



Royal Kennel Club

Field Trial Regulations

(including Gundog Working Tests)

2026

Royal Kennel Club Regulation Booklets

This is one of a series of booklets designed to present the Regulations in a more accessible form. The complete set of Rules & Regulations is of course still available within the Royal Kennel Club Year Book.

There are booklets available for Breed Shows, Obedience Shows, Agility Shows, Working Trials and Bloodhound Trials, Heelwork to Music, Field Trials and Rally. Whilst including all the relevant regulations also included is an extract from the B Regulations on the requirements of dog registration.

ROYAL KENNEL CLUB FIELD TRIAL REGULATIONS

As at 2nd February 2026

1. Introduction.

- a. Field trials shall be conducted in accordance with the Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations.
- b. A field trial is a meeting for the purpose of holding competitions to assess the work of gundogs in the field, with dogs working on live unhandled game and where game may be shot.
- c. Game that has been handled in any way, either dead or alive, must not be used for testing dogs in any part of a field trial, except that dead game may be used in the conduct of a water test.
- d. Societies which are registered with the Royal Kennel Club and which have been so authorised may organise field trials. A licence must be obtained from the Royal Kennel Club for every trial in accordance with the procedure set out in these Regulations.
- e. Notwithstanding the provisions of these Regulations, certain events, which are not licensed by the Royal Kennel Club, may from time to time, be recognised by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club. The Board shall have power to grant permission for Royal Kennel Club registered dogs to be entered for such events. A judge, competitor or promoter will not be prejudiced by participation in these special unlicensed events. Any field trial not licensed by the Royal Kennel Club is liable to be deemed an unrecognised event.
- f. The field trial year ends on 1 February and begins on 2 February in each year.
- g. If, in the opinion of the Board, a dog is of savage disposition it shall be ineligible for entry in any field trial, gundog working test or show gundog working day held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations. No activity shall be conducted which permits, encourages or develops aggression in a dog.
- h. The Board shall have the power to grant, withhold, suspend or cancel any trial held under these regulations.

2. Welfare of dogs.

A competitor whose dog is entered at a Royal Kennel Club licensed event should take all reasonable steps to ensure the needs of their dog(s) are met, and should not knowingly put their dogs' health and welfare at risk by any action, default, omission or otherwise. A breach of this Regulation may be referred to the Board for disciplinary action under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations. The use of pinch collars, electronic shock collars, or prong collars, is not permitted at any field trial licensed by the Royal Kennel Club. This shall apply at the venue or within the precincts of the trial.

3. Stakes.

- a. A field trial meeting may consist of one or more stakes which are separate competitions at that trial.
- b. Stakes may be run for any of the four sub-groups of gundogs recognised by the Royal Kennel Club under the Regulations for each sub-group.
- c. The four sub-groups are as follows:
 - (1) Retrievers (including Irish Water Spaniels).
 - (2) Spaniels other than Irish Water Spaniels.
 - (3) Pointers and Setters.
 - (4) Breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve.
- d. The following are definitions of certain stakes:
 - (1) Open
A stake in which dogs have the opportunity of gaining a qualification towards the title of Field Trial Champion (K Regulations refer) and towards entry in the Championship or Champion stake for its breed; in which entry is open to all dogs of a specified breed or breeds except that such Stakes may not be confined to Any Variety Spaniel [except Spaniel (Cocker) and Spaniel (English Springer)]. It will be limited to a prescribed number of runners, in which case these shall be decided by a draw conducted in accordance with Regulation J6.i. and J6.j. so that preference is given to previous performance.
 - (2) All Aged
A stake which is open to all dogs of a specified breed or breeds without restriction as to their age, but which may be restricted by any other conditions which may be determined by the society subject to the approval of the Board of the Royal Kennel Club.
 - (3) Novice
Retrievers, Spaniels breeds which hunt, point and retrieve and Pointers & Setters: A stake which is confined to dogs which have not gained an award, or awards, which would qualify them for first preference in the draw for Open stakes.
 - (4) Puppy
A stake which is confined to dogs under the age of two years at the scheduled date of the stake.
 - (5) Other stakes may, with Royal Kennel Club approval, be promoted by societies, but all stakes must be clearly defined in the schedule. Awards gained in stakes confined to Any Variety Spaniel [except Spaniel (Cocker) and Spaniel (English Springer)] will not qualify the dog for the purposes of Regulation J6.i.

4. Application and documentation.

- a. *Application*
 - (1) The application for a licence to hold a field trial must be made to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club at least 30 days before the proposed date of the Trial. The application must be accompanied by the appropriate fee.
 - (2) A current public liability insurance document must be available at the trial. Failure to have a current document at the date of the trial will invalidate the licence.

b. *Jurisdiction and responsibilities*

The officers and committee members of the society holding the licence are deemed responsible for organising and conducting the trial safely and in accordance with the Rules and Regulations of the Royal Kennel Club and agree to abide by and adopt any decision of the Board or any authority to whom the Board may delegate its powers. In so doing those appointed as officers and committee members accept that they are jointly and severally responsible for the organisation of the trial and that this is a binding undertaking.

Any decision given against the society under Rule A11 of the Royal Kennel Club Rules may be communicated by the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club to the Secretaries of registered or affiliated societies holding licensed events, and may also be published in the Royal Kennel Club Journal, together with a report of the proceedings in the matter.

Any notice sent to the Secretary of the Society at the contact address duly lodged at the Royal Kennel Club shall be deemed full and sufficient notice on the part of the Royal Kennel Club of (a) any proceedings, matters or decision of the Board, or of any Authority to whom the Board may have delegated its powers or (b) of anything arising out of the field trial licence or to the conduct of the Field Trial, or (c) of any other matter whatsoever arising out of or in connection with the same. Any change in officers or committee members must be notified to the Royal Kennel Club.

c. *Schedule*

(1) A society must issue a schedule for a field trial, such schedule to follow the layout of the specimen schedule provided by the Royal Kennel Club and conform with Royal Kennel Club Regulations.

The schedule must contain:

- (i) A statement that the field trial is to be held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations.
- (ii) A statement reminding competitors that dogs must be registered on the Royal Kennel Club Breed Register or have recorded an Authority to Compete (ATC) Number to be eligible to compete in a field trial.
- (iii) The definition of each stake to be held and the maximum number of runners permitted in each stake.
- (iv) The date and place of the field trial and, where the time and place of meeting are not included, a statement that the time and place of the meeting will be communicated to competitors separately, and by what means.
- (v) The order in which the stakes will be run.
- (vi) Save in exceptional circumstances, the names and ID numbers of the judges.
- (vii) The details of fees for entry and of prizes offered.
- (viii) The latest date for receiving applications for entry.
- (ix) The date, place and time of the draw and the method of notifying the full result to all entrants.
- (x) A statement that should circumstances so dictate the society, in consultation with the judges, may alter arrangements as necessary. Such changes and the circumstances surrounding them must be reported to the Royal Kennel Club at the earliest opportunity.

- (xi) A statement, if applicable, that the society may reserve to itself the right to refuse any entry, except that this shall not apply in terms of the preference in the draw Regulations (ref J6.i.). The Royal Kennel Club must be notified in writing of all such refusals with the society's reason.
- (xii) Notice of any restrictions or conditions attached to the stakes, including arrangements for the substitution of dogs.
- (2) No modification may be made to the schedule after publication except by permission of the Royal Kennel Club, followed by advertisement in appropriate journals if time permits before the closing of entries.
- (3) The schedule must be accompanied by a separate nomination or official entry form on which the wording of the declaration to be signed is in accordance with the specimen issued by the Royal Kennel Club.
- (4) The secretary of the society shall send a copy of the schedule and entry form to the Royal Kennel Club if requested.

d. *Card*

A society holding a field trial must publish a card which must include:

- (1) On the front outside cover or title page:
 - (i) The name of the society and its ID number.
 - (ii) The breed(s) and type of Stake(s) to be run at the trial.
 - (iii) Date(s) of the trial.
 - (iv) Names of the judges and their ID numbers.
 - (v) Name of the chief steward.
 - (vi) Venue of the trial.
- (2) *Contents*
 - (i) A statement that the field trial is held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations.
 - (ii) A definition of each stake to be run at the trial.
 - (iii) The prizes offered.
 - (iv) Entries listed as follows:
 - Registered name and number of dog and/or Stud Book number.
 - Name of owner(s).
 - Breed of dog.
 - Sex of dog.
 - Date of birth of dog.
 - Registered name of sire and dam.
 - Name of breeder.
 - Name of handler.
 - (v) A statement that the society accepts no responsibility for injury, loss or damage to person or property however occasioned.
 - (vi) Veterinary support: The name, address and telephone number of the veterinary surgeon, practitioner or practice supporting the trial.

e. *Marked Card*

Following the trial the secretary shall send to the Royal Kennel Club, within 14 days, a copy of the card with all Awards and certificate of merits marked, together with a copy of the draw.

- f. *Veterinary support*
Veterinary support compatible with the arrangements for the trial should be made by the organising society.
- g. *Abandonment or cancellation*
Any cancellation or abandonment of a field trial must be reported writing to the Royal Kennel Club, stating when and why, and enclosing a copy of the card if available.
- h. *Incident Book*
A copy of the Royal Kennel Club Incident Book, containing details of any incidents occurring at the trial, must be submitted to the Royal Kennel Club within 14 days.

5. Judges.

- a. *Appointment*
 - (1) The judges shall be appointed by the society holding the trial which must satisfy itself that the persons being invited to judge have practical experience of both field trials and the shooting field.
 - (2) Judges may not shoot at a stake which they are judging.
 - (3) Judges may not enter a dog for competition at a trial at which they are judging.
 - (4) Judging appointments should be confirmed in writing by both the society and the judge. When confirming an appointment the society should include the following wording:
'In accepting this invitation you agree to be bound by Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and the Royal Kennel Club Code of Best Practice for Judges. In doing so you also recognise that you are obliged to notify us in writing of any change in personal circumstances which will affect your ability to fulfil this judging appointment.
You should also note that we reserve the right to cancel the contract before the date of the appointment if there is a change in your circumstances, which in our reasonable opinion would adversely affect your ability to fulfil the appointment.'
 - (5) All judging contracts are subject to cancellation at the discretion of the Royal Kennel Club in the event of the judge being subject to relevant disciplinary action.
- b. *Compulsory judges for stakes*
The required number of judges for stakes and the number that must be Panel judges are as follows:
 - (1) *Retrievers - 3 or 4 judges*
Championship: all A.
Open stakes: all Panel judges with at least two A.
Other stakes: at least two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A.
 - (2) *Spaniels - 2 judges or 4 judges*
Championships: all A.
Open stakes: both Panel judges, one of whom must be an A. (If four judge system used all Panel judges, with at least 2 A Panel.)
Other stakes: at least one A. (If four judge system used at least 2 Panel judges, one of whom must be an A.)
 - (3) *Pointers and Setters*
Champion stake: 3 judges all A.
Other stakes: 2 judges, at least one A.

