judges has first been obtained. The Scout should return to the gallery immediately upon completion of their mission and not act as an outrider. Shooting dogs should handle and excess scouting shall be regarded as a fault. This standard also applies to Shooting Dog Derby Stakes.

Bird Work in All-Age and Shooting Dog Stakes

Should bird work be required by judges as a prerequisite for placing a dog in All-Age and Shooting Dog Stakes?

Bird work of a sufficient quality to be acceptable to the judges is desirable of a dog to entitle them to a placement in an All-Age or Shooting Dog Stake, but not mandatory. In one-course trials, especially when birds are planted, judges seldom have a legitimate excuse for not providing every dog deserving of recognition with an opportunity to show on birds. In multiple course trials when running on native game, acceptable bird work may be impossible at times to obtain, and placements on class and ground heats are acceptable.

Walking Shooting Dog Stakes

What is the expected performance of a dog in a Walking Shooting Dog Stake?

Walking Shooting Dog stakes are: a) where handling from horseback is not practical or traditional (Coverdogs) and b) for those who wish to handle their dogs from foot. In these stakes, the handler should walk at a hunting pace with the dog ranging ahead. The handler should refrain from running or jogging and should adapt their pace to that of the slower handler. The scout should walk in the gallery until called upon to locate the pointing dog.

Shooting Dog Standards apply to them, but their handler is on foot and therefore certain standards are necessarily modified. A Walking Shooting Dog must display an intense desire to find and point game birds throughout their heat. Pottering or “checking in” with their handler are evidences of lack of application to this task. They must have courage, stamina, and endurance for this quest and “letting down” or avoiding likely cover during their heat is detracting.

A Walking Shooting Dog must show bird sense, going to likely objectives with determination while covering the area in an efficient manner. They should indicate by their pattern that they are using their knowledge about the hunting condition (such as the wind) and the habits of the game bird in a most productive way.

While they are hunting, a Walking Shooting Dog must exhibit class in action. Their gait should be smooth and fluid, seemingly effortless. They should have a high carriage — a high head, indicating their use of air currents for scenting birds, and a cracking tail conveying their merry, joyful and excited manner during the hunt. Class then is a synergistic, joyful image created by several actions and attitude exhibited by the dog while hunting.

Throughout the hunting effort, a Walking Shooting Dog must quickly adjust their pace and range to prevailing cover conditions. When the cover is heavy and tight, they will naturally hunt closer, mindful of their subservience to the gun. When the cover “opens up” they should naturally adjust to the opportunity to hunt more distant, inviting objectives that may be productive. Natural adaptability is the mark of a superb bird dog, and excessive calling or hacking by the handler to accomplish satisfactory ranging — either closer or wider — is distracting from the dog’s performance. A Walking Shooting Dog should never range out of sight for a length of time that would detract from their usefulness as a practical shooting dog. By their actions, the Walking Shooting Dog must indicate responsiveness to their handler’s commands.

In their approach to game, the dog should quickly be able to distinguish between foot and body scent and use these to promptly



determine the location of the bird(s). They should approach game boldly and point positively, indicating the location of the bird(s). In the case of running game, the dog must be able to quickly relocate and point the bird(s). An unproductive point detracts from the dog’s overall performance. However, in the case of running birds, which are unproductively pointed and then relocated, such an unproductive should be viewed as part of the natural process of hunting game birds and the effort will do credit to the dog’s abilities.

Blinking birds (or the intentional act of avoiding contact with game birds when the dog is aware of their location) and bumping birds are serious faults in a dog’s performance. Style on point (characterized by a lofty appearance) is very desirable. However, intensity on point, throughout the approach and flushing effort by the handler is especially critical. The epitome is to have both style and intensity.

A Walking Shooting Dog must continue to exhibit staunchness until the bird has taken wing and the handler has promptly fired a blank shot over their dog. It is necessary for the dog to remain steady to wing and shot, for it displays the finished manners of a broke dog. Reworking marked birds is not to be encouraged for it adds little to the judges’ evaluation as to how well the dog can hunt and find birds. Handlers, therefore should encourage dogs who mark and go towards these birds to “go on” and search for other birds.

Timing of Stakes

Who are the official time keepers during a stake?

The judges are the official time keepers. The judges should set their watches at the beginning of each brace. The use of a stopwatch or a time elapse watch is very desirable. In the event that the judges become separated, this will insure an identical length of time for each dog. It also eliminates the possibility of one dog getting a time advantage over their bracedmate. For the accuracy of the report, reporter should also synchronize their timepiece. The field marshal should also synchronize their timepiece as a “backup” measure.

Out of Judgment

How long should a dog be out of judgment at any one time in order to disqualify them from placing?

Applies to Derby, All-Age and Shooting Dog Stakes.

The customary rule is one-third of a heat time. The judges must have some latitude in applying this rule. For instance, in a 30-minute Shooting Dog Stake, not having contact with the dog for 20 minutes is probably not consistent with a fine Shooting Dog performance. On the other hand, in the same stake, if a dog is lost for something more

than 20 minutes, but is found on point with circumstances showing that the dog had been on point for most of the time they were absent, then consideration for not disqualifying should be given. Timing of an absence is at the discretion of the judge.

Handlers Not at Starting Point

How much time should be allowed a handler within which to produce a dog not at the starting point when a brace is called?

- a) where failure to appear is due to the fault of owner or handler.
- b) where failure to appear is due to fault of an official or employee of the club.

It is the duty of handlers to allow sufficient time to reach the starting point, and it is also the duty of the handler to see that the right dog is put in the dog wagon. If a handler elects not to put their dog on the dog wagon, it is up to the handler to be at the starting point before the next brace is released. Where the owner or handler is negligent in not producing a dog when called, no more than 5 or 10 minutes should be allowed. Tardy handlers should not delay the progress of a trial. Where the owner or handler is not at fault and the failure to appear is due to the breakdown of club equipment or is wholly the error of a club official or employee, judges should allow such time as seems reasonable to them under the circumstances.

