

GUIDELINES for Judges and Handlers

Most Chesapeake Bay Retrievers running these working tests will not be as thoroughly trained as those who compete in Field Trials and many owners are amateurs with only basic knowledge. The WD Program was started to get people involved with their dogs and to have another way to test for basic instincts in the retriever. Therefore, the WD tests are simple land and water tests with the primary objective to test a dog's natural abilities, to see if he can mark, to test for gun-shyness, to see if he can handle birds well, to see if he can handle on a blind retrieve and to see if he will re-enter the water for a second retrieve. As is stated in the *AKC Retriever Advisory Committee Supplement*, these natural abilities are accurate marking and memory falls, intelligence, attention, a good nose, courage, perseverance, style and desire.

Generally, the WD Stake should follow the rules in the *Standard Procedure for Retriever Field Trials* and the *Retriever Advisory Committee Supplement* (copies may be obtained free from the AKC, 51 Madison Avenue, New York, NY 10010).

The following would constitute automatic eliminations:

1. Repeated evidence of poor nose.
2. Reluctance of the dog to enter cover, water, mud and/or other situations involving unpleasant or difficult going.
3. Returning to the handler without the bird.
4. Stopping the hunt.
5. Ignoring the bird when found and leaving it.
6. Unwillingness to release bird on delivery until compelled to do so by severe methods.
7. Badly damaging the game.
8. Loud and prolonged barking.
9. Anyone throwing anything into the water to persuade a dog to enter or to direct him to a fall.
10. Shouting from the field to get his attention.
11. Judges will decide, according to circumstances, whether a Dog peeing near a mark or rolling on a bird should be penalized or eliminated. A dog peeing directly on a bird should be eliminated.

The handler is expected to come to the line quietly with his dog under control at his side.

1. For the WD Stake, the dog may be brought to the holding blind and to the line on a leash or slip cord using a flat buckle collar or a choke chain. Choke chain to be removed at the line and flat buckle collar may remain on. You may hold the dog on line for the test by the flat buckle collar, the leash wrapped around his neck or by using a slip cord. The leash or slip cord will remain with you after the dog is sent. Put them in your pocket so they are away before the dog comes in with a bird. The dog may retrieve wearing a flat buckle collar or no collar. He cannot retrieve with a choke chain on. Before you call for the birds, the handler may gently touch his dog and speak in a normal manner to his dog, but manhandling the dog or an angry screaming voice is not allowed. After the dog is sent, the handler must stand quietly on the line while his dog is working in the field. These are marking tests, not handling tests, and there should be no voice commands or hand signals while the dog is working in the field.

ACC WD requirements allow the dog to be held on the line, but it would be a disqualification if the dog went before his number had been called by one of the judges. Once the dog has the bird, you may then call him with voice or whistle. Although hand delivery is not required, the dog must deliver the bird to within two paces of the handler at the line, and the dog should return by a reasonable direct route, showing a willingness to return with the bird.

2. For the WDX Stake, the dog may be brought to the holding blind and to the line on a leash or slip cord using a flat buckle collar or a choke chain. You may run the dog with a flat buckle collar on but not a choke chain. All items will be placed totally in your pocket after you sit the dog and before you tell him to mark and start the test. The dog is to be steady on line. Once the leash is put away the test will begin. You cannot touch the dog from this point on until the last bird is handed to the judge. You may then touch the dog to put on the leash and collar and quietly leave the line. In the WDX the dog must deliver the bird to hand but not necessarily at heel position.
3. For the WDQ Stake, the dog can be brought to the holding blind on lead or slip cord and collar. All will be removed and put in your pocket before heeling your dog from the holding blind up to the line. The handler cannot touch the dog once he leaves the holding blind until he has given the last bird to the judge and has heeled his dog back near the holding blind area. There he may put on his leash/collar and touch the dog. The dog is to be steady on line and must deliver the bird to hand but not necessarily at heel position.

A dog in the WD/X/Q on a water retrieve will not be disqualified solely for returning to the line by land instead of water. He does however need to take some water on the way to the bird.

Occasionally a dog may become confused as to whether or not he was actually sent. He may run out a few feet, stop, and return to the handler. If, in the judge's opinion, the dog was confused, or was possibly distracted or disturbed by an unforeseen occurrence or person, the judge may allow the handler to re-send the dog. A re-run is at the judge's discretion.

These are not Hunt Tests and should not resemble such. The WD/X/Q are marking and handling tests only. No camouflage or duck calls are allowed. One gunner or bird boy at each station will wear a white shirt or jacket to be easily seen by the dog from the line. Handlers may also wear white. There are no "retired gunners". All throwers and gunners will be in the open and clearly visible by dog and handler. All birds and their falls all the way to the ground will be visible by dog and handler. Birds will be thrown by hand, but in some instances a winger or mechanical device may be used.

Marks, whether back to back singles or multiples, will be placed wide apart so there will be no switching, or confusion. All blind retrieves will be well off to the side or away from marks and placed so the dog does not have to travel through any bird sent to get to the blind or be distracted by gunners in white coats. The blinds are to be basic and straight-forward.

Bitches in season may not participate in Working Dog Stakes and should not be brought to the test or be aired on the WD grounds. A written note should be provided from the owner before the test starts. A full refund except for a \$10 administrative fee should be given (without requiring a Vet note). RDs may

retain \$20 of the entry fee for dogs which are unable to run in the Stake entered due to injury (note from the owner required and without requiring a Vet note).

A “test dog” should be used before any competition starts in order to show what the test requires. Judges are to set up all tests according to ACC requirements. (The chairman holding this event will discuss the tests with the judges. The WD/X/Q rules are clearly written as to where birds should be placed and the distances and this should be followed). Judges are requested to ensure that all handlers are aware of the rules before running their dogs and to answer any questions handlers may have prior to running the tests. Often handlers are nervous, as this may be their first experience running a dog, and judges are in a position to reassure and relax the handlers.

The above is intended to standardize and provide consistency to the testing throughout the ACC. The Working Dog Certification Program and the Guidelines should be read carefully and understood by all the handlers and the judges.

Judges must mark the “passed” or “failed” box on the entry forms and sign each one. Return all the applications (including both passed and failed) to the RD at the completion of the WD Stake.

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