- (4) *Hunt, Point and Retrieve Breeds - 2 judges*
 Championship: both A
 Open stakes: both Panel judges, one of whom must be an A.
 Other stakes: at least one A.
- c. *Qualifications for Panels*
- (1) The Board shall issue to field trial societies the official lists of Panel judges for Retrievers, Spaniels, Pointers and Setters and breeds which hunt, point and retrieve which will be subject to adoption annually by the Board.
 - (2) Before a judge can be considered for addition to any panel the candidate must be recommended by a field trial society which is approved to hold open stakes for the appropriate sub-group and for which the candidate has judged within the previous 60 months. When considering the addition of any candidate to a panel the Field Trials Committee will consider evaluation forms from all 'A' Panel judges with whom the candidate has judged during the previous 60 months and in the case of a candidate for the 'B' Panel for Retrievers or Spaniels, all 'B' Panel judges with whom the candidate has judged during the previous 60 months.
 - (3) Judging experience must include stakes judged at trials held by at least two different societies. Before being added to the Panel for Retrievers or Spaniels candidates for the B Panel must have handled a dog to win at least one field trial stake for the appropriate sub-group and have considerable field trial experience. Before being added to the A Panel for Retrievers or Spaniels, candidates must have handled a dog to win at least one open stake or in the case of Retrievers, been awarded 2nd in a 2-day open stake and, since being added to the B Panel, have substantially increased their field trial experience. For HPRs, before being added to the A Panel or the B Panel, candidates must have handled a dog to a win at a novice, all-aged, or open HPR stake.
 - (4) Prospective judges for Pointers and Setters should have some experience in judging both partridge/pheasant and grouse trials before being added to any panel.
 - (5) Before a judge can be added to a panel the candidate must have judged:
 - (i) *B Panel:* over a minimum period of 36 months, and a maximum period of 60 months immediately preceding the date of the application:
 - Retrievers – a minimum of 6 stakes with at least 5 different A Panel judges.
 - Spaniels - A minimum of 6 stakes with at least 5 different A Panel judges. Of these, the candidate must have judged a minimum of 2 stakes under a 2 judge system and 2 stakes under a 4 judge system.
 - Pointers and Setters – a minimum of 4 trials with at least 4 different A Panel judges.
 - HPRs – a minimum of 6 stakes with at least 5 different A Panel judges.

- (ii) *A Panel*: over a minimum period of 36 months, and a maximum period of 60 months, subsequent to their appointment to the B Panel:
 Retrievers and Spaniels – a minimum of 6 stakes, of which 3 must have been open stakes, with at least 5 different A Panel judges.
 Pointers and Setters – a minimum of 4 trials of which at least 2 must have been open stakes, with at least 4 different A Panel judges.
 HPRs – a minimum of 8 stakes of which at least 3 must have been open, with at least 5 different A Panel judges.
- (iii) *Re-Applications*: Retrievers and Spaniels - a minimum of a further 4 stakes with at least 4 different A Panel judges. Note: For the A Panel at least 2 stakes must have been open.
 Pointers and Setters - a minimum of 4 trials with at least 4 different A Panel judges. Note: for the A Panel at least 2 stakes must have been open.
 HPRs - A minimum of a further four stakes with at least 4 different A Panel judges.
 Note: For the A Panel at least one stake must have been open.
- (6) Before a judge can be added to any Panel the candidate must have attended a Royal Kennel Club Judges' Training Programme seminar on Royal Kennel Club J Regulations for the appropriate sub-group and have passed the examination. With effect from 2 February 2023 to remain on a judging Panel, all judges must have attended a Royal Kennel Club Judges' Training Programme seminar on Royal Kennel Club J Regulations for the appropriate sub-group and must have passed the examination, unless the judge has "Grandfather rights" (see note). (Note: Judges deemed to have "Grandfather rights" and who are therefore exempt from Regulation J5.c.(6) are: judges who were appointed to the 'A' Panel or the 'B' Panel prior to 1 January 2010, and/or were involved in the pilot scheme for the judges training programme and/or those who are, or have been a Royal Kennel Club Approved Presenter) .

6. Entries.

A dog must, at the time of entry for a trial, be registered on the Royal Kennel Club Breed Register or have recorded an Authority to Compete (ATC) Number as required by Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations in the owner's name (or registration of transfer applied for). In the case of joint registered owners the full name of every registered owner must be given.

Where an owner makes an entry on behalf of another joint registered owner(s) or where an agent enters on behalf of a single or joint registered owner(s), such person must have the authority and consent from the single or joint registered owner(s) to sign the entry form on their behalf thereby binding them all to Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations. In the event of any dispute, evidence of such authority and consent will be required.

A dog acquired subsequent to entry having been made at a trial may compete as the new owners property provided that an application for the transfer has been forwarded to the Royal Kennel Club before the trial, and the new owner has

undertaken to abide by the Regulations and conditions of the original entry form (and in accordance with the conditions set out above).

- a. An entry is an application, on a copy of an official Royal Kennel Club entry form supplied by a registered society, for a named dog, registered at the Royal Kennel Club or which has an authority to compete (ATC) number, in the name of the owner, to run in a stake, subject to any conditions laid down in these Regulations and must comply with Regulation B20 in the Royal Kennel Club Year Book (Regulations for Classification and Registration).
- b. A nomination is a request by an owner/agent to enter a dog. In the event of a ballot, those drawn for places will be sent an entry form for a named dog, which is eligible for the stake and registered at the Royal Kennel Club, in their name.
- c. A society may make its own arrangements as regards the pre-payment of entries and, except where otherwise defined in the Regulations, conditions of stakes. Dates of closing of entries or nominations must be a minimum of 14 days prior to the stake.
- d. A society may reserve to itself the right to refuse any entry or nomination. Any such refusal must be reported to the Royal Kennel Club.
- e. If entries or nominations exceed the number of permitted runners, the right to compete in a Trial shall be decided by ballot (subject to Regulation J6.i. which relates to preference in the draw for open stakes). Societies must ensure that all eligible owners/members are given the opportunity of having their preferred dog entered into the first ballot (See J6.j) The society must publish the result of this ballot in full to all applicants. This must include the draw preferences the dogs are entered under. Where an online system, approved by the Royal Kennel Club, has been used to take entries, the ballot must be carried out using the same online system, and the result forwarded to the Royal Kennel Club at the same time that competitors are notified.
- f. After an applicant has been successful in the draw for a place in a stake, or as a reserve has accepted an offer of a run, if the run is not taken up, the applicant may become liable for the full entry fee except:-
 - (1) Where the applicant has qualified out of Novice Stakes (where applicable) or
 - (2) Where the dog drawn to run has qualified for the championship after entries have closed or
 - (3) On production of a veterinary certificate confirming that the dog entered for the stake is unfit to compete or
 - (4) On production of a medical certificate that the applicant or the applicants nominated handler is unable to compete or
 - (5) Where the dog drawn to run is withdrawn more than 7 days prior to the stake.
- g. Societies may, or may not, after an entry has been accepted, allow an applicant to substitute a dog before a trial with another dog owned by him or her, the dog must, however, be eligible.
- h. A society which runs two or more stakes of the same denomination in a season which are drawn on the same date may ask a member, who has been successful in the draw for more than one stake, which of the stakes he/she wishes to run in. Similarly, where a society holds two or more stakes in a season of the same denomination which are not drawn on the

same date, it may have discretion to give priority in any subsequent draws to members who were not successful in the previous draw/s. This must be clearly stated on all relevant schedules.

- i. *Preference in the draw for open stakes*
 - (1) *Retrievers*
A first, second, third or fourth in a 24-Dog Open stake. First, second or third in a One-day Open stake.
First in all age or novice stakes.
 - (2) *Spaniels*
A first, second or third in an open stake or a first in a Novice Stake or All Aged (excluding trials restricted to Any Variety Spaniel except for Spaniel [Cocker] and Spaniel [English Springer]).
 - (3) *Pointers and Setters*
A first, second or third in an Open stake.
A first or two seconds in All Age, Novice or Puppy stakes.
 - (4) *Breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve*
A first, second or third in an Open stake
Or any two of the following awards:
A first in an All-Aged Stake
A second in an All-Aged Stake
A first in a Novice Stake
- j. *Order of draws*
 - (1) *Open stakes*
 - i. Members' first preference dogs which have gained awards as shown above.
 - ii. Members' second preference dogs which have gained awards as shown above.
 - iii. Non-members' first preference dogs which have gained awards as shown above.
 - iv. Non-members' second preference dogs which have gained awards as shown above.
 - v. Members' dogs which have gained other awards.
 - vi. Non-members' dogs which have gained other awards.
 - vii. Other dogs.

The foregoing places must have been gained in a stake qualifying for entry in the Royal Kennel Club Stud Book.
 - (2) *Novice stakes*
 - i. Members' first preference dogs.
 - ii. Members' second preference dogs.
 - iii. Non-members' first preference dogs.
 - iv. Non-members' second preference dogs.
- k. All Aged stakes may be restricted by any conditions determined by the society (See J3.d(2)). In all cases members' dogs which meet the conditions of entry should take preference in the draw.
- l. If a member enters more than two eligible dogs for a stake, these subsequent eligible dogs must be placed in separate ballots and drawn before non-members' eligible dogs.
- m. The secretary of the society shall retain all entry forms of competitors for twelve months after the meeting, and produce any of them to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club if so requested.

7. Awards and Prizes.

- a. An award is any placing in a stake decided by the judges which may be first, second, third or fourth.
- b. The following may also be conferred at the discretion of the judges: at a Championship, Diplomas of Merit and in other stakes, Certificates of Merit.
- c. Awards at a field trial must be discrete; equal awards are prohibited.
- d. The judges are empowered and instructed to withhold any prize or award if, in their opinion, the dogs competing do not show sufficient merit.

8. Control of dogs and competitors under trial.

a. *Management*

The management of a field trial shall be the responsibility of the society to which the licence is issued.

- (1) A chief steward, who should be present throughout the trial, must be appointed by the committee of the society and shall be responsible for ensuring the regulations are observed. The chief steward must not interfere with the judges' decisions which are final but should, however, decide upon any matter not related to judging which is not provided for in the rules and regulations. The chief steward may call upon the judges to assist with such a decision and that decision shall be final.
- (2) Societies must ensure that the draw for the initial order of running shall take place as stated in the schedule, and each dog entered must be given a number that accords with its place in the draw.
- (3) A handler and dog must always be available to pick up wounded game when required as agreed between host and society.

b. *Handling and competing*

- (1) All competitors must be present when the chief steward announces that the trial has commenced, and subsequently when required by the judges. However, a competitor who is not present when the chief steward announces that the trial has commenced, and whose number has been allocated to the next available reserve, forfeits his run in the trial. Should a competitor be delayed by circumstances which are exceptional in the opinion of the chief steward of the organising society, then the competitor may still be allowed to take the run, in order of draw, providing he/she is available when required in line by the judges.
- (2) No person attending a trial may allow a bitch in season to be on the field trial ground or to foul any ground to be used by competing dogs.
- (3) If, after consultation with the judges, the chief steward considers a dog unfit to compete, by reason of contagious disease or physical condition, such a dog shall be required to be removed immediately from the ground and from the trial.
- (4) Any person in charge of a dog at a field trial must at all times ensure that the dog is kept under proper control whilst at the meet, or venue of the trial, and while travelling to or from the meet or venue in any transport provided for that purpose.
- (5) All handlers must carry out the instructions of the judges who are empowered to turn out of the stake any dog whose handler does not obey them, or whose handler wilfully interferes with another competitor or dog.

- (6) Except in the championships, no handler may handle more than two dogs in a stake for Retrievers, Spaniels or breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve, or more than 5 dogs in any stake for Pointers and Setters. (See also J6).
- (7) An owner, having deputed the handling of a dog to another, may be in the line while the dog is working, but must take no part in the working the dog.
- (8) There shall be no substitution of handler once a stake at a field trial has commenced.
- (9) A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler, if handling more than one dog, to ensure that his/her dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.
- (10) No person shall carry out punitive correction or harsh handling at a field trial.
- (11) With the agreement of the judges, a handler may carry a stick whilst competing.
- (12) No competitor may withdraw a dog or leave the trial ground without the permission of a judge or chief steward.
- (13) The Royal Kennel Club's Codes of Conduct specify the sort of behaviour expected of those who take part in competitive gundog work. All participants should be aware of the Codes of Conduct and must abide by them, and by Royal Kennel Club Regulations, and, in particular, should never publicly impugn decisions of the judge or judges. Neither should they criticise the host, ground or guns.