Late Starters

Is it permissible for a handler, whose dog is not on hand when the brace is ordered cast off, to overtake the judges and put their dog down several minutes late?

No, never! If a handler is late, most judges will wait a few minutes before sending the brace away. Once the order to “let them go” has been given, the absent dog is out.

Starting Stakes on Intermediate Course

In multiple-course trials it frequently happens that a stake is finished on a course several miles from headquarters. In such an event is it possible to order the next stake started on the next unused course, thus avoiding the fatigue of a long trip to headquarters and the loss of valuable running time?

Club officials should be vigilant to save the judges as much time and fatigue as possible. Where it is evident that a stake will be finished on a course some distance from headquarters and the same courses are to be used for the following stake, the officials should see that dogs and handlers are available so that the next stake can be started as near as possible to the point where the preceding stake is concluded.

Deserting Handlers

Under what circumstances should a judge leave or fail to follow a handler?

When dogs on the course become separated during the running, a judge should accompany or remain with each dog and its handler until the dog is again shown in judgment on the course or until their time limit as mentioned in the standard “Out of Judgment” has expired. A judge should stay in contact with a handler to cover a find as long as the dog is on the course. If the dog is not in contention, the judge should tell the handler before deserting them and going on with the gallery.

Lost Handlers

What should the judges do if a handler gets lost?

Designate someone, preferably a person who knows the dog, to handle until the regular handler reappears. There is no obligation on the judges to either locate or wait for a lost handler. If the dog refuses to work with a substitute handler, there is nothing the judges can or should do about it.

Educating Handlers

Is it desirable that judges should help young or inexperienced handlers, particularly amateurs, by making helpful and constructive suggestions as the opportunity occurs during the running of the heat?

Yes, for the good of the sport a judge with respect to youthful or inexperienced handlers, especially amateurs, should be both arbiter and counselor. The judge should not assist the young handler in the running of their dog during the trial, as they could come under criticism for giving a handler an advantage over the other handlers. The judge can, however, tell the inexperienced handler what to “do next” or give similar type instructions. During the trial judges are expected to give their undivided attention to judging and not to hold class. The judge can approach a young handler at noon, in the evening or after the trial with friendly advice and counseling.

Bitches in Season

How should judges handle the matter of bitches discovered in season in multiple course?

Section II of the Minimum Requirement states: “Bitches in season shall not be permitted to run in one-course trials. In multiple course trials, they may start only if, in the opinion of the judges, it can be accomplished under conditions which will ensure absolute fairness to the other entries.” If the fact is discovered after the drawing is completed and if the brace mate drawn with her is a male, she must be withdrawn from the stake. If the discovery is made by the judges

after she has been put down and if her braced mate is a male, she must be ordered up, whereupon the braced mate may continue until the end of the heat.

Consent of Handler to Rebracing or to a Braced mate for a Bye Dog

Is consent of a handler necessary to rebrace a dog or to provide a braced mate for a dog?

This is governed by Section 7(a) of the Minimum Requirements which states: "Should there be a bye in the stake, the bye dog shall run alone. Provided, however, that if a dog from a regularly drawn full brace should be withdrawn, fail to appear or be disqualified, the bye dog shall be named by the judges to run with the dog remaining in that particular brace, the bye moved up to fill the vacancy caused by the absent dog. In the event there is no bye, then such dog losing its braced mate, as previously contemplated, must be run in its regular order of drawing, and run alone. In event that there be two withdrawals from different braces, the braced mates of such withdrawn dogs may be run together where the first vacancy occurs, or in their regular order, at the discretion of the judges. This same rule applies if there be four or any even number of dogs withdrawn from the stake." Permission from the handler to move a bye dog up to fill a vacancy caused by an absent dog is not required. The only way a bye dog should have a braced mate is if they are moved up to replace a dog in a broken brace, where a vacancy occurs. The judges should never name a braced mate to run with a bye dog, just because they are a bye dog. A handler who has drawn a bye and is lucky enough not to have their bye dog move up during the running should not be forced to accept a braced mate. A second series dog should never be braced with the bye dog. This used to be done many years ago, but is considered a bad policy for a number of reasons.

Re-Running a Bye Dog

Is it good practice for judges who have a top dog, which, however ran as a "bye," to re-run them with a braced mate in a second series in order to demonstrate that they is not a trailer or will back?

This should never be done. A dog should not be obliged to win a stake twice and should be permitted the luck of the draw and any advantages it may entail. Judges should, however, be alert to take advantage of opportunities during the running to brace a bye-dog with another entry, provided a brace is broken. It is always desirable to run dogs in direct competition.

Reaching the End of the Course Before Time.

What should a judge do in a multiple course expiration of time?

The brace should be continued forward even though it encroaches on the next course until time expires. The next brace should be put down at or near the place that the preceding brace was picked up. Barring a disqualifying fault, every dog is entitled to run its full allotted time. Dogs should not be placed that have not run the full time of a heat.

Loose Dogs on Course

What action should the judges take?

a) A dog that has been ordered up in advance of its braced mate, for whatever reason, is considered a loose dog and the handler should be ordered to catch the dog as soon as is practical and possible before it can interfere with the braced mate's work.

b) When a dog not under judgment is found on the course, it should be the duty of the judges to order someone in the gallery to catch the loose dog as quickly as possible before it can interfere with the work of the dogs in competition.

Fighting at the Breakaway

Should the aggressor dog be penalized for fighting at the breakaway?

If this action becomes more than the dogs just bumping one another and results in an open fight, a determination of the aggressor should be made immediately and the dog ordered up. If this determination cannot be accurately made, the dogs should be separated and released once again. If one dog singles out the other again, that dog should be ordered up. Any delay in this determination could result in the non-aggressor being intimidated, thus preventing it from performing up to its capability. If both dogs are singling each other out, both should be ordered up.

Trailing

If a dog is interfering with its braced mate's work either as a head-on or rear-end trailer or otherwise, what action should the judges take?

