

## November 2021 VHD monthly Judging and Testing Updates

### **REMAINING BY BLIND:**

We are still getting feedback that some Judges are instructing handlers that they must place the dog **in** the blind. This is incorrect. Our rules state the following: Upon arrival at the blind, the handler is allowed to position the dog **in or at either side of the blind**. The handler may leave an object, such as a cap, jacket or unattached lead, with the dog without incurring a penalty (No object left may be touching the dog).

### **HEELING:**

“The course should be serpentine style using 10 pairs of stakes or trees. Gates should be placed 3-4 feet apart, in a manner that allows comfortable passage for dog and handler.” Please make sure when setting up the heeling course that the gates are at least 36” (3 feet) in width.

### **UPT RETRIEVE:**

We have received feedback from the field that judging teams are giving lowered scores for UPT dogs that come back to the handler within a step or two and drop the duck or bird. This is incorrect. We must remember that this is a UPT dog and our rules for UPT retrieving, on land or water, state “For the UPT retrieve the dog should bring the bird within reach of the handler to receive a (4), it does not have to bring the bird to the hand. Although, in order to receive a passing score (1), the dog must bring the bird within a reasonable distance and easily accessible to the handler.”

### **DESIRE / COOPERATION:**

If a dog “no go’s” (i.e. fails to enter the water for the retrieve) on a blind retrieve or retrieve of a duck, this is a failure in either desire or obedience, and may be both. It is not a cooperation issue. An example would be a dog that just stands and fails to enter the water. The last sentence in the **desire** paragraph in the UT section of the Aims book is a good illustration of this: “It (desire) is the firm, determined, yet controlled will to get on with the job that marks the dog (as) possessing this indispensable characteristic. Another great example from the Aims book in the **obedience** paragraph of the UT test is also a good illustration: “The actual success of the hunt can hinge upon an obedient dog that will willingly suppress its natural instincts and desires and obey his handler’s commands. In elementary terms, and we’ve all heard this many times; desire takes them out, cooperation brings them back.”

### **PLACING ON THE GROUND:**

The question has come up whether it’s allowable for the handler to place the gun on the ground? Currently there is no rule against placing the gun on the ground. But, with that said, and every situation is unique, if you feel that the act of placing the gun on the ground is affecting the dog’s performance you may disallow it. As we all know, anything that a handler does, whether verbal or nonverbal, that affects the dogs performance