9. Championships and Champion stake.

- a. The following championships and champion stake may be held annually:
 - (1) The IGL Retriever Championship.
 - (2) Any Variety Spaniel [Excluding Spaniel (Cocker)] Championship.
 - (3) The Cocker Spaniel Championship.
 - (4) The Pointer and Setter Champion Stake.
 - (5) The Hunt, Point and Retrieve Championship.
- b. The conditions governing the championships and champion stake shall be reviewed annually by the Board and published as early as possible each year.

10. Removal of dog(s) from the trial.

A dog shall be removed from the trial if it is:

- a. A bitch which is in season
- b. Suffering from any infectious or contagious disease.
- c. Interfering with the safety or chance of winning of a fellow competitor.
- d. Of such temperament or is so much out of control as to be a danger to the safety of any person or other animal.
- e. Likely to cause suffering to the dog if it continues competing.

11. Objections.

- a. An objection must be lodged directly with the Royal Kennel Club within seven days after the last day of the trial, and under these circumstances a copy of the objection must be sent to the field trial secretary.

When an objection is lodged the following information must be given:
 A statement detailing the objection, quoting the relevant Regulation(s).
 The objection fee of £35, or such amount as may from time to time be decided by the Board.

The name and address of the objector.

The name and address of the owner of the dog (if relevant).

All relevant evidence.

The objection fee may be returned after consideration of the objection.

- b. The right to lodge an objection to a dog or any action taken at a trial is limited to anyone in attendance at the trial, or the owner of a dog competing or his accredited representative, provided they are not under a term of suspension imposed by the Royal Kennel Club.
- c. No objection shall be invalidated solely on the grounds that it was incorrectly lodged.
- d. With the exception of objections made under regulations relating to the removal of dog(s) from the trial, the dog should be allowed to compete and a full report made to the Royal Kennel Club.
- e. Objections or alleged breaches of Royal Kennel Club Regulations shall be referred to the Board of the Royal Kennel Club who have the power to delegate the hearing of the objection or breach of Regulation to the relevant Committee or may decide to refer the matter for disciplinary action under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11.
- f. Any appeal against the relevant Committee decision must be lodged within fourteen days of the decision being given and will be subject to the prescribed appeals procedure as shall be determined by the Board from time to time.

12. Disqualification and forfeit of awards.

- a. A dog may be disqualified by the Board from winning an award, whether an objection has been lodged or not, if it is proved amongst other things:-
 - (1) To have undergone surgical interference with the structure of the vocal cords for non-therapeutic reasons.
 - (2) To have been entered for a field trial not recognised by the Board.
 - (3) To have been entered by a person disqualified or suspended under Royal Kennel Club Rules.
 - (4) To have been entered for a field trial not in accordance with the Regulations of the Royal Kennel Club.
 - (5) To have been registered or recorded as owned by one of the scheduled judges within a period of twelve months prior to the trial. This provision does not apply to judges appointed in an emergency.
 - (6) To have been handled at a trial, boarded or prepared for competition by one of the scheduled judges within the previous twelve months prior to the trial or by the scheduled judge's spouse or immediate family or is resident at the same address as the scheduled judge within the previous twelve months prior to the trial. This provision does not apply to judges appointed in an emergency or at any Field Trial Championship or Champion Stake.
 - (7) To have been the subject of any other default, omission, action or incident occurring at or in connection with the trial rendering it unfair that the award should be allowed to stand.

- (8) If a dog be disqualified, the prize to which it would otherwise have been entitled shall be forfeited. The committee may at its discretion move up the dog or dogs next in order of merit (up to and including reserve or fourth place) to take the prize or prize(s).

13. Fraudulent or discreditable conduct at trials.

- a. The organising society of a trial must immediately report in writing to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club any case of alleged fraudulent or discreditable conduct, or any default, omission or incident at, or in connection with, the trial which may come to its notice, even where parties concerned have indicated that they intend taking no action. The society, at the same time, must forward to the Secretary of the Royal Kennel Club all documents and information pertaining to its report.
- b. If evidence is placed before the Board to its satisfaction that undue influence has been exercised by any person, or that any improper means have been adopted to obtain, or interfere with, the appointment of a judge or the participation by any dog at any Trial under Royal Kennel Club Regulations, the Board may require all correspondence and evidence in connection with the case to be produced in order that it may deal with the offenders under Rule A11 of the Rules of the Royal Kennel Club.

14. Penalties.

The Board shall have power to impose any of the following penalties upon any person for any breach of Royal Kennel Club Regulations subject to a right of appeal, notice of intention of which must be lodged within 14 days from the date on which the decision is given and subject to the prescribed appeals process as shall be determined by the Board from time to time;

- a. Warn
- b. Censure/reprimand
- c. Apology directive (Conduct Regulation or the Control of Dogs Regulation)
- d. Fine
- e. Award disqualified
- f. A dog's registration record may be marked 'incident recorded'
- g. A dog's registration record may be endorsed 'not eligible for entry in any event held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Regulations, nor any unlicensed event recognised by the Royal Kennel Club.'

In the event of any fine not being paid, or non compliance with any apology directive issued within the time stipulated by the Board, then that person may, at the discretion of the Board, be dealt with as if a complaint under Royal Kennel Club Rule A11 had been lodged and proved to the satisfaction of the Board.

For complaints of conduct whether at a licensed event or on social media, in addition to a warning issued - a short term fixed period of refusal of entry/attendance at Royal Kennel Club licensed events may also be imposed in accordance with procedures to be published from time to time to implement this regulation.

THE MANAGEMENT, CONDUCT AND JUDGING OF FIELD TRIALS

1. General.

- a. A field trial should be run as nearly as possible to an ordinary day's shooting.
- b. All competitors, judges and officials must be present when the secretary or chief steward has announced the trial has commenced or when the trial is deemed to have commenced.
- c. The chief steward should liaise closely with the steward of the beat who will have planned which ground is to be used for the trial. He or she should, where necessary, welcome all on behalf of the society and introduce the host, steward of the beat, judges, guns and other officials. The chief steward, moreover, should explain the outline of the day, with instructions about transport, lunch, toilets and other arrangements. The chief steward should also issue warnings on safety.
- d. At the end of the day, the chief steward should ensure that the host, guns, judges and officials are properly thanked.
- e. Dogs must not wear any form of collar when under the orders of the judges except for identification where necessary.
- f. Dogs must be excluded from further participation in the stake if they have committed an 'eliminating fault'. The judges may also discard dogs for 'major faults'. Where a dog is eliminated for 'hard mouth' all the judges must have examined the injured game before the dog is discarded. The handler shall also be given the opportunity of examining the game in the presence of the judges, but the decision of the judges is final.

2. Water tests.

- a. A water test requires a dog to enter water readily and swim to the satisfaction of the judges.
- b. If a separate water test is included as part of a stake, all dogs placed in the awards, and those who have achieved a Diploma of Merit or Certificate of Merit must have passed this test.
- c. A handler is not entitled to ask for a shot to be fired.

Where a special water test is conducted for part qualification for the title of field trial champion (in accordance with the provisions of Royal Kennel Club Regulations for entries in the Stud Book, Champions, and Warrants, paragraphs K2.c(3), K2.c(6) and K2.c(8)), it must be held between 1 September and 1 April inclusive.

3. Judging.

- a. The task of the judges is to find the dog which, on the day, pleases them most by the quality of its work from the shooting point of view. They must, therefore, take natural game-finding to be of the first importance in field trials.

A judge must also have a very good working knowledge of the breed or breeds under trial and have the interest and future of the breed or breeds at heart, since final placings may influence breeding plans and so determine the course of breed development.

- b. No judge should accept an invitation to judge a trial, and no competitor should enter a trial, unless they are fully conversant with the current Field Trial Regulations.
The chief steward of a field trial should ensure that each of the judges at a field trial has a copy of the current Field Trial Regulations.
- c. Judges are responsible for the proper conduct of the trial in accordance with Royal Kennel Club Rules and Field Trial Regulations. Judges are also expected to maintain and abide by the highest standards in accordance with the appropriate Codes of Best Practice as published from time to time.
- d. All judges, chief stewards and others responsible for the organisation of the trial should be courteous and co-operative with the host and steward of the beat and fall in with their arrangements to achieve the best result possible in an atmosphere of friendliness and confidence.
- e. At the start of the day, the judges should be introduced to each other and decide their positions in the line which will remain the same throughout the body of the stake. The judges should brief the guns and handlers and if, at any time, conditions force them to depart from the arrangements they have set out the chief steward should be informed so that he or she can advise the competitors, guns and others affected.
- f. Judges should also make themselves aware of any special prizes which are to be awarded in the stake.
- g. Judges should ask the steward of the beat what the game position is likely to be and regulate the amount of work or number of retrieves for each dog accordingly. At driven trials judges should, after consultation with the steward of the beat, ensure that dogs sitting at a drive are positioned as to have the best opportunity to retrieve runners or wounded game during the drive only when it is practical to do so (they should also, however, be mindful of Regulation J(A)4.b). They should moreover satisfy themselves that arrangements have been made for the collection of dead or wounded game not gathered by the competing dogs and where necessary its humane despatch.
- h. Judges should be careful for the safety of dogs and should not require them to negotiate hazards such as dangerous barbed wire fences, ice on ponds, unsupervised roadways or walls with high drops. Whilst judges should take reasonable precautions for the safety of competing dogs, it is also the duty of the handler to satisfy himself or herself that their dog is suitably trained, physically fit and prepared to undertake the work allocated by the judges before directing it to carry out the task specified.
- i. A higher standard of work is expected in stakes which carry a qualification for the title of Field Trial Champion.
- j. All judges must be satisfied that the conditions at the Stake were such as to enable the dogs to be satisfactorily tested. If there was insufficient game the stake must be considered void and must be reported to the Royal Kennel Club within 14 days.
- k. It is the duty of the judges to give dogs every opportunity to work well by seeing that conditions are, as far as possible, in their favour. In all trials the work of the dog is much affected by the way the handler behaves. Noisy handling, however occasioned, is a major fault. A good handler will appear to do little but watch his dog while maintaining at all times perfect control over it.

- l. Judges should keep their opinions strictly to themselves and act on what happens on the day or days of the trial at which they are judging, forgetting past performance.
- m. At the end of each retrieve or run, judges are advised to place each dog in a category such as A or B (+ or -) according to the work done. Such gradings may, quite properly, be supplemented on occasion by additional notation for reference purposes when judges are going through their books. It is, however, imperative to appreciate that gradings should never be retrospectively adjusted once agreed with all judges and written in the grid. Neither should there ever be any attempt to sum sequences of grades to produce a single letter grading of a dog. When all dogs have been seen by a judge, or judges, they will wish to confer to determine which dogs they wish to discard or retain; it is vitally important for judges to make short notes of each dog's work. judges should never expect to be able to trust to memory.
- n. Judges on the A Panel and the B Panel must submit assessments of B Panel or non-panel judges, as appropriate, with whom they officiate. All evaluation forms to be received by the Royal Kennel Club within 30 days of the trial.