A judge should not be premature in their determination as to the dog at fault. They should be fully satisfied that one dog is clearly at fault, for a clever head-on trailer can make its braced mate look like a rear-end offender. If both dogs are substantially contributing to the problem, which is sometimes the case, no one dog should be ordered up or both should be ordered up. A hasty determination may not ensure true identity of the offending dog; on the other hand, the determination should be made early enough to allow the

non-offending brace mate to perform. After a preliminary warning from the judges, the handler of the offending dog should be ordered to bring their dog in and cast it off in a new direction. If the dog seeks out the other dog and again persists in their former practice, it should be ordered up. Care must be taken by the handler of the offending dog not to intimidate the brace mate with their horse or voice while attempting to bring their dog under control. If the innocent dog looks to have been a real contender, and was substantially interfered with by the offending brace mate, the judges, at their discretion, can run the dog again at the end of the stake.

Flagging

To what extent should a dog which flags while on point be penalized?

There are probably at least two causes of flagging. One is either an inherited trait or is a tendency that is further aggravated by some lapse or error in the training process. This is a very serious flaw and indicates a lack of intensity and is not a desirable trait to be passed on in a breeding program. The second cause may be considered situational. Many times a dog will flag when it has been on point a long time and its game has run off. This flagging indicates that the dog wants to relocate its game and it is not a serious fault. Another situation is when a dog has been standing on point for a long period of time and is flagging prior to the arrival of the handler but tightens up with the arrival of the handler and the flushing process. This also is not a serious fault. If a dog does not tighten up with the approach of the handler, the handler should first attempt to send it on in the hope that better contact with scent will cause the dog to tighten and be intense. It is the dog which flags when it has its game pointed close, with the wind being favorable, that should be severely penalized as this is an indicator of an undesirable trait.

Blinking

What penalty should be assessed against a dog for "blinking"?

Blinking is when a dog finds birds but leaves them without pointing, or points them and leaves before the handler arrives to flush. This is generally a man-made fault, brought about when the dog comes to associate birds with punishment of some sort. This is one of the worst habits a dog can have, and if conclusively proven by the judiciary, it should be sufficient to disqualify.

Dropping on Point

How much should dropping on point penalize a dog?

- a) Dropped on point where found or dropping when the find is made.
- b) Dropping at the approach of the handler.
- c) Dropping at flush or shot.

Dropping on point can be excused only in very rare circumstances and if it is deemed an emergency on the part of the dog to prevent a flush when scent is suddenly struck. Judicial analysis is required, considering such evidence as skid marks. Another circumstance might be dropping on point to avoid being struck by flushing birds. In this circumstance, the dog must immediately, on their own, return to their normal pointing stance. Dropping at the approach of handler or flush or shot should be severely penalized, as it denotes fear, lack of confidence, and/or harsh training methods.

Stop-To-Flush

What is a stop-to-flush?

A stop-to-flush is when birds flush on their own accord and the dog stops mannerly to the sound and sight of the flushing birds. Another form of stop-to-flush is when birds disturbed by the gallery, deer, etc. fly over and the dog stops at the sight of the birds. Still another form is when a dog is running downwind and runs over birds and stops mannerly. This is an unintentional flush, and the dog is not at fault and should not be penalized. After a long and vigorous flushing attempt by a handler, where bird scent has been disturbed, a stop-to-flush during a bold relocation should not be penalized. Every instance of stop-to-flush should be carefully analyzed by the judge as to the direction of the wind and the circumstances involved. A true stop-to-flush is mannerly conduct and should be shot over. Shooting over a dog at stop-to-flush tends to reinforce more style and intensity when they realize the shot is coming and that there might be another bird left for the kill.

Credit for a Stop-To-Flush

Should credit be given for a stop-to-flush?

Some credit should be given, especially in the more difficult situations where the dog is running downwind and the birds are unintentionally flushed, or when the dog stops at the sight of birds overhead. Some credit should be given for a stop-to-flush in the instance where bird work is at a premium. A stop-to-flush is better than no bird work at all, for it demonstrates a dog's correct manners and boldness to the gun.

Bump (Knock) and Stop

What is a bump (knock) and stop?

A bump (knock) and stop is when a dog is working birds or is clearly aware of the presence of birds and intentionally crowds the birds, therefore causing them to flush, whereupon the dog stops. A dog should be penalized for a bump and stop. This situation should not be confused with the circumstance where a dog, unaware of the

presence of birds, is working downwind, running fast, runs over the birds, and stops. Each situation requires careful and critical analysis of the circumstances involved such as wind direction, scenting conditions, etc., with the benefit of the doubt going to the dog.

Coming from Behind

To what extent should coming from behind penalize a dog?

Persistent back-casting should eliminate a dog. A dog that comes in from behind occasionally should not be faulted too much, particularly if the pace of the gallery is fast, the course turns, and the dog is hunting desirable objectives. There are some conditions under which a dog might be commended for occasionally coming in from behind, such as casting into the wind in order to reach what appears to be birdy objectives. In one-course trials where most courses are circular or rectangular and where turns are frequent, it is very often impossible for a dog to properly work out the objectives in sight without sometimes coming in from behind. Such a dog should be rated above a competitor who bores ahead to the front in a straight line, frequently failing to hunt logical objectives. It is deliberate back-casting or aimless or unnecessary cutting back that should be severely faulted.

Backing

To what extent should the failure of a dog to back be penalized when it is obvious that they have seen their pointing brace-mate?

- a) in a Derby Stake (All-Age or Shooting Dog standards)
- b) In an All-Age or Shooting Dog Stake
- c) In a Championship All-Age or Shooting Dog Stake

Fall derby dogs (prior to January) should not be required to back, but a fall derby that repeatedly interferes with their brace-mate on point should be ordered up. Spring derbies (after January 1) should back, but should not be ordered up for refusal to back unless interfering with brace-mate on point.

