

# Judges Email Blast

October 2023

## **Invitational Judges**

The Judging & Testing Committee would like to recognize and thank the 26 Senior Judges who volunteered their time to Judge at this year's Invitational. Many of them arrived on Tuesday and left on Sunday. Thank you all for helping to make this Invitational a huge success!

## **Judge Reimbursement**

We are getting reports from Judges that they are not getting reimbursed for their expenses from the Chapter in a timely manner. Since airfares, when required are usually the most expensive item, chapters should ask judges if they would like airfare reimbursed when the reservation is made. It is a minimal expectation that the Chapter reimburse judges in a timely manner, preferably prior their leaving the grounds on the last day of the test, unless other arrangements have been made. Judges, if a Chapter fails to reimburse you in a timely manner, please contact the Chapter President directly. If that doesn't work, please contact Kim Arnett 517-605-6823 or Mark Whalen 240-888-5826.

## **Gunning For A Family Member**

Family members are permitted to gun at any level of NAVHDA testing, if they are over 18 and they have met the requirements established by the state or province and the Chapter to be an approved gunner. These requirements must include the demonstrated ability to be safe and accurate. Gunners should also be experienced trainers who have run dogs at the UT level. At no time should a gunner be permitted to give handling advice to any handler during the test.

## **Poppers**

As a reminder only 12-gauge factory poppers and blanks are permitted to be used for a NAVHDA test. Poppers and blanks were in short supply earlier in the year. The supply chain is caught up and availability is now good. Common manufacturers of poppers and blanks include, but are not limited to, Winchester, Kent & Focchi. Factory "primed poppers", which consist of an empty hull and just a primer are not permitted.

## **Appealing Test Scores**

There is NO appeal process for test scores, physical attributes or comments written on the cards by the judges. Test scores are only changed if there is a mathematical error. By entering a NAVHDA test handlers take the responsibility of knowing that their dogs will be judged by a team of experienced judges who will judge the dogs based on what they see that day as it relates to NAVHDA standards. Test scores will not be changed because a handler disagrees with the scores they received.

## **From The Field – Duck Search**

**Question** to the J&T Committee:

Dog does 6-7 minutes of duck search and catches the duck. Twenty yards from shore the dog releases the duck and the duck swims away. The duck is shot, and the dog grabs the duck and begins to swim away from the shore and handler. After 5 commands from the handler, the dog completes the retrieve of the duck. Can this dog receive a 4 in duck search?

**Answer** from the J&T Committee:

NO. This dog should be penalized for releasing the duck as well as avoiding the retrieve after the duck was dispatched. Our rules state the following: *“The retrieve is not necessary unless the dog makes contact with the duck. If the dog locates the duck, a prompt retrieve is required”*.

**Question** to the J&T Committee:

Dog searches for 5 minutes then returns to handler and sits by his side for 2 minutes. The handler asks if he is allowed to re-send his dog. The Judge answers yes, but we will score the re-send accordingly. The handler re-sent his dog. Can this dog receive a 4 in duck search?

**Answer** from the J&T Committee:

NO. Quitting on a duck search after 5 minutes and sitting by the handler demonstrates a lack of desire and obedience which should be scored accordingly.

In both cases it should be remembered that the Search for the duck is to simulate a duck hunting situation. In this simulation, a duck has been “shot” and lost on the pond. The test is to determine if there is a reasonable chance that, based on the dog’s search, the duck would be recovered.

## **2023 Judges Workshops**

Judges are required to attend one Judges Workshop every year to maintain judging credentials. Again, this year there will be three opportunities to do so. We will have an in-person Judges Workshop at the Annual Meeting in Troy Michigan on Saturday, January 27<sup>th</sup> from 11:00am-12:30pm. In addition, we will be offering two virtual Judges Workshops via TEAMS on Sunday, March 10<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm Eastern Time, and again on Sunday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:00pm Eastern Time. Sign-up sheets are forthcoming, and we ask that you sign up for one of these sessions. Apprentices are invited and encouraged to attend one workshop as well.

## **Thank You!**

Thank you, Senior Judges, Invitational Judges, Clinic Leaders, Judges and Apprentice Judges, for another great year of evaluating some of the finest hunting dogs in North America. Your commitment to this organization is appreciated beyond words. We also want to thank all the handlers who participated in a NAVHDA test this year and all those who volunteered at a test. Without you running a dog in a NAVHDA test, or volunteering, there would be no NAVHDA. We appreciate all of you!

It's hunting season! We wish you a safe and productive hunting season. Go out and enjoy all of the work you put into your dogs.