4. For all sub-groups required to retrieve.

- a. A dog should be steady to shot and fall of game and should retrieve tenderly to hand on command. Handlers shall not send their dog until directed by the judge.
- b. Judges at open stakes and championships should ask their guns not to shoot directly over a dog when it is already out working on a retrieve. In other stakes, judges should ask their guns not to shoot when a dog is already out working on a retrieve unless by so doing they are certain there would be no chance of distracting the dog from its task.
- c. All wounded game should, where possible, be gathered and despatched immediately. Unless exceptional circumstances prevail then wounded game should always be tried for before dead game. If game cannot be gathered, the judge must depute this task to the official handler and dog appointed for this purpose.
- d. If game is shot very close to a dog which would make a retrieve of no value, the retrieve may be offered to a dog under another judge. During the first round of the stake dogs should, whenever possible, have the opportunity to pick game shot by their own guns.
- e. Handlers should be instructed where to try from and be given reasonable directions as to where the game fell. Whilst dogs are retrieving, judges should not use their stick or any other aid as a marker to show the precise whereabouts of shot game or the fall area. If the dogs tried fail to complete the retrieve the judges should search the area of fall and, if they find the game, the dogs tried, save in exceptional circumstances, will be eliminated. However, should a dog or dogs prove to have been tried in the wrong area they should not be so penalised.
- f. Good marking is essential in a retrieving dog as it should not disturb ground unnecessarily. Judges should give full credit to a dog which goes straight to the fall and gets on with the job. Similarly, the ability to take the line of a hare, wounded rabbit or bird should be credited.

- g. A good retrieve will include a quick and unfussy pick-up followed by a fast return. The handler should not have to snatch or drag game from the dog's mouth. Whilst judges should not penalise a dog too heavily for putting game down to get a firmer grip, they must never, however, condone sloppy retrieving.

A good game-finding dog should not rely on the handler to find the game. It should, however, be obedient and respond to its handler's signals where necessary.

Dogs showing game-finding ability and initiative when hunting and retrieving should be placed above those which have to be handled to their game. Usually, the best dog seems to require the least handling. It appears to have an instinctive knowledge of direction and makes a difficult find look simple and easy.

- h. If a dog is performing indifferently on a runner, it must be called up promptly. If more dogs are tried on the runner, the work of all these dogs must be assessed in relation to the order in which they are tried. The handlers of the second and subsequent dogs down may be allowed to take their dogs towards the fall, as may the handler of the first dog if it has not had a chance to mark the game. Game picked by the second or a subsequent dog constitutes an 'eye wipe'. Dogs which have had their eyes wiped during the body of the stake, however it may have occurred, will be discarded. All eye wipes should be treated on their merits.

If the first dog sent shows ability by acknowledging the fall and making a workmanlike job of the line or the area, it need not automatically be barred from the awards by failing to produce the game provided that the game is not collected by another dog tried by the judges, or by the judges themselves, when searching the area which they directed the handler to search. Moreover, there will be occasions when circumstances make it impossible to send a dog promptly. If this happens and a significant delay ensues, a dog disadvantaged in this way should not be penalised as a first dog down.

- i. All game should be examined for signs of hard mouth. A hard-mouthed dog seldom gives visible evidence of hardness. The dog will simply crush in one or both sides of the ribs. Visible inspection and blowing up the feathers on a bird will not disclose the damage, digital examination is imperative.

Place the game bird on the palm of the hand, breast upwards, head forward, and using that same hand feel the ribs with fingers and thumb. They should be round and firm. If they are caved in or flat this may be evidence of hard mouth. Be sure the game reaches the co-judges for examination.

Judges should always satisfy themselves that the damage done has been caused by the dog, not by the shot or fall. Judges, for instance, must be clear about the difference between damage to the ribcage caused by shot and the quite distinctive damage caused by a dog.

Handlers must be given the opportunity of inspecting the damaged game in the presence of the judges, but the decision of the judges is final.

A sure sign of good mouth is a dog bringing in live game whose head is up and eye bright. Superficial damage, if any, in this case can be ignored. At times, the rump of a strong runner may be gashed and look ugly. Care should be taken here, as it may be the result of a difficult capture or lack of experience in mastering a strong runner by a young dog.

There should be no hesitation or sentiment with hard mouth. The dog must be eliminated.

- j. Only game shot by the guns during the trial should be used for dogs to retrieve whilst they are under the direction of the judges. Handlers may be required to use their dogs to look for game after the trial at the request of the keeper. Practicing with cold game on the trial ground is forbidden.

RETRIEVERS

These Regulations should be read alongside and assume a familiarity with the Royal Kennel Club Guide to the J Regulations document.

1. Basic requirements.

Dogs shall be required to be steady by the handler whilst being shot over until commanded to quest for dead or wounded game, from land or water, and retrieve tenderly to hand. Any dog which does not fulfil the basic requirements shall not receive an award or a Certificate of Merit.

2. Number of runners.

To qualify for entry in the Royal Kennel Club Stud Book, the number of runners permitted in Stakes is:

- (a) Two-day Open Stakes: maximum 24, minimum 20.
- (b) One-day Open Stakes: maximum 16, minimum 10.
- (c) Other Stakes per day: maximum 16, minimum 10.

3. Competing.

- (a) The order of running shall be the order of the draw unless the Judges decide to split the competitors.
- (b) Initially, the dog with the lowest number under each judge should be placed on the judge's right. When there are three judges for a stake they must judge singly and when there are four judges they must judge in pairs. If two of the four judges are not Panel judges they must not judge together. Moreover, if there are only two A Panel judges present they must not judge together.
- (c) All dogs, unless discarded, must be tried in the first two rounds by more than one judge if there are three judges, or by more than one pair of judges if there are four. Dogs must not come into line in the second round under the same judges as in the first round. After the second round, dogs may be called back into line in numerical order to either side in a four judge system or to any judge in a three judge system.
- (d) In the event that the dogs are to be split between the Judges under the 4 judge system, this will be done odds and evens. In the first round, the odd numbered dogs will be seen by the right hand judges and the evens by the left hand judges. Where this system is adopted, in the second round the odd numbered dogs remaining in the trial must be seen by the left hand judges and the evens by the right hand Judges. Upon completion of the second round the order of sending may revert to the order of the draw, although this decision depends on circumstances applying at the time and would be at the discretion of the Judges. Where a handler is running an odd numbered dog and an even numbered dog, both dogs should be run on the side of the lowest numbered dog. The dogs on that side will be run in numerical order.

- (e) Where the trial is to be run under the three judge system, the dogs should be split equally, and in numerical order, between the three judges, i.e. 1,2,3,4 with the right hand judge, 5,6,7,8 with the middle judge and 9, 10, 11 and 12 with the left hand judge in a One-day stake and 1-8, 9-16 and 17-24 in a two day. Dogs should then rotate from right to left so that the dogs under the left hand judge in the first round should be seen by the right hand judge next and so on.

4. Credit Points.

Natural gamefinding ability.	Control.
Drive and style.	Quiet handling.
Good retrieving and delivery.	Nose.
Quickness in gathering game.	Marking ability.

5. Eliminating Faults.

Hard mouth.	Whining or barking.
Running in.	Out of control.
Failing to enter water.	Refusal to retrieve.
Changing game whilst retrieving.	Chasing.
Without merit	

6. Major Faults.

Unsteadiness at heel.	Being eye wiped.
Disturbing ground.	Poor control.
Slack and un-businesslike work.	Failing to find dead or wounded game.
Noisy or inappropriate handling.	Sloppy retrieving and delivery.

7. Trial Procedure.

a. *The three judge system*

If there is one A Panel judge, then it is advisable that he or she takes the centre of the line, to be available to the other judges if required, and be able to keep some contact with all the line.

b. *The four judge system*

If there are only two A Panel judges they should not judge together.

c. *The line*

(1) In walked-up trials the steward of the beat will be in charge of the line and dictate the pace of the line.

(2) In a three judge walked-up trial, the judges will be positioned left, centre and right. Each judge will usually have two guns shooting for him and he would normally place himself and his dogs between his guns. If there are extra guns then it should be decided which judge they are to shoot for. This will go a long way towards avoiding two dogs being sent for the same game.

d. (1) Dogs must walk steadily at heel and remain steady and quiet at drives.

(2) If the game situation permits, two retrieves in the first round, then one retrieve in the second round is the usual procedure. It is imperative that the chief steward should be informed of any dogs eliminated or discarded for any reason. This will enable the chief steward to have the correct dogs available when required.

- (3) The chief steward should send in the second round dogs to the appropriate judge when there is a vacancy in the line (paragraph J(B)3.c refers). Second round dogs should have their opportunity to be tried against first round dogs when the situation arises.
- (4) In a round with two retrieves a judge should be most careful to see that each dog gets its chance in the correct order, starting with the lowest number on the right. Should dog No. 1 fail, and dog No. 2 be successful, so eliminating his partner, No. 2 still has the first chance on the next retrieve. In these circumstances a dog may be given two consecutive retrieves.
- (5) When a judge tries his dogs, for example no. 1 and no. 2, behind other dogs, if no. 1 dog is successful, then the next retrieve under that judge should be offered to no. 2 dog. The back up dog in line must always have the first opportunity of an eye-wipe over its partner, irrespective of which round it is in. Lower round dogs should not be called over from the other side until after this dog has been given its chance. If the two dogs fail on game, the judge should not call fresh dogs into the line to try for the retrieve until all the other dogs already in the line have been tried. The exception to this is when using the odds and evens system the Judges should continue to use dogs on their own side. For example, dogs No. 5 & No. 7 would be tried behind No. 1 & No. 3. If No. 5 is successful, the next retrieve should be offered to No. 7. Should No. 5 fail and No. 7 be successful, No. 7 still has the next retrieve. The Judges should have four dogs in line, the two sending dogs and two back up dogs.
- (6) In walked-up trials if one part of the line is starved of game and the dogs have been down under that judge or judges for quite some time then another judge or judges, who may have been getting more game shot by their guns, could offer one or more of his guns to the judge or judges who are short of game. The handlers should be made aware of these arrangements. It is quite unfair in the body of the trial for a judge to offer dead game to a co-judge whilst asking their own dogs to try for the runners.
- (7) A first dog failure, is when the first dog to be tried on a retrieve, fails. However, if there is any significant delay in sending a dog, then it should not be penalised as a first dog failure when the game is not subsequently picked by another dog, tried by the judges, or by the judges searching the area which the handler has been directed to search.

8. Run-off.

When the judges decide to run-off the top few dogs to confirm their final placings, they will usually position themselves together in the centre of the line or, at least, in a position where they can see all the dogs working. At this stage in the trial, a dog may be stretched to such a degree that it may fail and be eye-wiped. In this situation the dog which has had its eye-wiped would be penalised, but could still feature in the awards. In the concluding stages of a Trial, judges may use their own discretion with the order of sending, as the situation arises.

9. Multiple handling.

If two or more dogs are handled by the same person:

- a. In a walked up trial the accepted practice is for the handler to have his lowest numbered dog in line with his other dog or dogs on the lead held by a deputy out of the line, but in reasonably close proximity at the discretion of the judges. On leaving the line the handler should exchange the dog with the deputy for his next lowest numbered dog and return to the line when instructed to do so by the judges or dog steward.
- b. In a driven trial a handler who has more than one dog may be expected to have all his dogs in line at a drive. A deputy should be in reasonably close proximity at the discretion of the judges and the handler, ready to put the other dog or dogs on the lead should the handler be asked to send one of the dogs for a retrieve during the drive. At the end of the drive all dogs, other than the dog which the judges wish to try next in its turn, should be taken out of line and should be held by the deputy on the lead until required in line. When directed to do so by the judges, the handler should exchange the dog in line with the deputy for his next lowest numbered dog and return to the line when instructed to do so by the judges or dog steward.
- c. These procedures apply not only in the body of the stake, but also in the run off.
- d. A handler should not have their second dog backing up their first dog, while other dogs are available in the round except in a run off.