Whether in a Championship Stake or otherwise, All-Age dogs and Shooting Dogs should back, on sight, a brace-mate on rigid point. Violation should result in the offender being ordered up. Point stealing is a form of failure to back and should be similarly penalized. In analyzing a situation that might require a back, a judge should attempt to see the situation through the eyes of the approaching dog, taking into account the less acute eyesight of the dog and the possible interference of cover, terrain or background, as it approaches the scene. The dog should get the benefit of any doubt

until it can be determined it had full opportunity to see the pointing brace-mate. In any type of stake a back should be accomplished if the opportunity presents itself, but a race should not be interrupted and a dog returned from a distant cast in order to achieve a back.

Relocation during the Flush

Should a dog be allowed to voluntarily relocate during the flushing attempt?

No. A dog may voluntarily relocate at any time prior to the handler going in front of the dog and beginning the flushing attempt. Once the flushing attempt is in progress, the dog should not relocate until instructed to do so by the handler. Voluntary relocation exhibits poor manners. Sometimes a handler will conduct a prolonged (too extensive) flushing attempt, and the dog will become impatient at the long wait and start to move. There is some excuse for this when the dog apparently loses scent contact with game that may be running. The fault lies as much or more with the handler than with the dog. A good dog seeks to stay "on terms" with its game and should be allowed to move up promptly.

Circling Birds

Should circling a running bird for the purpose of re-establishing a point be considered a "Blink"?

No. Not usually. The circumstance of circling a running bird is seen sometimes when a dog is pointing running pheasants. Although pheasants are the worst runners, they are not the only runners, and on occasion all birds will run including Ruffed grouse and Bobwhite quail. A dog that has had considerable experience with pheasants will sometimes do this to prevent further running of the bird. A dog that is resourceful enough to cast to the side and then circle to pin a running pheasant is probably showing more than ordinary intelligence and will certainly provide more shots for the hunter. Some dogs will independently relocate when from their scenting abilities they deduce their game to be leaving. It is their way, if you will, of preventing an unproductive. Realistically, a dog



does not know when “point is called,” only people do. A dog which independently decides to relocate in order to get on better terms with its game is performing acceptably. However, once the dog establishes point and the handler has dismounted and the flushing attempt is under way, the dog should not move or break point until ordered to relocate by the handler.

Marking Flight of Birds

Should a dog be penalized for movement in marking flight of the birds?

No. A good dog should be intense in pointing and minimal movement in marking flight of the birds is an extension of that intensity. Movement of the head or wheeling in the direction of flight is permissible, but there should be no significant forward motion of the rear feet in the direction of the birds flight. What constitutes significant motion must be left to the discretion of the judge. A judge would most certainly not want to throw out the best dog in the stake just because it moved one inch more than what is specified.

Flush of the Birds Before Judges Arrival

Should credit be given in the instance where, the handler relates to the judge that birds have left before judges arrival and that he is going to shoot, and take their dog on, whereupon birds flush when the shot is made?

The assumption is that point was called, and the birds which flushed did not come under judicial observation. At this point there is no credit whether or not the handler elects to shoot. If the handler shoots and birds flush from the area, which could have been in the scent cone or reasonably near the scent cone, then some credit may be given but not to the extent of a well-executed find. This circumstance represents proof that the dog was, indeed, pointing birds. If the handler elects to flush and does not produce birds, with or without a relocation, then the dog should be charged with an unproductive. If the handler elects to take the dog on (without flushing) after the judge informs them the birds were not seen, there should be no penalty and no unproductive charged.



Dog Working Game When Time Expires

What is the best procedure to follow when a dog is working game when time expires?

A dog that is pointing or working game when time expires should always be allowed a reasonable opportunity to locate or relocate its game.

Retrieving of a Dead Bird Found on Course

Should a dog be penalized for retrieving a dead bird found on course?

No. Dogs are taught in the course of training to “hunt dead” and to retrieve. In addition, they are taught to find and retrieve crippled birds. It would, in most cases, be unusual for a dog not to retrieve a dead bird discovered on course. Whether it is material for a judge to examine the bird to see if it is still warm is debatable. The bird may have just recently expired or was about to expire and did so during the retrieve. Unless the judge actually sees a dog chase and catch a bird, the retrieval of a dead bird has no significance.

Catching Crippled Birds

In one-course trials weak or crippled birds are often unknowingly released and quite often birds are left on the course that have been injured by dogs. What demerit, if any; should be charged against a dog that catches a bird that is obviously crippled?

- a) When the dog has first pointed the bird.
- b) When the bird runs across the dog's path without the dog having had an opportunity to catch its scent.
If a dog points a bird, it should remain steady until ordered on by the handler regardless of whether the bird is crippled or wounded.

If a crippled bird runs across a dog's path while it is in motion and they pick it up, the degree of demerit would depend upon the surrounding circumstances. Generally speaking, it is not regarded as justifying a severe penalty. As one experienced judge puts it: “If the dog is tops in the rest of its work it can stay on top with this fault. If there are two dogs in the stake otherwise equal, the one that did not have this bad break in luck should get the placement.

Speeding Up to Reach Birdfield

It frequently happens in one-course trials that dogs will shortcut or follow the course or horsetracks to the birdfield, in many cases getting on point long before the judges have appeared. It is common practice for the gallery in such instances to notify the handler by the honking of horns, yelling, etc. Is it bad practice for one or both of the judges to gallop ahead to observe the performance of such a dog?

Under no circumstances should both judges go ahead and only in rare instances should either judge increase their horse's pace to observe a dog on point that has not run the course. The galloping ahead of even one judge in a one-course trial is likely to break up the cast of the other dog and perhaps spoil its ground work by carrying it along to the birdfield. If judges did not ride ahead to observe the birdfield performance of dogs that should be hunting the course, handlers — many of whom now encourage their dogs to get to the birdfield first — would soon discourage such practices.

Birds Refusing to Flush

What action should judges take if a bird is seen by them but refuses to flush?

If the handler makes a conscientious effort to get such a bird in the air, the judge should order the handler to fire and credit the dog with a find. When it is impossible to flush birds, such as impenetrable briars, a judge should order the handler to fire and give credit to the dog, but the judge must first be absolutely certain they have seen the bird(s).

