

September Judges and Apprentice Judges Email Blast

Bite & Teeth: If you have judged a dog to have either a butt bite, overshot or undershot, you **do not** need to list the numbers of the teeth involved. Please simply circle butt, overshot or undershot on the card. If you judge a dog with missing or extra teeth, please circle missing or extra **and** list the number(s) of the teeth that are extra or missing. If you have judged any abnormalities with bite or teeth, please **do not** write "ok" in the space to the left of bite and teeth, just leave that blank.

Apprentice Judges Checking Teeth: Please make sure we are teaching Apprentice Judges the safe way to check teeth. They should remain standing on one side of the dog and not kneeling. If the dog lunges while someone is kneeling, the person will generally end up on their back, which of course is not safe.

UT Blind Sequence: As a reminder, please give clear instructions to handlers in regards to shouldering the gun during all shots for steadiness by the blind, and swinging on the duck while the duck is in "flight". If handlers fail to shoulder the gun or swing on the bird, that should be reflected in their steadiness by blind score.

Social Media: As Judges and Apprentice Judges, we are held to higher standard of personal conduct. Please be very mindful of what you write or post on any dog related social media platform. Comments denigrating a breed, breed club, member of a breed club or NAVHDA are inappropriate.

Apprentice Score Cards: Apprentice Judges are learning our system and the use of score cards. Please make sure that Apprentices are filling score cards out completely, including their scores, as well as the consensus scores. Please also check throughout the day that the notes and the back of Apprentice cards justify the number on the front of the card.

Aggressive Dogs: We recently had an incident at a test where a Judge was severely bitten by a dog. This was very unfortunate for the handler, the dog, and most certainly the Judge who sustained injuries. We can all agree that this kind of incident is extremely rare in NAVHDA, but with that said, we felt the need for clearer guidelines regarding aggressive dogs was warranted. The EC, in consultation with the Judging & Testing Committee, has adopted the following protocol in regards to aggressive dogs:

- Aggression is defined as, but is not limited to, "a dog that attacks, or attempts to attack, another dog or person"
- As Judges we must be very careful and mindful before we write "aggressive" on a scorecard. We've all judged dogs that growl, pull away and get snippy because they don't want their teeth checked; that is not aggression. We've also all judged dogs that we just can't check teeth for fear we will be bitten; that is also not aggression. However, this type of behavior is a fault and needs to be clearly noted in the comments section of the scorecard. **Please be clear and concise in your description, but do not use the term "aggression" unless, in your view, the dog's behavior meets the definition above.** As Judges, you must make a careful and thoughtful decision as to whether the dog is aggressive.
- A dog that is judged to be aggressive **will** be immediately removed from the test grounds, and **will not** be permitted to finish the test. As is the case for a dog pulled from the test due to injury or because the handler elects not to continue the test, the portions of the card and the scores the dog has received will be completed and the totals added. Again, no prize will be awarded and the reason should annotated in the comments section on the card.
- A dog that is judged to be aggressive **will not** be eligible to receive a prize for that test.
- If you judge a dog to be aggressive, please write in the comment section "Aggressive", along with an explanation of what transpired.
- The Judging team must provide written statements detailing what transpired within 72 hours to the Director of Testing and the Director of Judge Development for any dog that is judged to be aggressive.

- The Judging and Testing Committee will investigate and make recommendations to the EC as to whether the dog will be permitted to run in any future NAVHDA tests.

On behalf of the entire Judging & Testing Committee we wish you all a very safe and productive hunting season.

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