SPANIELS

These Regulations should be read alongside and assume a familiarity with the Royal Kennel Club Guide to the J Regulations document.

1. Basic Requirements.

Dogs shall be required to quarter ground hunting for game and other quarry species (hereafter game), to be steady to flush, shot and fall and to retrieve tenderly to hand on command.

Any dog which does not fulfil these basic requirements shall not receive an award or a Certificate of Merit.

2. Number of Runners.

To qualify for entry in the Royal Kennel Club Stud Book, the number of runners permitted in stakes is:

- a. Open Stakes - maximum 18, minimum 14.
- b. Other Stakes - maximum 18, minimum 12.
- c. Any Variety Spaniel (Except Spaniel [Cocker] and Spaniel [English Springer]) - maximum 18, minimum 10.

3. Competing.

Where possible dogs should be run in pairs, one dog under each judge or pair of judges. In the first round, odd numbers will run under the right-hand judge(s) in consecutive order and, unless eliminated or discarded, will run in the second round under the left-hand judge(s) and vice versa. A handler who is running two dogs in the stake may already be running a dog when called for a run with his or her other dog. The judge(s) should then call the next dog on that side to allow continuity of the stake. When this occurs the stake must revert to the original running order at the earliest opportunity. After the second round of a stake is completed the judges may call up any dogs they please and in any order.

4. Credit points.

Natural gamefinding ability.	Marking ability.
Drive.	Style.
Control.	Quiet handling.
Clean quick retrieving and good delivery.	

5. Eliminating faults.

Hard mouth.	Whining or barking.
Missing game on the beat.	Running in or chasing.
Failing to enter water.	Refusal to retrieve.
Out of control.	Picking wrong retrieve.
Being eye wiped.	Changing game whilst retrieving.
Without merit.	

6. Major faults.

Disturbing ground.	Poor control.
Catching healthy game.	Not stopping to flush.
Noisy handling.	Not quartering or making ground good.
Not stopping to shot and game.	
Failing to find dead or wounded game (subject to J(A)4.h.).	

7. Trial procedure.

A Spaniel's first job is to hunt and find game and flush it within range of the handler. A Spaniel should at all times work within range with good treatment of ground and must not miss game on the beat it is working. During this period, the judge(s) can assess the game-finding ability, pace, drive, and, possibly, courage. A dog should have drive and face cover well, but at the same time, should be lively and biddable. In short it should be exciting and a pleasure to watch. It should show good treatment of ground with a minimum of help from its handler. All things being equal, the stylish dog should be given credit. However, judge(s) should be satisfied that the fast stylish dog is also the best gamefinder.

The direction of the wind has a considerable influence on the way a dog will work ground. With a head-on wind the dog should quarter the ground systematically, left to right and vice versa, making good all likely game-holding cover, but keeping within gunshot distance of the handler. With a following wind it could be very different. The dog will often want to pull well out, then work back towards the handler. Judge(s) must regulate the pace of the line to allow the dog to do this and make good its ground.

When hunting, lines and foot scents should be ignored. Persistent pulling on foot scents is unprofitable and can result in game being missed. However, the ability to take the line to a shot rabbit or hare and birds which have run should be credited.

A run without a find should not automatically bar a dog from the final placings.

8. Any game caught by a dog whilst hunting must be retrieved to its handler and handed to the judge(s) for despatch. After examination the judge(s) may discard the dog unless there are extenuating circumstances.

9. It is a refinement if a dog indicates the presence of game before flushing the game positively.

10. A dog should stop to flush, game and shot, but if it moves in order to mark the fall, if this is obscured, this shows intelligence and should be credited.

11. A Spaniel should pick up cleanly, return quickly and deliver tenderly to hand. Such a retrieve is desirable; but too much should not be made of a momentary check if the dog has had a long gruelling hunt up to the time of flushing, thus making the retrieve possible. This should be allowed for. Whenever possible, and always bearing the conditions in mind, a dog should not be sent on a long unseen retrieve, but should be taken to within a reasonable distance of the fall.

Normally, it is unwise to try more than two dogs on one retrieve. If both dogs are tried and fail to complete the retrieve and the judges have satisfactorily searched the area, the line will continue to move forward. Should any subsequent dog find dead or wounded game, however, this will not necessarily be considered to be an eye wipe.

12. Judges should refrain from holding a conversation with anyone whilst a dog is actively competing. From the moment the dog starts working, judges should make every effort to keep the dog in view. When the dog is sent out for a retrieve, the judges should also, where possible, observe the dogs' every move until the game is delivered to hand.

13. Judges are under an obligation never to waste game and if a spare retrieve becomes available it must be offered in the first instance to the dog on the other side, if this dog has not yet had a retrieve. The judges may subsequently offer a spare retrieve to a dog that has already had a satisfactory run without a retrieve in sequence starting with the lowest number.

14. Run-Off.

It is desirable to place the dogs on their work in the body of the stake. If the judges are unable to do this then the dogs may be further assessed by running them side by side. The main consideration now should be style, pace, ground treatment and each dog's response to its handler. Judges must ensure that competitors do not interfere with the other handler or dog (Regulation J8.b(5)). In this run-off stage dogs will only be discarded if they commit eliminating faults.

POINTERS AND SETTERS

These Regulations should be read alongside and assume a familiarity with the Royal Kennel Club Guide to the J Regulations document.

1. Basic requirements.

Dogs shall be required to quarter ground systematically with pace and style in search of gamebirds, to point gamebirds, to be steady to flush and shot and, where applicable, to fall. Dogs should not be gun shy. The dog should work its point out freely, on command, without the handler either touching the dog or moving in front of it.

Any dog which does not fulfil the basic requirements shall not receive an award or a Certificate of Merit.

2. Number of runners.

To qualify for entry in the Royal Kennel Club Stud Book, the number of runners permitted in stakes is:

- a. Open Stakes: maximum 40, minimum 16.
- b. Novice/All Aged Stakes: maximum 45, minimum 10.
- c. Puppy Stakes: maximum 45, minimum 8.

Where an open and any other type of stake are to run on the same day, the maximum number of runners over the whole day is 45.

3. Competing.

Dogs are to be run in pairs and their handlers must walk within a reasonable distance of one another as though shooting together. Dogs should be placed as drawn on the card, with the first number on the left, and every dog must be brought up in its proper turn without delay.

4. Draws.

Prior to the Stake and before the commencement of each round a draw will be made. For second and subsequent rounds, if the judges are satisfied that they have identified the dogs which will figure in the awards, they may run them in pairs as they see fit, to establish the final places. When an handler has more than one dog in a stake, those dogs shall, when a draw takes place, be kept separate in every round.

5. Byes.

When in any round in a stake the number of dogs is unequal, the dog whose number is drawn last must be run against a dog chosen by the judges. No dog shall have a second such bye.

6. Collars.

The judges may require any dogs to wear distinguishing collars.

7. The whole quality of a dog's work must be taken into consideration, not just the number of points it has made. The judges should be looking for credit qualities rather than trying to eliminate dogs, and it is the better dogs which should be fully tried, not wasting ground and time on those with little or no merit. Minor faults should not be too heavily penalised when a dog has done good sound work. A dog's work should be exciting and a pleasure to watch, as would appeal to and interest guns particularly if gamebirds are scarce.

8. Credit points.

Systematically quartering with stamina pace and style.

Hunting with drive and purpose.

Style on point and production.

Dropping to wing.

Natural backing.

Quiet handling.

9. Eliminating faults.

Flushing up wind.

Chasing fur or feather.

Whining or barking.

Stealing a point.

Interfering with the other dog on point.

Not dropping to flush down wind.

Missing gamebirds on the beat.

Out of control.

Unsteadiness to game.

Blinking a point.

Without merit.

10. Major faults.

Poor ground treatment.

Stickiness on point.

Persistent back casting.

Noisy handling.

Persistent false pointing.

11. Each brace should be tried for a reasonable time except when undoubted lack of merit of one or both dogs is confirmed by both judges.

12. The dog should quarter the appointed ground as drawn with pace and style making good all its ground, working correctly to the wind particularly if downwind or cheek wind, showing gamebird finding ability and working naturally with the minimum of handling. Dogs should be steady to fur, feather, flush and shot.

13. If a dog flushes a gamebird upwind it should be discarded, but if it is working downwind and flushes; or on the first cast runs sideways into gamebirds and drops immediately, having had no chance to wind them, these do not constitute eliminating faults.

14. Judges should appreciate that a backing dog may be disadvantaged in the following circumstances:

If a pointing dog is sticky on point.

If a pointing dog is guilty of persistent false pointing.

If a pointing dog is not positive in its workout.

15. When a dog has worked ground and gamebirds are proved to have been left on the beat, that dog has missed gamebirds and should be eliminated. If gamebirds are found on the ground which the dog should have worked but did not cover, the judges should consider the circumstances before penalising the dog for faulty ground treatment (but not for missing gamebirds).

16. If, when pointing gamebirds, a dog blinks by leaving the point and continues hunting that dog must be discarded.

17. Judges should appreciate that different breeds have different styles of working and should make themselves conversant with these styles.

18. Judges should conserve the ground by being as decisive as possible. They should keep up with the handlers to try to see everything that takes place, but not try to keep up with a dog that is obviously running out of its ground.

19. If possible, it is desirable that the winner should have run with the second, and the third with the fourth, to minimise the luck of the draw regarding variations in conditions, scent and gamebird supply.

BREEDS WHICH HUNT, POINT AND RETRIEVE

These Regulations should be read alongside and assume a familiarity with the Royal Kennel Club Guide to the J Regulations document.

1. Basic requirements.

Dogs shall be required to quarter ground systematically in search of quarry (hereafter game), to point game, to flush on command, to be steady to flush, shot and fall, and to retrieve tenderly to hand on command.

Any dog which does not fulfil the basic requirements shall not receive an award or a Certificate of Merit.

2. Number of runners.

To qualify for entry in the Royal Kennel Club Stud Book, the number of runners permitted in stakes is:

- a. Open stakes: maximum 16, minimum 10.
- b. Other stakes: maximum 16, minimum 8.
- c. Championship - no maximum number

3. The trial should run as nearly as possible to an ordinary day's rough shooting for a small party of guns, numbering not more than 4 in total.

4. Competing.

Dogs shall be run singly in order of the draw under two judges judging as a pair. A dog, unless discarded must have been tried at least twice in the line, before it may receive an award or certificate of merit.

5. Credit points.

Systematically quartering with stamina pace and style.

Hunting with drive and purpose.

Style on point and production.

Dropping to wing.

Speed and efficiency in retrieving.

Good marking.

Quiet handling.

Good water work.

6. Eliminating faults.

Hard mouth.

Flushing up wind.

Unsteadiness.

Failure to hunt or point.

Changing game whilst retrieving.

Picking wrong retrieve.

Missing game on the beat

(excluding hare and snipe).

Whining or barking.

Out of control.

Running in or chasing.

Blinking a point.

Being eye wiped.

Refusal to retrieve or swim.

Failure to retrieve to hand.

Without merit.

7. Major faults.

Poor ground treatment.

Persistent false pointing.

Not stopping to flush down wind.

Not acknowledging game going away

Failing to find dead or wounded game

(subject to J(A)4.h.).

Stickiness on point.

Disturbing ground

Noisy handling

Catching unwounded game.

8. Judges should define the beat to be worked. As much discretion as practical should be left to the handler as to how to work the ground.