Unproductive

What is an unproductive, and how does it affect the dog's performance?

An unproductive is when a dog points and no game is flushed or seen leaving the area. A handler can call point, ride/walk to their dog, and even get off their horse, but not until they go in front of their dog and starts the flushing attempt have they committed themselves. If they commit themselves by initiating the flushing attempt and no game is flushed or seen leaving the area or no game is flushed following relocation, the dog should then be charged with an unproductive.

- a) If deer, squirrel, rabbit, or any animal is seen leaving the area, the dog is not charged with an unproductive.
- b) If the dog continues to point "off" game, it seriously hurts its chance of winning.
- c) One unproductive is a very minor offense.
- d) Two unproductives in a one-hour stake are generally accepted as too many, making it difficult to win a quality stake. This, however, must be evaluated in the context of the other performances.

Sometimes poor scenting conditions and other factors can give rise to many of the dogs having unproductives during the stake.

Backing Dog

When should a backing dog be taken on?

The backing dog and its handler should stay until the handler of the pointing dog has a reasonable time to produce the bird or until they elect to allow their dog to relocate. At this time, the backing dog should be taken on, with permission of a judge. Once a dog has demonstrated a willingness to back and stand for a reasonable length of time, it is unfair to waste its running time by staying on the scene. The judge should grant permission for the dog to proceed on the course. The handler should proceed in a manner which will not interfere with their bracemate's attempt to flush or relocate.

Shooting by Handler of Backing Dog

Should the handler of a backing dog shoot when the bird is flushed?

Never, unless requested to do so by the judges if the opposing handler is, for some reason, unable to shoot or if the judges have reason to believe that the point was stolen.

Handler Interference

What action should be taken in the instance of blatant interference by a handler with a bracemate's dog?

In the instance of blatant interference, the handler should be disqualified immediately. Lesser transgressions should be given an immediate, stern warning by the judge. The second offense should result in ordering the handler and their dog up. Article I, Section 7(a) states: "The judges are expected to direct and rigidly enforce the prohibition of the interference by a handler, scout or dog with the bracemate's dog."

Roading of Dogs on the Course

Should roading of dogs on the course behind the gallery be permitted?

Handlers roading dogs should stay in close proximity of and behind the gallery and under no circumstances work their dogs on birds found on the course, whether or not birds are being released. The field marshal should closely monitor dogs being roaded in order to enforce this procedure in roading.

Holding Dogs

Should dogs ever be ordered held while a lost bracemate is located?

No. A dog should never be ordered held while a lost bracemate is located. Every handler should be permitted to show their dog to the best of their own ability for the entire running time. To order a dog held could destroy the continuity of its ground work, decrease the

time it has available to locate game and possibly destroy its chances in the stake through no fault of its own.

Leashing and Transporting

Is it ever permissible to leash or transport a dog during the running of a heat?

No, except in very unusual circumstances and only after permission is granted by the judges. Article I, Section II, (Handling Dogs) states: "During the running of a heat, no dog in competition therein shall be removed from the ground for an appreciable length of time, placed on a leash, or worked otherwise than an accepted manner of handling by voice, whistle, or signal." A leash should never be placed on a dog in directing it from one place to another except if permission is granted by the judges. A dog may be leashed in very dangerous circumstances, such as crossing a busy highway, with permission of the judges. In the event a dog gets into an unusual situation where it becomes mired or falls into a ditch or gully from which it cannot free itself, they may be carried only to the extent necessary to extricate. The judges are usually consulted for permission in unusual circumstances of this nature. If after a find, a dog is hemmed in by a cordon of horses and the direction of the course lies through them, it is proper for the safety of the dog, to lead it by the collar through the gallery before casting off. It is also permissible for the purpose of crossing unguarded roads. Following a find, it is permissible to lead the dog by the collar a short distance before sending it on, in order to divert its attention from marked birds.

Handling Devices

To what extent is the use of extraneous materials and devices permitted on a dog during the running?

Article I, Section II(a) states: "The use of any electronic device for communication or to in any manner influence the dog's action during the handling of a dog in competition in a field trial is forbidden. The use of weighted or spike collars and fluorescent ribbons or vests is forbidden. Fluorescent and reflective safety collars are permitted." The best procedure in order to prevent misunderstanding would be for a club to provide the fluorescent or reflecting safety collar with identifying tag when desired by a handler or required to help distinguish similar appearing dogs. Should a judge have any question concerning a collar being used, they should examine the collar prior to the breakaway.

Grabbing

To what extent should a dog's standing in an All-Age or Shooting Dog Stake be penalized if its handler grabs for its collar either before firing the shot or so quickly thereafter as to show that they have grave doubts as to the dog's manners?

Once point is called, a handler should never touch their dog until they have flushed in front of the dog. If birds are flushed, then they should fire, hesitate shortly, and take hold of the dog. If a handler grabs its collar before they shoot, then the dog is disqualified and should be picked up.

Discipline

Is it proper to discipline dogs during the running of a heat?

It is very bad form to punish a dog in public. Any such incident immediately disqualifies the dog.

Delayed Shot

To what extent should a dog be marked down if its handler delays firing until the birds are well beyond gun range?

In an All-Age or Shooting Dog Stake, if the birds have been flushed by the handler over a dog's point, the handler is supposed to fire before the birds are out of reasonable killing range so as to simulate bird hunting conditions. Of course, if the birds have flushed wild before the handler has had an opportunity to reach the dog, some delay in shot is expected. A handler should never shoot when a dog is in error. Delayed shot, unfortunately, has been commonplace over the years. Examples of abuse are handlers walking back in front of the dog before firing or not having gun loaded and ready to fire at flush. These practices should be judged accordingly.

In a Derby Stake, this standard can be relaxed considerably. Derby dogs, because of their stage of development, usually require some handler assistance in varying degrees to maintain their staunchness to wing and shot. This assistance may be the form of the handler turning to face the dog following the flush with some delay of shot.

