

August 2020 Judges Email Blast

Below you will find questions, comments or concerns brought before the Judging & Testing Committee over the last few weeks. As a reminder the Judging & Testing Committee is comprised of the following individuals:

Mark Whalen (MD) – Director of Judge Development

Dan Wittman (AZ) – Director of Testing

Roy Ames (CO) – Acting Senior Judge Program Manager

Phil Swain (OR) – Apprentice Judge Program Manager

Peter Wade (ME) – Apprentice Judge Mentor

Mike Melotik (WI) – Apprentice Judge Mentor

Ruth Weiss (CA) – Apprentice Judge Mentor

Tom Swezey (CO) – Apprentice Judge Mentor

Steve Kosmicki (IL) – Member at Large

Judges Returning Phone Calls and Emails

Several Test Secretaries have communicated that they are asking people to judge a test and they are not getting any response back. I'm sure everyone is getting lots of requests to judge these days. As a professional courtesy please get back to those test secretaries in a reasonable amount of time and let them know if you are available to judge or not available to judge.

NA Test Field / Water Sequence

This has come up several times over the last 4 to 6 weeks and the J&T Committee has discussed it at length. Because of the high heat we are experiencing throughout most of the country; some teams are running a single NA dog in the field, then taking that dog directly to the water to complete the water work portion of the test. This is repeated for the entire NA running order. The rationale from the teams has been that they are doing this because of efficiency when it's hot outside.

The J&T Committee asks judging teams **not** to do this. Our rationale is whether you can truly judge the NA dogs desire to swim directly after coming out of a hot field. Are they swimming because they're hot, or because of their inherent desire to swim? In addition, this may be efficient if every dog swims with no problem. If you have a few dogs that struggle with swimming, need several bumpers, then a pick up dog, and possibly a bird, you will then be at a time deficit. In that case the handler that would have ordinarily run their dog at 10:30, now goes into the field at Noon, or even later, when it could be getting really hot.

Heeling

Q: Is it considered a command if a handler stomps their feet or stutter steps through the gates?

A: YES! From the Aims & Rules Book "voice or other commands given by the handler as he or she proceeds along the path may lower the score". In essence, anything that you do to influence the performance of the dog, whether verbal or non-verbal, may lower the dogs score and should be scored accordingly.

Treats

Q: Is it ok for a handler to give his or her dog treats during the test?

A: NO. Treats are considered a training aid and are not allowed to be given while your dog is under judgment. Scores in desire, cooperation and obedience may be impacted if you give your dog treats while the dog is under judgment.