9. Judges must judge as a pair, but record their assessments independently having established the categories to be marked. They should see as much work as possible from every dog, particularly those which impress most favourably, and assess this work carefully in every aspect. Judges should remember that the main work of a dog which hunts, points and retrieves is to find game, and present it to the guns so that they have a good chance of a reasonable shot. Particular note should be taken of the following:-

- a. **Game finding ability.** This is of the highest importance. The judge must assess game finding by observing the way the dog works its beat with regard to the wind, covers all likely game holding pockets and responds to scent generally, and also by its drive and sense of purpose.
- b. **Ground treatment.** In all stakes it is highly desirable that all dogs be worked into the wind wherever possible. Dogs should quarter the beat systematically and with purpose, regulating their pace to suit the type of ground and cover.
If a dog flushes game upwind it should be discarded, but if it is working downwind and flushes or runs sideways into game having had no chance to wind it, these do not constitute eliminating faults. However, the dog should always acknowledge game so flushed and stop.
- c. **Pointing.** Credit will be given to the dog that acknowledges game scent positively, draws in deliberately, points staunchly, flushes only on command and is subsequently steady. Persistent, false or unproductive pointing is a major fault. False pointing may be recognised by the dog leaving its point and immediately showing no further interest in the scent that apparently brought it on point. Unproductive pointing is where the dog points residual scent. Less experienced dogs tend to persist on such unproductive points, thereby wasting time, whereas a more experienced dog will recognise this residual scent for what it is and quickly resume hunting. If, when pointing game, a dog blinks by leaving the point and continues hunting that dog must be eliminated.
- d. **Retrieving.** All retrieves should be completed as quickly as possible so that the progress of the Trial is not interrupted unduly.
- e. **Style.** Before final assessments of the work are made, judges should consider the style of the dogs. Credit should be given to a dog which embraces grace of movement, stylishness when pointing and retrieving and which shows keenness and competence in what it is doing. Judges should recognise that each breed within the Hunt, Point and Retrieve subgroup has its own individual style, and they should acquaint themselves with these differences.

SHOW GUNDOG WORKING CERTIFICATE

1. The Show Gundog Working Certificate is not a qualification in itself, however, when awarded it enables the 'Sh' to be removed from the title of 'Show Champion' and the letters SGWC may be used after the dog's name on entry forms and in show catalogues.

2. A gundog which has won a Challenge Certificate or previously qualified for Crufts through a breed class may be entered for a Show Gundog Working Certificate at a field trial or a show gundog working day for its sub-group, licensed by the Royal Kennel Club, with a minimum of two judges officiating, of which at least one must be an A Panel judge. Judges must be aware that the principal purpose of the Show Gundog Working Certificate is to assess whether a dog demonstrates a natural ability to hunt and, where appropriate, point and retrieve, and they should take care to judge accordingly.

3. The permission of the society holding the trial must be obtained and the dog must be entered on the entry form of the meeting. The fee charged by the society should be the same as that for dogs entering the trial.

4. Societies which are registered with the Royal Kennel Club and which have been authorised to organise field trials may apply for permission to organise a show gundog working day for their relevant sub-group.

5. Retrieving breeds should be tested on freshly shot, unhandled game.

6. The granting of a Show Gundog Working Certificate shall be at the discretion of the judges at the meeting and all judges must sign the certificate.

7. Before signing a certificate the judges must be satisfied that the dog fulfilled the following requirements:-

- a. The dog has been tested in line.
- b. The dog has shown that it is not gunshy.
- c. For a Retriever, that it hunted for, and found, dead or wounded game, faced cover, and retrieved tenderly.
- d. For a Spaniel, that it hunted, faced cover, produced game and retrieved tenderly.
- e. For a Pointer or Setter that it hunted and pointed game.
- f. For a Hunt, Point and Retrieve breed that it hunted, pointed game and retrieved tenderly.

- g. For all retrieving breeds, that the dog entered water freely, swam and retrieved. [If a natural retrieve from water is not possible then a dummy may be used and if suitable water is not available the dog is permitted to undertake a special water test as soon as possible after the day, but between 1 September and 1 April, which will be recognised by the issue of a certificate, to be signed by two field trial panel judges, one of whom must be on the 'A' Panel.]
- h. That the dog has not whined or barked in line, subject to the breed standard.
- i. That the dog has been under reasonable control.

8. Judges should be aware of their responsibility when awarding a SGWC, that the dog has been thoroughly tested, and shown sufficient merit to become a Champion. (Regulation J(A)3.a. refers.)

ROYAL KENNEL CLUB REGULATIONS FOR GUNDOG WORKING TESTS

These Regulations should be read alongside and assume a familiarity with, Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Regulations. A copy of these Regulations must be available at all Gundog Working Tests (GWTs.)

1. Introduction.

- a. GWTs are competitions which, by artificially simulating shooting day conditions, seek to assess, without game being shot, the working abilities of the various breeds of Gundog.
- b. Gundog Working Tests should be conducted in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, welcoming to newcomers as well as being a test of the progress of a gundog's training for the shooting field and field trials. No titles are to be used for the winners of Gundog Working Tests.
- c. The Royal Kennel Club authorises registered societies to hold competitive gundog working tests.
- d. Scurries, Pick-Ups, and other similar events are exempt, as are non-competitive club training assessments where no awards are on offer. The Royal Kennel Club also recognises that events involving unregistered dogs do sometimes take place. Such events cannot, however, be considered to be GWTs under these Regulations.
- e. Application for authority to hold GWTs must be made annually to the Royal Kennel Club and, applicants should indicate the number of GWTs they propose to hold in the forthcoming year.
- f. Unaffiliated societies or individuals may also be accorded annual authority to organise GWTs, subject to 1.e. above, and these must be run in accordance with the J(G) Regulations.
- g. The GWT year will run from 2 February to 1 February.
- h.
 - (1) Notwithstanding the provisions of these Regulations, certain events which are not authorised by the Royal Kennel Club may from time to time be recognised by the Board of the Royal Kennel Club. The Board is able to grant permission for Royal Kennel Club registered dogs to be entered for such events.
 - (2) A judge, competitor or promoter will not be prejudiced by participation in such unauthorised events.

2. Definition of Gundog Working Tests (GWT).

- a. GWTs may be run for any of the three sub-groups of Gundogs recognised by the Royal Kennel Club as detailed below:
 - (1) Retrievers and Irish Water Spaniels.
 - (2) Spaniels other than Irish Water Spaniels.
 - (3) Breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve.
- b. The following classes of competition are recognised by the Royal Kennel Club:
 - (1) OPEN. Open to all dogs of a specified breed or breeds, although preference may be given to dogs which have gained an award or certificate of merit at a field trial, been placed first, second or third in an open GWT, or first in a Novice GWT.

- (2) NOVICE. Confined to dogs which have not gained an award or certificate of merit at a field trial, been placed first, second or third in an Open GWT or first in a Novice GWT held in accordance with Royal Kennel Club Rules and Field Trial Regulations.
- (3) PUPPY. Open to all dogs of specific breed or breeds less than eighteen months of age on the date of the test regardless of awards gained.
- (4) NOVICE DOG/NOVICE HANDLER. Confined to dog and handler who have not gained any award in a field trial or classified GWT or won a Novice Dog/Novice Handler test.
- (5) UNCLASSIFIED. Open to all dogs of a specified breed or breeds, but may be restricted by conditions as determined by the society. To include water and team tests. A water test can include dogs of any sub-group competing together. However, if dogs of more than one sub-group are competing as a team, each sub-group will compete and be judged in accordance with the Royal Kennel Club Gundog Working Test Regulations relating to that group.

3. Organisation of Gundog Working Tests.

- a. The organisation shall agree to hold and conduct the tests within the Rules and Regulations of the Royal Kennel Club.
- b. Control of dogs. The owner, competitor, handler or other person in charge of a dog at Royal Kennel Club authorised events must, at all times, ensure that the dog is kept under proper control whilst at the venue including its environs, car and caravan parks and approaches.
- c. GWTs should be organised by a person or persons with experience of dog work under shooting field conditions. Each dog or team of dogs should have, as near as possible, an equal opportunity with any variability in circumstances, as far as possible, minimised.
- d. The organisers of GWTs will try, wherever possible, to simulate the circumstances of a shooting day. They must also ensure the tests are designed to further good Gundog work, and not inhibit dogs from marking or showing natural working ability. It is important, for instance, that guns and dummy throwers are positioned with such considerations in mind, and that distances of retrieves and difficulty of test are achievable and relevant to the standard (e.g. puppy, novice, open). Organisers may set tests in advance, using non-competing dogs of the same standard to ensure this.
- e. The organisers must ensure that competitors are aware of the initial running order.
- f. Final decisions regarding the acceptability of tests lie with the judge or judges.
- g. Only dummies acceptable to the judges, will be used for retrieves in GWTs. The same type of dummy must be used within each exercise.
- h. When dummies are thrown in association with gunfire in retrieving tests, the shot must always precede the thrown dummy with the gun pointing in the direction of where the dummy is to be thrown. The gun should be positioned within 'shot range' of the retrieve. With unseen retrieves gunfire is optional.
- i. A dog, when retrieving, must not be required to pass too close to another retrieve.

- j. Organisers and judges must be careful for the safety of dogs and must not require them to negotiate dangerous obstacles. Whilst judges should take reasonable precautions for the safety of competing dogs, it is the duty of the handler to satisfy themselves that the dog is suitably trained, physically fit and prepared to undertake the work allocated by the judges before directing their dog to undertake the allotted task.

4. Conduct of Gundog Working Tests.

- a. The organisers must ensure all competitors and judges are informed that the event is being held under Royal Kennel Club Rules and Field Trial Regulations.
- b. The Code of Conduct expected at GWTs is the same as that for Field Trials. The Code of Conduct documents can be found on the Royal Kennel Club website.
- c. Those taking part in GWTs shall not openly impugn the decision of the judges or criticise the host, ground, or helpers. Any cases of alleged misconduct must be reported to the Royal Kennel Club in accordance with Regulation J13 (Fraudulent and Discreditable Conduct at Trials). In particular the provisions of Field Trial Regulations J11 (Objections), J12 (Disqualification and Forfeit of Awards) and J14 (Penalties) shall apply.
- d. All dogs must be registered with the Royal Kennel Club. Each dog to be of a breed included within the relevant sub-group as previously defined.
- e. The organisers have the power to exclude dogs from the competition and will have the right to refuse an entry.
- f. The organisers may restrict the numbers in a GWT, in which case the right to compete shall be decided by ballot.
- g. All judges must have considerable experience of dog-work under shooting field conditions and competition.
- h. In an Open Gundog Working Test (GWT), there must be at least one Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Panel Judge from the relevant sub-group officiating. In all other GWT's a Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Panel Judge should officiate, if possible.
- i. The officiating judges must be announced to all competitors.
- j. All handlers must carry out the instructions of the judges. The judges are empowered to remove from the test any dog whose handler does not follow their instructions or whose handler wilfully interferes with another competitor or their dog.
- k. Each GWT day must have a minimum of 2 judges.
- l. No person attending a GWT may allow a bitch in season to be on the test ground or foul any ground to be used by competing dogs.
- m. If, after consultation with the judges, members of the committee present consider a dog unfit to compete by reason of contagious disease or physical condition such a dog shall be required to be removed immediately from the ground. Any such case is liable to be reported to the Royal Kennel Club.
- n. No dog shall wear a collar whilst competing.
- o. No person shall carry out punitive correction or harsh handling at a GWT.
- p. No competitor may withdraw their dog and leave the GWT ground without informing the Test Secretary or a Club Official.

