

September 2022 Judges Email Blast

Updates and discussion topics submitted to the Judging & Testing Committee over the last few weeks.

Updates:

1. Judges Email Blasts from the last 3 years may now be found on the NAVHDA website under the Judging tab.
2. There will be 3 virtual Judge Workshops this year with identical agendas and information. All Judges are required to attend **ONE** of those virtual meetings to keep judging status current. Dates for the workshops will be sent out in the next month or two. In addition, at the Annual Meeting we will hold a meeting for those Judges and Apprentice Judges who are attending the Annual Meeting. Workshop credit will be given if you attend.
3. Everyone should be aware of our new Apprentice Incentive Program. At this writing we are at an all-time high of 50 active apprentices, which is outstanding. The requirements to become a NAVHDA judge have not been relaxed or changed. The incentive program is to help defray some apprentice expenses because of record inflation and high travel costs.
4. Email blasts are sent with the intention of clarifying rules and situations occurring during the testing season. The clarifications provided have been discussed in depth and vetted by the Judging and Testing Committee and, when necessary, by the Executive Council. It is essential that all Judges and Apprentice Judges read these email blasts and Judge accordingly.

Redundancy in Email Blasts, when they occur, are necessitated by failure of some judges to read and adhere to the information and clarification of rules provided. Please print them out and take them to the test along with your Aims and Rules book. If you have a question

during a test call someone on the Judging & Testing Committee and ask for clarification.

Since the email blasts are reprinted in the Versatile Hunting Dog magazine, judges should expect handlers to be aware of the information they contain.

5. As a reminder, we ask that all Judges and Apprentice Judges refrain from wearing any apparel with kennel or breed specific logos. Wearing apparel with a NAVHDA or sponsor logo is accepted. In addition, we are allowing Judges and Apprentice Judges to wear “Sun Shirts” with hoods if they are a solid, dark, or neutral color. Judges should always refrain from wearing a white shirt when judging. The sun shirts are a way to keep our Judges safe from sun related skin damage while in the field for several days in a row. Sun shirts will be the only exception to the requirement of wearing a collared shirt.
6. If for some reason you are ill or injured and can't judge a test that you have accepted, please do your due diligence in trying to find a replacement.
7. **Blind Sequence** (remain, steadiness and retrieve of duck): This is a reiteration of previously issued guidelines. Adherence to these guidelines is mandatory.
 - a. **The blind must be 3 sided.**
 - b. For remaining by the blind, the dog may be positioned **in or at either side of the blind.**
 - c. **Heeling gates.** There are **10 gates positioned 3-4 feet apart.** Distance from the last set of gates to the blind should be no more than **5 yards.**
 - d. The number of decoys in the decoy spread is **6-10.**
 - e. **Blind is to be positioned** approximately **24 inches** from the water's edge. (If we put the blind right at the water's edge, we have essentially made that portion of the test pass or fail, which

we do not want to do. This will be changed in the next issue of the Aims & Rules book.)

8. **UT Drag:** The UT drag needs to be **100-200 yards with a bend**. Drags of 50 -75 yards are not acceptable and do not meet the NAVHDA standard. At the end of the drag, after leaving the bird, Judges should hide downwind, 15-20 yards away, if possible.

Questions from the Field:

1. Question: During the retrieve of duck sequence the handler shoots after the duck has hit the water. Can we redo this part of the test?
Answer from the J&T: As judges you can redo any part of the test if you believe it was administered in an unfair way. It is extremely important to give very clear instructions prior to each event. If a handler does not comply with the instructions, and there are no extenuating circumstances, the dog should be scored accordingly.

Similarly, in the field, if the handler has been reminded several times to swing on the bird and continues to not comply, the steadiness score may be lowered.

2. Question: Can Apprentice Judges take a picture of their score cards?
Answer from the J&T: No, never. At no time should any Judge or Apprentice Judge be permitted to take a picture of a score card. However, Apprentice Judges are encouraged to take a picture of the front and back of their evaluation form. This will help them to write the required test report and may also facilitate their review and study after the test.

Additionally, as a reminder, filming or video taping of a test is not permitted unless specifically authorized by the EC.

3. Question: Duck decoys are always too close to the shore; can we standardize the distance?

Answer from the J&T: No, it is the responsibility of the Senior Judge and judging team to ensure the decoys are properly placed.

4. Question: Can credit be given for a “flash” point in Natural Ability?

Answer from the J&T: Yes, duration of points is ***not*** a pointing criterion. If the dog’s stance meets the Intense, Convincing, Unmistakable, Productive (ICUP) criterion specified in the Aims and Rules, it is a point.

5. Question: Can credit be given to the NA dog who spends time on a previous dog’s track?

Answer from the J&T: While the dog is expected to use the “hot” track laid for it, credit may be given for tracking a previous dog’s track. The Judges Handbook states: “Judges may score a dog which leaves its own track and runs a track laid for a previous dog. The score may be adjusted down but could be a ‘4’ if the (previous) track was virtually unused (not a lot of dog tracks over the bird track) and the track was followed efficiently.”

6. Question: For UPT Duck Search can a second shot be fired for a resend if the dog retrieves the dead duck, and additional search time is needed to complete the evaluation?

Answer from the J&T: Yes, a second shot is acceptable after a retrieve if a resend is required.