Intimidating

To what extent should a dog be penalized for the use by the handler of a flushing whip, leash, cane or riding crop, ostensibly to flush birds but actually used in such a manner as to intimidate the dog?

The flushing attempt should be made similar to that made during an actual hunting situation. Using the gun barrel to flush should be discouraged, as this can be dangerous. A flushing whip or leash can be used but never in a fashion in which the use could be interpreted as intimidating the dog. If it is evident to the judges that the handler is deliberately intimidating the dog, then the dog should be penalized. If a judge suspects intimidating with a flushing whip, they should require the handler on any future finds to leave their whip on the saddle and flush without it.

Flushing from Horseback

Is it permissible to flush birds from horseback?

Handlers should always be on foot when flushing birds and not deliberately attempt to flush from horseback. If the birds are accidentally flushed, there should be no penalty. If a handler is unable to dismount to flush because of age and infirmity or injury, another person can be named by the judges to flush.

Making Shot

What is the proper procedure in making shot?

In all instances, the barrel of the gun is to be pointed skyward directed away from the judges, gallery and dog. Only blank ammunition is permissible. Any handler discovered using live ammunition should be ordered up. Article I, Section 15. The use of live ammunition is banned in all trials held by members and in all amateur championships sanctioned by the corporation.

Taking Dogs Up

What is the best procedure with respect to taking dogs up at the end of a heat?

Dogs not under observation should not be ordered up when time expires unless the dog is hopelessly out of the stake. The handler should be allowed the allotted time under the standard "Out Of Judgment" in which to bring their dog under judgment. There is no obligation, however, for a judge to wait the allotted time referred to above if the handler shows that they are not cooperating fully or is obviously endeavoring to obtain additional time for their dog to get on game.

Style

To what extent should style be considered?

Intensity is one of the most desirable characteristics of a pointing dog. There are very few dogs today which can win without possessing a lofty head and tail, no matter how impressive their other qualities. By today's standard, a dog's tail must be above the horizontal. Extreme intensity, however, in a dog possessing lofty style on point is like having icing on a cake. Joy in hunting is a most desirable characteristic and should always be looked for. This is sometimes indicated by animated, merry running, sometimes by other physical attributes of a dog in motion, but it is unmistakable. There should be no distinction in the desirability of style in ground work or on point as between Derby, All-Age, Shooting Dog or Championship contenders.

Compulsory Title Stakes

The conditions of some championship events such as the National Amateur Championships require the naming of a champion. Under such circumstances, what is the best practice to insure the naming of the best available dog?

Article V, Section 10 states: "A champion must be declared in all National Amateur Championships. The naming of a runner-up in all the championship events is optional with the judges." If at the end of the first series in a compulsory title stake the only dog that can be named is undeserving of a title, but there are one or more other dogs in the stake with nothing against them, which with a better opportunity on birds might make deserving champions, the best practice is to hold the first dog in reserve and call back the class dogs for a second series. If none comes through, they have the first dog to fall back on.

Contact with Other Wild Game Birds During a Trial

How should judges evaluate a dogs performance when contact is made with wild game birds other than those being run on during a trial?

On occasion during the running of a trial, contact may be made with wild game birds which are not normally run on during field trial competition. Examples of such wild game birds are wild turkeys and sage grouse. These birds do not usually permit themselves to be pointed or worked satisfactorily by bird dogs. On rare occasions, however, these birds are pointed and flushed in the usual fashion during a trial. Inasmuch as bird dogs are not trained on such game and these birds are not considered a part of normal field trial competition, a dog cannot be expected to perform acceptably on these birds. A game contact of this nature during a trial should for the most part be disregarded by the judges irrespective of its nature or outcome. Should the contact result in an acceptable performance, the judges might give the dog some consideration for exhibiting good manners. A dog having such game contact cannot be given credit for a find and, conversely, a dog should not be disqualified for mishandling such game.



In National Amateur Championships which are named after specific game birds, a dog must have a find on the named game bird in order to be named champion. A find on other game birds such as Hungarian partridge in a National Amateur Prairie Chicken Championship or quail in a National Amateur Pheasant Championship, etc., should count and should be used in the judicial evaluation of a dog's overall performance, but it cannot be used to name a champion in the absence of a find on the named game bird.

Contact with Game Other than Wild Game Birds During a Trial

How should judges evaluate a dog's performance when contact is made with "off" game during a trial?

Virtually all bird dogs possess a trailing instinct and contact with "off" game such as rabbits, squirrels, coyotes, and deer frequently results in a chase. A chase per se does not disqualify the dog, but repeated or prolonged episodes of this nature would severely interfere with a dog's overall performance and should be judged accordingly.

Championship Performance

Should the judging of a championship be distinguished from an ordinary field trial stake? In other words, should minor errors be overlooked in a championship stake in order to get a winner that has outstanding characteristics as against an errorless, mediocre performer?

When selecting a winner for a championship event, there should be an honest endeavor to select the best overall performance for the placement. While it is desirable that the winner of a championship stake be charged with no errors, it is a better practice to award a title to a dog which displays all of the characteristics of style, pace, intensity, drive, bird sense, etc., even though such dog be charged with some minor error or breach of manners, than to award a title to a dog lacking many of these characteristics even though it was errorless.

All stakes should be judged on the above basis but it is especially important that champions, as probable progenitors, be named for brilliance of overall performance rather than on the basis of errorless mediocrity.

Second Series

Is it good practice in judging All-Age and Shooting Dog Stakes to call back dogs that have run birdless, when there are at least three dogs which had clean bird work with acceptable but not brilliant ground heats in the first series?

If three dogs have errorless bird work in the first series with acceptable though not necessarily brilliant ground heats, the dogs with brilliant ground heats but no bird work in the first series should not be called back. On the other hand, if there are but one or two

dogs with acceptable ground heats and clean bird work in the first series, it is preferable to call back for a second opportunity dogs that had brilliant ground work but no birds for an opportunity to show on birds, rather than place one or more dogs that had clean bird work in the first series but whose ground work was unacceptable.