5. Judging.

- a. Judges must agree a common scoring system. All competitors should be informed of the scoring system at the commencement of a GWT. But, whatever the system adopted, failure to complete an individual test will result in a mark of zero. A multiple retrieve constitutes one test. If a dog fails or commits a serious fault in any part of a multiple exercise this will result in a mark of zero for that exercise.
- b. GWTs will typically be judged on a points system with individual tests marked out of 20 though, on occasion, when their organisation is more akin to that of a field trial, letter gradings may be used.
- c. Judges must ensure that spectators are a reasonable distance from competitors in line.
- d. Judges should give dogs every opportunity to work well by seeing that conditions are, as far as possible, in their favour. They will be looking for dogs, which need the least handling and please them most from a shooting point of view.
- e. In all retrieving breeds good marking is essential with a quick pick-up and a fast return. Judges will not penalise a dog too heavily for putting down a retrieve to get a firmer grip, but this must not be confused with sloppy retrieving.
- f. Any serious fault or failure in an individual test or tests will disqualify a dog from gaining an individual award and may lead to elimination. In team tests, however, one dog's serious fault or failure will not disqualify a team from the awards. If two or more teams finish on equal points a run-off will be necessary to determine the result.
- g. The judges are empowered to withhold any prize or award if in their opinion competing dogs have not shown sufficient merit.

6. Instructions for specific sub-group tests.

- a. **Retrievers.**
 - (1) A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.
 - (2) A Retriever must be steady to shot and fall and must retrieve only on command. Whenever possible, all dogs should be tested in water. Except in Puppy and Novice Dog/Novice Handler GWTs, dogs should be tested either at a simulated drive and/or a walk up. A dog must walk steadily at heel and retrieve tenderly to hand.
 - (3) Good marking is essential with a quick pick-up and a fast return. Dogs should be credited for showing marking ability and initiative.
 - (4) If a dog fails a retrieve in the run-offs, it may still feature in the awards.
 - (5) **Credit points.**
 Natural marking and hunting ability.
 Quickness in gathering retrieve and good delivery.
 Nose. Drive and style.
 Quiet handling. Control.

(6) **Serious faults.**

Refusing to retrieve.	Whining or barking.
Running in or chasing.	Out of control.
Failing to enter water.	Changing retrieve.
Poor heel work.	Without merit.

b. **Spaniels.**

- (1) A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing. Dogs must be run either singly or in pairs, with the lowest number on the right.
- (2) A Spaniel's primary task is to find game and flush within range of the handler. In GWTs it should at all times work within that range and demonstrate thorough ground treatment. The direction of the wind has a considerable influence on the way a dog works its ground. With a head-wind the dog should quarter the ground systematically, making good all likely game-holding cover yet keeping within gunshot distance. With a following wind, the dog will often want to pull well out and then work back towards the handler. Judges must regulate the pace of the line to allow the dog to do this so that it can make good its ground. The judge will assess the handling ability of the dog and also its pace, style, drive, courage and the quality of its ground treatment.
- (3) A Spaniel must be steady to flush, shot and fall and retrieve tenderly to hand on command from land or water.
- (4) When dummies are thrown and gunfire used, the gun and dummy thrower must walk at the edge of the beat the dog is working in line with the handler.
- (5) If a dog fails to retrieve in the run-offs, it may still feature in the awards.
- (6) If there is a flush while the dogs are hunting that is not part of the test, they should not be asked to retrieve at this point. It is acceptable for the judge to ask the handler to redo the test.

(7) **Credit Points.**

Natural hunting ability.	Nose.
Good marking.	Drive.
Style.	Control.
Speed in gathering retrieve.	Delivery.
Quiet handling.	

(8) **Serious Faults.**

Refusing to retrieve.	Whining or barking.
Running in or chasing.	Out of control.
Failing to enter water.	Changing retrieve.
Without merit.	

c. **Breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve.**

- (1) A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.

- (2) Dogs should quarter the beat across the wind hunting systematically and regulating their pace to suit the ground and cover. In puppy, novice dog/ novice handler and novice tests dogs should not normally be required to work down wind.
- (3) Judges must assess quartering, by observing the way the dog works its beat in relation to the wind. They should consider how the dog covers any possible game holding pockets and its drive and style, especially as indicated by its response to the presence of scent.
- (4) Retrieving tests must be set as naturally as possible and close distractions must be avoided.
- (5) If a dog fails a retrieve in the run-offs, it may still feature in the awards.
- (6) Dogs must be steady to shot and fall and retrieve on command.
- (7) If there is a flush while the dogs are hunting that is not part of the test, they should not be asked to retrieve at this point. It is acceptable for the judge to ask the handler to redo the test.
- (8) **Credit Points.**
 Natural quartering and pointing ability.
 Drive. Style.
 Good marking. Control.
 Quickness in gathering retrieve and delivery.
 Quiet handling.
- (9) **Serious Faults.**
 Refusing to retrieve. Whining or barking.
 Out of control. Chasing.
 Failing to enter water. Changing retrieve.
 Failure to deliver to hand. Without merit.

REGULATIONS FOR ENTRIES IN THE STUD BOOK, CHAMPIONS AND WARRANTS

As at 1st January 2026

1. Stud Book Qualifications.

- a. An entry in the Stud Book shall consist of the registered name of the dog, its sex, colour, date of birth, owner, breeder and an extension of its pedigree limited to three generations, or a Stud Book reference within that limit.
- b. All dogs must be entered in the Stud Book in the name of the registered owner at the time of qualification.
- c. A Royal Kennel Club Stud Book number will be assigned to each dog accepted for entry.
- d. A neutered dog, which has qualified for an entry in the Stud Book will be listed therein with the letters 'NEUT' appearing after its name.
- e. The following dogs are entitled to entry in the Royal Kennel Club Stud Book subject to regulations a, b, c, and d above.
 - (3) Dogs winning first, second, third or fourth awards, Diplomas of Merit or Certificates of Merit at field trials held under Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Regulations

2. Championship qualifications.

- c. *Title of Field Trial Champion (FT Ch)* The following dogs shall be entitled to be described as Field Trial Champions. All first place awards are confined to Open stakes for which a Field Trial Certificate will be awarded to each winner:
 - (1) *Pointers and Setters*
 - (a) A dog placed first in the Pointer and Setter Championship stake.
 - (b) A dog which gains two first awards at two different Field Trial meetings in open stakes for Pointers and Setters under two different Panel A judges. In the event that the same Panel A judge officiates at both trials, the dog will be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion provided that the co-judge at one trial is also a Panel A judge.

There must be no fewer than 16 runners in each of the stakes and one of these wins must be in a stake open to Pointers and all breeds of Setter.
 - (2) *Retrievers*
 - (a) A dog placed first in the Retriever Championship.
 - (b) A dog which gains two first awards in 24-dog Open stakes under three different Panel A judges.
 - (c) A dog which gains a first award in one 24-dog and one One-day Open stake under three different Panel A judges.

Excerpt from K

(d) A dog which gains a first award in three One-day Open stakes under three different Panel A judges.

In a 24-dog stake there must be no fewer than 20 runners and in a One-day Stake no fewer than 10 runners. For a dog to be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion one of its wins must be in a stake open to all breeds of Retriever.

(3) *Proviso for all Retrievers*

Before any Retriever is entitled to be described as a Field Trial Champion it must also have a Water and Drive Certificate. The Water Certificate must have been conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A Panel, at one of the following: the Retriever Championship, a Field Trial Open Stake, or at a subsequent special test. (J(A)2 refers.) The Drive Certificate must be conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A Panel, at the Retriever Championship or a Field Trial Open Stake.

(4) *Cocker Spaniels*

(a) A dog placed first in the Cocker Spaniel Championship.

(b) A dog which gains two first awards in open stakes under two different Panel A judges. In the event that the same Panel A judge officiates at both stakes, the dog will be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion provided that the co-judge at one stake is also a Panel A judge

With the exception of the Cocker Spaniel Championship all Stakes must be limited to a maximum of 18 dogs. In order for the stakes to qualify there must be no fewer than 14 runners.

(5) *Any Variety Spaniel [Excluding Spaniel (Cocker)]*

(a) A dog placed first in the Any Variety Spaniel [Excluding Spaniel (Cocker)] Championship.

(b) A dog which gains two first awards in Open stakes under two different Panel A Judges. In the event that the same Panel A judge officiates at both stakes, the dog will be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion provided that the co-judge at one stake is also a Panel A judge

With the exception of the Any Variety Spaniel [Excluding Spaniel (Cocker)] Championship all Stakes must be limited to a maximum of 18 dogs. In order for the stakes to qualify there must be no fewer than 14 runners.

(6) *Proviso for all Spaniels*

Before a dog is entitled to be described as a Field Trial Champion it must also have gained a Water Certificate. The Water Certificate must have been conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A, at one of the following: the Championship, a Field Trial stake or at a subsequent special test. (J(A)2 refers.)

(7) *Breeds which Hunt, Point & Retrieve*

(a) A dog placed first in the championship for Breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve.

(b) A dog which gains two first awards in Open stakes for breeds

Excerpt from K

which Hunt, Point and Retrieve under two different Panel A judges. In the event that the same Panel A judge officiates at both stakes, the dog will be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion provided the co-judge at one stake is also a Panel A judge.

In order for the stakes to qualify there must be no fewer than 10 runners. For the dog to be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion one of its wins must be in a Stake open to all breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve.

(8) *Proviso for all breeds which Hunt, Point and Retrieve*

Before a dog is entitled to be described as a Field Trial Champion it must also have a Water Certificate. The Water Certificate must have been conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A, at one of the following: the Hunt, Point and Retrieve Championship, a Field Trial Stake, or at a subsequent special test (J(A)2 refers.)

d. *Dual Champion*

Any Gundog which has been awarded the title of Show Champion & Field Trial Champion.

ROYAL KENNEL CLUB REGULATIONS FOR CLASSIFICATION AND REGISTRATION

As at 1st January 2026

20. Dogs for competitions.

Dogs entered for any form of Royal Kennel Club competition i.e. show classes, field trials, gundog working tests, obedience, working trials, agility, heelwork to music, and rally must be registered in the name of the person(s) making the entry. If, at the closing date for entries, the owner(s) have applied for but have not received the Royal Kennel Club registration certificate, the dog shall be entered in the name shown as the first choice on the application form for registration and the name should be followed by the letters 'N.A.F' (name applied for). In the case of applications for transfer of ownership and change of name, the dog should be entered 'T.A.F.' (transfer applied for) 'C.N.A.F.' (change of name applied for) where application has been made but not received. Dogs are exempt from registration in the following cases:-

- a. Dogs either exhibited exclusively in classes specially exempted by the Royal Kennel Club Board or in special classes sanctioned by the Board.
- b. Hounds belonging to recognised packs.

**ROYAL KENNEL CLUB REGULATIONS FOR THE
REGISTRATION AND MAINTENANCE OF TITLE
OF SOCIETIES, BRANCHES AND BREED COUNCILS
AND THE AFFILIATION OF AGRICULTURAL
SOCIETIES AND MUNICIPAL AUTHORITIES**

As at 1st January 2026

5. General

- c. A Royal Kennel Club licence is issued to the designated society only and it is non transferable under any circumstances.

FIELD TRIAL REGULATION AMENDMENTS

Regulation J4.c.(4)

TO:

The secretary of the society shall send a copy of the schedule and entry form to the Royal Kennel Club ~~within three days of printing~~ **if requested.**

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J12.a.(6)

TO:

To have been handled at a trial, boarded or prepared for competition by one of the scheduled judges within the previous twelve months prior to the trial **or by the scheduled judge's spouse or immediate family or is resident at the same address as the scheduled judge within the previous twelve months prior to the trial.** This provision does not apply to judges appointed in an emergency **or at any Field Trial Championship or Champion Stake.**

(Insertion in Bold. Deletion struck through.)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(A)3.m.

