



AMERICAN
KENNEL CLUB™

November 18, 2011

Changes to Pointing Breed Hunting Test Regulations

At its November meeting, the AKC Board of Directors passed a number of changes to the Regulations for AKC Pointing Breed Hunting Tests. All the following become effective January 1, 2012 except #6 and #8.

1. CHAPTER 1, SECTION 4. TESTS OFFERED, ENTRY REQUIREMENTS, NO SPECIAL INDUCEMENTS. A Hunting Test giving club shall not accept an entry fee other than that published in its premium list or entry form, or in any way discriminates between entrants. Except a club, at its discretion, may allow for a reduced entry fee for dogs handled by juniors. A junior handler is someone less than 18 years of age on the first day of the test.

The inclusion of the “no special inducements” clause means the entry fee for everyone wishing to enter a testing level must be the same. (No special deals for select individuals.) Except a club may offer at its discretion a lower entry fee for junior handlers as a way to promote youth involvement in the sport.

2a. CHAPTER 2, SECTION 3. SENIOR HUNTER TITLE (SH).

Dogs that have acquired a Senior Hunter title at an AKC licensed or member Hunting Test are eligible to enter Junior Hunting Tests. No JH title will be issued.

2b. CHAPTER 2, SECTION 4. MASTER HUNTER TITLE (MH).

Dogs that have acquired a Master Hunter title at an AKC licensed or member club Hunting Test are eligible to enter Junior and Senior Hunting Tests. No JH or SH titles will be issued.

This modifies the current Regulation that says once a dog has earned a title at a higher level, it may not enter lower level tests. The AKC has received requests from owners with elderly dogs that are no longer capable of performing at a high level but the owner would like to run the dog for the enjoyment of the dog and owner. This change may also find application with a professionally handled dog whose owner would like to try handling but does not feel comfortable entering a high level test.

3. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 12. HUNTING TEST COMMITTEE, Weather. Weather is an important consideration for the hunting test event committee. The safety of participants and animals is of utmost importance. Extreme weather such as lightening, strong winds, heat or cold, snow or heavy rain can create hazardous conditions. The hunting test event committee, in consultation with the judges, has the responsibility to decide if an event should be halted due to weather and at what point the event shall resume. If a weather delay results in an entrant being unable to participate, the refund of entry fees, in whole or in part, will be at the discretion of the event committee. If an entire event or part of an event is cancelled due to weather, the refund of entry fees, in whole or in part, will be at the discretion of the event committee.

This is meant to clarify that the event committee has the responsibility of deciding when an event should be stopped/started due to weather conditions. The event committee also has the right to decide how to handle entry fees from participants when weather causes delay or cancelation.

4. TRACKING DEVICE REGULATIONS, #10.

The use of tracking devices is at the discretion of the host club. For Hunt Tests, the premium list must state they are not allowed, otherwise they will be allowed.

This change makes the premium list wording regarding the use of tracking collars consistent between hunting tests and field trials. As is currently the case for field trials, a Hunt Test premium list must state tracking devices are not allowed, otherwise it can be assumed they are allowed. A recent AKC survey of Hunt Test premiums indicated that well over 50% of the tests allow the use of tracking collars.

5. CHAPTER 1, SECTION 6. Judges' Eligibility and Approval.

In order to Apprentice Judge:

- ~~Must attend one AKC Pointing Breed Hunting Test Seminar.~~
- Must handle a dog to at least one qualifying leg at the level to be judged or higher.

In order to be an Approved Judge:

- Must apprentice judge twice at the level to be judged or higher.
- Must attend one AKC Pointing Breed Hunting Test Seminar.
-other requirements remain the same.

This modification allows more flexibility in meeting the judging eligibility requirements. Under the modified requirements, a prospective judge may apprentice judge if the opportunity arises prior to attending an AKC Pointing Breed Hunting Test Seminar. A Seminar must be attended before the individual is approved to judge. Before this change, a prospective judge was required to attend a seminar prior to apprentice judging.

6. EVENT APPLICATION FEE

The AKC Board passed an increase in the event application fee to \$35.00 (previously \$25.00) for all events held on or after April 1, 2012, unless the event has been applied for prior to December 12, 2011. The current Hunt Test Application fee has been in effective since the beginning of the program in the mid-80s.

7a. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 4. Motorized Vehicles.

Birds may be liberated from horseback and/or All-Terrain Vehicles on the back course as long as it can be done without interference to the working dogs. Judges may ride 4-wheelers/ATVs at the discretion of the host club. If judges will be using 4-wheelers/ATVs it must be clearly stated in the event premium. The vehicle must be turned off while a judge observes a dog's bird work. If one judge uses a 4-wheeler/ATV the other judge must also use a 4-wheeler/ATV or walk. For safety reasons the mixing of 4-wheelers/ATVs and horses for judges is not allowed. The 4-wheelers/ATVs must meet all applicable state and federal government requirements and their use must be allowed by the land owner/governing agency. These vehicles are not allowed in bird fields.

In order to control the number of vehicles on course, apprentice judges may not ride their own 4-wheeler/ATV. If the vehicle used by the judge is designed to safely accommodate two individuals, an apprentice judge may ride with the judge or an apprentice judge may walk.

7b. CHAPTER 3, SECTION 6. Horses.

Judges may ride horses, walk or ride 4-wheelers/ATVs at the club's discretion. For safety reasons, one judge may not use a 4-wheeler/ATV while the other judge rides a horse.

This modification allows a third option for judges – they may ride horses, walk or ride 4-wheelers/ATVs.

This past spring the Performance Events field staff in conjunction with several hunt test clubs conducted an experiment with judges riding 4-wheelers/ATVs. The results were extremely favorable. 92% of the participants had no issues of any kind. 89% of the judges felt the use of 4-wheelers had no meaningful impact on their ability to evaluate a dog's performance. Three advantages were identified by host clubs: 1) a significant cost savings over the need to rent horses, 2) it greatly expanded the pool of prospective judges, and 3) it speeds up the event as judges were able to move more quickly from the end of the course to the starting line.

This option will not be needed by all clubs and will not work in all situations. High cover, difficult or sensitive terrain, narrow paths and land use restrictions can make the utilization of 4-wheelers/ATVs unfeasible. However it can be used in many locations and potentially provide a significant cost savings to the club.

Pictures of clubs using 4-wheelers/ATVs at hunt tests can be viewed on the AKC Performance Events – Pointing Breed Hunt Test website at:

www.akc.org/events/hunting_tests/pointing_breeds/articles/4wheelers.cfm.

8. “ADVANCED” HUNT TEST TITLES – The Board also approved three new Pointing Breed Hunting Test titles – Junior Hunter Advanced (JHA), Senior Hunter Advanced (SHA) and Master Hunter Advanced (MHA). The intent of these titles is to provide an incentive for participants to maintain their involvement with their Hunt Test clubs and events. The new titles will become effective February 1, 2012. Complete information about these new titles will be e-mailed to all licensed clubs in the near future.