Birdwork in Junior Stakes

What is the expected bird work in junior stakes?

- a) Puppies: None.
- b) Fall Derbies: Derbies should show the result of training and experience in the way they go to their game and in the way they handle game. Absolute finish is not required. The fire and enthusiasm of a "true" derby should count heavily with the judges.
- c) Spring Derbies: Increased maturity in the way the dog handles country, uses the wind, and handles game should be expected. Everything else being equal, good manners on game may be decisive. As it pertains to backing, a stop on command shows sufficient finish for a spring derby.

Picking the Winners

Is it the best judicial practice for judges to evaluate the dogs as they go along or ride in judicial silence until the end of the stake and then name to each other the dogs that each feels worthy of placement?

While it is possible for two judges who have worked together a great deal and who understand each other's standards to exchange views only at the end of the first series running, it is a much better and safer practice for judges to evaluate the dogs as the stake progresses, selecting the first dog with an acceptable performance as a standard and rating other dogs equaling or surpassing that performance as they run.

Such procedure avoids the long consultations between judges frequently encountered at the conclusion of a stake. Differences of opinion with respect to the relative value of performances are settled while the matter is fresh in mind, and on conclusion of the running the judges are ready to either announce the winners or name the second series dogs.

Withholding of Placements

Are judges ever justified in withholding all or any placements?

Dogs should be rated on the available performances but should at least meet minimum field trial standards. Judges should have wide discretion in these matters, but should withhold placements

reluctantly and should make an effort to find three logical winners, if possible. There are times when conditions may be such as to make satisfactory bird work unobtainable, whereupon placements on class and ground heats are acceptable. When running conditions are satisfactory but the work of the contestants is such that it is impossible to pick three dogs with performances approaching minimum field trial standards, one or more placements should be withheld where there are not three worthy winners. If placements are withheld, never withhold a first place and award second and third placements or withhold first and second placements and award a third placement. In a championship, if there is no dog which has shown championship qualities, the title should be withheld. In this instance, placements (up to three) should be given, but only if the dogs meet minimum field trial standards. *Note: In a National Amateur Championship, a winner is always named.*

Announcing Purpose of Second Series

Should judges in calling back two or more dogs for a specific purpose, such as verifying the steadiness of one and seeing if the other will back, announce their purpose?

The judge should not give their reasons for calling any dog back except possibly to the secretary or field marshal, if that should be necessary in order to assure the best possible course or location for the test. If, for example, judges should call two dogs back, the first for the specific purpose of seeing it again on game, and the second for the sole purpose of seeing if it will back, the proper club official should be asked to use the most suitable location for the test, but no announcement should be made to the gallery other than that two dogs have been called back. In this instance, the best practice would be to put the first dog down and let it run until it has found game, meanwhile, holding the second dog on lead. When the first dog finds game, the second dog can be released to see if it will back. If there is any question in the judges' minds concerning the steadiness of the first dog, the backing dog can be ordered up before the handler of the first dog is ordered to flush the birds.

Second Series — Calling Dogs Back

Should judges, in calling dogs back for a second series, announce how long they intend to run them?

Judges in calling back dogs for a second series should never, under any circumstances, indicate how long they intend to run them, for circumstances wholly beyond their control may make it advisable or even compulsory to pick the dogs up earlier than planned.

Second Series in One-Course Trials

How should a second series in a one-course trial be conducted?

It is suggested that in one-course trials a second series should be run for a specific purpose only. If for ground work, the course only should be run without use of the birdfield. If the purpose is bird work, then the dog should be released at some convenient nearby point so that they may reach the birdfield quickly. Dogs should never be cast off directly into a birdfield.

Second Series Dog with the Bye Dog

Is it good practice to run a second series dog with a first series bye dog or in place of another dog that doesn't appear for the first series heat?

It is bad practice. The handler of a bye dog should never be required to accept a bracemate. No second series dog should be run until every dog has had an opportunity to run at least once. Dogs are also entitled to any advantage accruing from the luck of the draw.

Ground Work vs Birdfield

In one-course trials what amount of credit should be given for multiple finds in the birdfield as against quality of performance on the back course?

So many factors influence the decision of experienced judges that it is impossible to lay down a reliable standard. For the guidance of the uninitiated it may be said that the best test of a dog's intelligence, bird sense, adaptability and willingness to handle lies on the back course. They are presumed to be hunting birds in that area, not using it for willful excursions or as a corridor to the birdfield. A dog that hunts the course correctly with a find in the birdfield — handled as required of a dog of their age classification — should, other factors being substantially equal, place over a dog that is deficient in its ground work but has several finds in the birdfield. The finding of several planted birds in a restricted area, over which a dog is repeatedly hacked, is not proof of a dog's ability to work hunting country in a manner productive of maximum results.

Overbirdiness in Birdfield

To what extent should a dog be marked down that shows extreme overbirdiness in the bird field as a result perhaps of being over worked on planted birds?

Dogs should hunt the birdfield naturally and at a brisk pace. They are expected to locate birds by testing the air for body scent. Dogs that linger over ground scent, sneak from bush-to-bush at an unnaturally slow pace, or hunt the birdfield in any unnatural manner, are to be regarded as "pottering" and should not be placed except as a last resort.

ON WINNING AT FIELD TRIALS

by Dr. Robert P. Knowles

What are some thoughts on the current, almost insatiable desire to win and the rewards which field trials provide other than winning?

It has been said 'Show me a good loser and I will show you a loser' (frequent loser or consistent loser) or another similar derogatory comments.

We all like to win. But there are many more non-winners than winners in any field trial. In a championship event frequently 50-100 dogs compete and only two can be classed as winners.

The reason for the organization of the first field trial is perhaps lost in antiquity but I am certain it was not for the purpose of accumulating statues, plates or other trophy items.

We all like to see how our current favorite compares to the others. Field trials provide an organized method of doing that. They provide a system of designating winners and non-winners and winners of the special events, such as championships. They also provide much more and it is upon the many aspects of field trials, other than winning that this article focuses.