TO:

At the end of each retrieve or run, Judges are advised to place each dog in a category such as A or B (+ or -) according to the work done. Such gradings may, quite properly, be supplemented on occasion by additional notation for reference purposes when Judges are going through their books. It is, however, imperative to appreciate that gradings ~~must~~ **should** never be retrospectively adjusted **once agreed with all judges and written in the grid.** Neither should there ever be any attempt to sum sequences of grades to produce a single letter grading of a dog. When all dogs have been seen by a Judge, or Judges, they will wish to confer to determine which dogs they wish to discard or retain; it is vitally important for Judges to make short notes of each dog's work. Judges should never expect to be able to trust to memory.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(A)4.i**TO:**

All game should be examined for signs of hard mouth. A hard-mouthed dog seldom gives visible evidence of hardness. The dog will simply crush in one or both sides of the ribs. Visible inspection and blowing up the feathers on a bird will not disclose the damage, digital examination is imperative.

Place the game **bird** on the palm of the hand, breast upwards, head forward, and **using that same hand** feel the ribs with fingers and thumb. They should be round and firm. If they are caved in or flat this may be evidence of hard mouth. Be sure the game reaches the co-Judges for examination. Judges should always satisfy themselves that the damage done has been caused by the dog, not by the shot or fall. Judges, for instance, must be clear about the difference between damage to the ribcage caused by shot and the quite distinctive damage caused by a dog.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

The Committee noted the Sub-Group's recommendation that an introductory paragraph be added to each sub-group section within

J Regulations J(B), J(C), J(D), J(E).**TO:**

These Regulations should be read alongside and assume a familiarity with the Royal Kennel Club Guide to the J Regulations document.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)3.(d)**TO:**

In the event that the dogs are to be split between the Judges **under the 4 judge system**, this will be done odds and evens. ~~Where the Trial is to be run under the 4 judge system,~~ In the first round the odd numbered dogs will be seen by the right hand Judges and the evens by the left hand Judges. Where this system is adopted, in the second round the odd numbered dogs remaining in the Trial must be seen by the left hand Judges and the evens by the right hand Judges. ~~The Judges can thereafter~~

continue to rotate the dogs remaining in the stake in this way until they get together for a run-off, when the order of sending shall revert to numerical order. **Upon completion of the second round the order of sending may revert to the order of the draw, although this decision depends on circumstances applying at the time and would be at the discretion of the Judges.** Where a handler is running an odd numbered dog and an even numbered dog, both dogs should be run on the side of the lowest numbered dog. The dogs on that side will be run in numerical order.

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)
(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)3.(e)

TO:

Where the trial is to be run under the three judge system, the dogs should be split equally, and in numerical order, between the three Judges, i.e. 1,2,3,4 with the right hand Judge, 5,6,7,8 with the middle Judge and 9, 10, 11 and 12 with the left hand Judge in a one-day stake and 1-8, 9-16 and 17-24 in a two day. Dogs should then rotate from right to left so that the dogs under the left hand Judge in the first round should be seen by the right hand Judge next and so on. ~~The rotation should continue until a run-off when numerical order will resume.~~

(Deletion struck through)
(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)7.d.(4)

TO:

In a round with two retrieves a judge should be most careful to see that each dog gets its chance in the correct order, starting with the lowest number on the right. Should dog No. 1 fail, and dog No. 2 be successful, so eliminating his partner, No. 2 still has the first chance on the next retrieve. In these circumstances a dog may be given two consecutive retrieves.

(Insertion in bold)
(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)7.d.(5)**TO:**

When a Judge tries his dogs, for example No. 1 & No. 2, behind other dogs, if No. 1 dog is successful, then the next retrieve under that Judge should be offered to No. 2 dog. **The back up dog in line must always have the first opportunity of an eye-wipe over its partner, irrespective of which round it is in. Lower round dogs should not be called over from the other side until after this dog has been given its chance.** If the two dogs fail on game, the Judge should not call fresh dogs into the line to try for the retrieve until all the other dogs already in the line have been tried. **The exception to this is when using the odds and evens system the Judges should continue to use dogs on their own side. For example, dogs No. 5 & No. 7 would be tried behind No. 1 & No. 3. If No. 5 is successful, the next retrieve should be offered to No. 7. Should No. 5 fail and No. 7 be successful, No. 7 still has the next retrieve. The Judges should have four dogs in line, the two sending dogs and two back up dogs.** ~~In the concluding stages of a Trial, Judges may use their own discretion as the situation arises.~~

(Deletion struck through) (Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)8.**TO:**

When the Judges decide to run-off the top few dogs to confirm their final placings, they will usually position themselves together in the centre of the line or, at least, in a position where they can see all the dogs working. At this stage in the Trial, a dog may be stretched to such a degree that it may fail and be eye-wiped. In this situation the dog which has had its eye-wiped would be penalised, but could still feature in the awards. **In the concluding stages of a Trial, Judges may use their own discretion with the order of sending, as the situation arises.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(B)9.d**TO:**

A handler should not have his/her their second dog backing up his/her their first dog, while other dogs are available in the round except in a run off.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through.)

(Effective 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)1.b**TO:**

No title used to describe the winners of GWTs will be associated with such competition which is best understood as a means to an end rather than an end in itself.

Gundog Working Tests should be conducted in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, welcoming to newcomers as well as being a test of the progress of a gundog's training for the shooting field and field trials. No titles are to be used for the winners of Gundog Working Tests.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)1.e**TO:**

Application for authority to hold GWTs must be made annually to the Royal Kennel Club and, ~~on the form provided~~, applicants should indicate the number of GWTs they propose to hold in the forthcoming year.

(Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)2.a(2)**TO:**

~~Sporting~~-Spaniels other than Irish Water Spaniels.

(Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)2.b(3)**TO:**

PUPPY. Open ~~Confined~~ to all dogs of specific breed or breeds less than eighteen months of age on the date of the test **regardless of awards gained.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)2.b(4)**TO:**

NOVICE DOG/NOVICE HANDLER. Confined to dog and handler who have not gained any award in a field trial or classified GWT or won a Novice Dog/Novice Handler test.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

(Subsequent regulation to be renumbered)

Regulation J(G)3.d**TO:**

The organisers of GWTs will try, wherever possible, to simulate the circumstances of a shooting day. They must also ensure the tests are designed to further good Gundog work, and not inhibit dogs from marking or showing natural working ability. It is important, for instance, that guns and dummy throwers are positioned with such considerations in mind, **and that distances of retrieves and difficulty of test are achievable and relevant to the standard (e.g. puppy, novice, open). Organisers may set tests in advance, using non-competing dogs of the same standard to ensure this.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)3.g**TO:**

Only dummies acceptable to the judges, will be used for retrieves in GWTs. **The same type of dummy must be used within each exercise.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)3.h**TO:**

When dummies are thrown in association with gunfire in retrieving tests, the shot must always precede the thrown dummy **with the gun pointing in the direction of where the dummy is to be thrown.** The gun should be positioned **within 'shot range' of** ~~a plausible distance from~~ the retrieve. With unseen retrieves gunfire is optional.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)3.i**TO:**

Organisers and judges must be careful for the safety of dogs and must not require them to negotiate dangerous obstacles. Whilst judges should take reasonable precautions for the safety of competing dogs, it is the duty of the handler to satisfy ~~himself or herself~~ **themselves** that the dog is suitably trained, physically fit and prepared to undertake the work allocated by the judges before directing ~~his or her~~ **their** dog to undertake the allotted task.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.b**TO:**

The Code of Conduct expected at GWTs is the same as that for Field Trials.

The Code of Conduct documents can be found on the Royal Kennel Club website.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.g**TO:**

All judges must have **considerable** experience of dog-work under shooting field conditions **and competition.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.h**TO:**

In an Open Gundog Working Test (GWT), ~~each sub-group~~ **there** must have **be** at least one Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Panel Judge **from the relevant sub-group** officiating. **In all other GWT's a Royal Kennel Club Field Trial Panel Judge should officiate, if possible.**

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.i**TO:****The officiating judges must be announced to all competitors.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

(Subsequent regulations to be renumbered)

Regulation J(G)4.i (previously J(G)4.i)**TO:**

All handlers must carry out the instructions of the judges. The judges are empowered to remove from the test any dog whose handler does not follow their instructions or whose handler willfully interferes with another competitor or ~~his~~**their** dog.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)4.k**TO:****Each GWT day must have a minimum of 2 judges.**

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

(Subsequent regulations to be renumbered)

Regulation J(G)4.p (previously J(G)4.n)**TO:**

No competitor may withdraw their dog and leave the GWT ground without informing the ~~chief steward~~ **Test Secretary or a Club Official.**

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.a(1)**TO:**

~~At the start of a GWT, judges must ensure they have the correct dogs in the line, lowest number placed on the right.~~

A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.a(2)**TO:**

A Retriever must be steady to shot and fall and must retrieve only on command. ~~Also, whenever possible, all dogs should be tested at a simulated drive, walking up and in water.~~ **Whenever possible, all dogs should be tested in water. Except in Puppy and Novice Dog/Novice Handler GWTs, dogs should be tested either at a simulated drive and/or a walk up.** A dog must walk steadily at heel **and retrieve tenderly to hand.**

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.a(5)**TO:**

Credit points.

Natural marking and hunting ability.

Quickness in gathering retrieve and **good** delivery.

Nose.

Drive and style.

Quiet handling.

Control.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.a(6)**TO:**

Serious faults.

Refusing to retrieve.

Whining or barking.

Running in or chasing.

Out of control.

Failing to enter water.

Changing retrieve.

Poor heel work.

Without merit.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(1)**TO:**

~~At the start of a GWT, judges must ensure they have the correct dogs in the line.~~ **A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.** Dogs must be run either singly or in pairs, with the lowest number on the right.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(3)**TO:**

A Spaniel must be steady to flush, shot and fall and retrieve **tenderly to hand** on command from land or water.

(Insertion in bold.)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(6)**TO:**

~~If live pigeons are released this must be treated as a separate exercise and not occur as part of an exercise involving a retrieve.~~

If there is a flush while the dogs are hunting that is not part of the test, they should not be asked to retrieve at this point. It is acceptable for the judge to ask the handler to redo the test.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.b(8)**TO:**

Serious Faults.

Refusing to retrieve.

Running in or chasing.

Failing to enter water.

Whining or barking.

Out of control.

Changing retrieve.

Without merit

(Insertion in bold.)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c.(1)**TO:**

~~Organisers must be aware of the limitations and possible problems when using game for pointing exercises.~~

A handler must ensure that only the number of the dog being handled at the time is displayed. It is the responsibility of the handler if handling more than one dog, to ensure that their dogs are being run in the correct order when competing.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c(2)**TO:**

Dogs should quarter the beat across the wind hunting systematically and regulating their pace to suit the ground and cover. In **puppy, novice dog/ novice handler** and novice tests dogs should not normally be required to work down wind.

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c(7)**TO:**

~~If live pigeons are released this must be treated as a separate exercise and not occur as part of an exercise involving a retrieve.~~

If there is a flush while the dogs are hunting that is not part of the test, they should not be asked to retrieve at this point. It is acceptable for the judge to ask the handler to redo the test.

(Insertion in bold. Deletion struck through)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

Regulation J(G)6.c(9)**TO:**

Serious Faults.

Refusing to retrieve.

Out of control.

Failing to enter water.

Failure to deliver to hand

Whining or barking.

Chasing.

Changing retrieve.

Without merit

(Insertion in bold)

(Effective from 2 February 2026)

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