Whether country or city bred, those of us who pursue field trials as a hobby experience a fulfillment associated with horseback riding or walking in the woods following bird dogs that is unmatched by any other activity. Field trials embody the exposure to the multitude of stimuli — auditory, visual, olfactory and tactile — unlike any other sport.

The sound of a horse snorting, the creaking of saddle leather; horses' hooves on a hard-topped road crossing; the electrifying sound of the command 'Turn 'Em Loose!'; the rising and falling of the acappella duet of handlers voices drifting back through the woods on a frosty morning; the jingle of curb chains on bits; the thunder of many horses galloping to a distant find; the nickering of a horse searching for their stable mate; the southern-soft admonition. 'Cous' to de lef'; the finality of the command 'Pick 'em up; All these conjure up warm, happy feelings.

Is there a prettier or more enjoyable sight than two canine athletes surging away at the cast off, each trying to retain the legacy of training and discipline which brought them there and yet each wanting, for a few brief moments, to clearly demonstrate superior speed and selection of objectives?

The beauty of the completion of a far-flung cast to return to the front along a tree-lined bottom, or the rapid traverse of a barren field to gain the edge up ahead, is hard to match.

The picturesque stand, head and tail high, on the top of the next hill — immovable but impatiently waiting for handler and gallery to join them in the culmination of all our efforts and hopes. What a thrill to see a brace mate truly 'honor' another dog's point.

The merry tail, the enthusiastic pursuit of the search, the almost immediate transformation from a full out running athlete to the frozen statue — what else compares to these? The intelligent choice of objectives, the willingness to comply to the handler's signals, the strength, stamina, determination. Where else are these qualities combined to this degree?

The opportunity to observe, during the quiet of a gallery ride, the wonder of this land in which we live, the majesty of a tall pine, the soft brown carpet of pine needles beneath, rich, freshly turned soil, hills and valleys and the strange and beautiful patterns cast by shadows on the earth, these are a part of field trials. Icicles hanging from tree limbs; vapor rising from a horse's back as they begin to sweat; swift water flowing over ever-so-smooth rocks lining a creek bottom; the trees that invariably line the banks of even the smallest stream; the setting sun, casting a crimson glow over the fields as evening falls, these are the pleasures we see, hear and feel at field trials.

What is more invigorating than the feel of the surge of strength between your knees as your mount lunges up the far side of a creek bank? What is more pleasant than to be mounted on a compliant and smooth-walking horse which knows as much about the game as you do and which is as anxious as you to be 'in on the action'?

The comfort of a well fitted and familiar Canadian saddle is legendary. The feel of a wet pine needle branch brushing on your face can be most refreshing. The tug on your saddle of two eagerly roading pointers is a most satisfying sensation. The thrill and satisfaction of the successful clearing of an unanticipated ditch at full gallop is hard to beat.

The warm, firm handshake of a person whom you like and admire after a long separation; the feel of smooth reins in your hands on a hot day; the gentle and firm communication between rider's hands and horses mouth is a rhythmic pattern; the feel of good warm gloves on a cold day — the comfort of a down-filled jacket when the frosty wind blows — the feel of the warm sun on the back of your neck as midday approaches; the pleasure of holding and drinking a hot cup of coffee on a bitterly cold day — a filling, home-cooked meal after a brisk morning's ride — few, other than field trialers, ever experience these memorable things.

The smell of the piney woods; of newly harvested crops; the pungent odor of weeds; the smell of horse sweat and even fresh horse manure; the smell of new saddle leather, of the wood smoke softly curling from the chimney

of the frequent cabins dotting the grounds; the frantic barking of cur dogs in the cabin yards. These are the things of which nostalgia is made.

The amalgamation of people from far-flung areas of the country and from all walks of life bonded together by a shared love of this sport is unmatched.

Most know the breeding of many entries; they are interested in current trends — studs and brood matrons. They have their individual preferences but there is an unanimity of purpose and interest that I have not encountered elsewhere. The friendships, comradeship and camaraderie associated with field trials set them apart.

The fierce but friendly competition blends with an unspoken and instantaneous willingness to help the other fellow, whether stuck in a ditch or with a lost dog. We perhaps do not realize how unique this attitude is. "All of these combine to provide a memorable sensory-stimulating setting to which only the departed can fail to respond.

Undue emphasis on winning can lead to overage puppies; false papers, re-registrations and other corruptions which depreciate our pristine sport.

Wins do not make the pine trees taller, the grass greener, the sky bluer or the clouds whiter. They are an additional form of gratification and satisfaction. They have a positive influence on breeding, training and conditioning, but to focus on wins alone with a disregard for the myriad of other pleasures associated with our sport is to cheat oneself. "I have never seen roses growing on field trial grounds (there may certainly be some), but I suggest that we take time along the way to relish all the pleasures which cannot be avoided, but which can be ignored, when you field trial, and to smell whatever flowers there be. We only come this way once.

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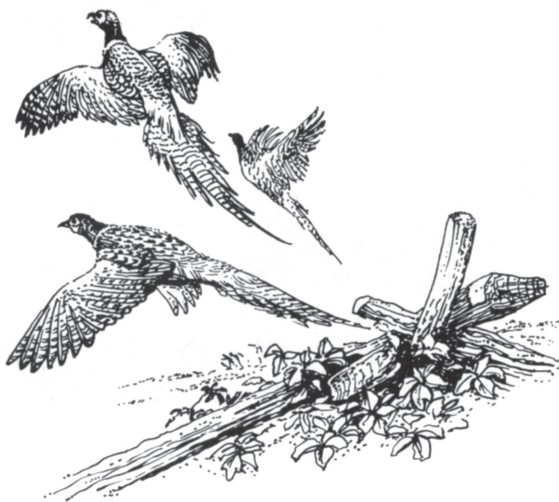
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The AFTCA is grateful to have had permission from John Donaldson to publish his beautiful oil portraits. We also express our appreciation for Leon Borkowski's wonderful gamebird illustrations.



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Adopted by Board of Trustees, July 2019
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Second Edition