

Guidelines for Clubs Sponsoring Rating Tests

This is prepared to supplement the rules and aid sponsoring clubs to conduct proper tests. The procedures and recommendations are made to enhance the rules and encourage uniformity.

BEFORE THE TEST

- Select a Rating Test Committee that should consist of no less than six people as follows:
 1. **Rating Test Chairperson**—Organizes, plans and supervises other committee members, works with the WCA Representative
 2. **Secretary**—Does all paperwork for the test; applies to WCA, contacts possible judges, composes and mails flyers, receives entries, aids in drawing, posts running order, completes official score sheets and sends to WCA with proper fees.
 3. **Field Marshal**
(Retrieving Rating Test)—is present in the field for each test to aid in declaring birds out of minimum or maximum distances in mis-tests.
(Shooting Rating Test)—rides each brace to assist judges and makes orders of judges known to handlers, spectators. Times backcourse and birdfield.
 4. **Line Marshal**—Calls dogs (braces) to the line, and times the five minute limit. Also calls dog(s) to be ready for next brace.
 5. **Bird Handlers**—At least two persons to crate, prepare, plant and handle all birds used. **MUST WEAR GLOVES.**
(Retrieving Rating Test)—Responsible for birds being killed in a like manner and being shackled securely and in a like manner; birds being delivered to the throwing station one at a time only; for removing used birds from sight and smell of testing dogs. Bird Throwers are responsible for throwing bird at proper distance, firing blank guns when bird is at height of throw, and remembering the location of the fall in case of mis-tests.
(Shooting Rating Test)—Must be skilled in the proper planting of live birds and should mark well the location of each, particularly for NSD in case of birds running out of the birdfield.
 6. **Gunners**—Two experienced persons with 20 gauge or larger shotguns. Also, up to three gunners with blank guns for RDX water portion.
- Select a WCA Representative (When looking for a WCA Rep, how about asking your local WCA officer or board member?)
 1. Must be a member of WCA
 2. Must be approved by WCA as per rating test standards
- Investigate and comply with state and local requirements to locate suitable grounds
- Contact judges
- Submit WCA Application (It is not necessary to give all levels of ratings if facilities do not permit. When stating type of bird to be used the club may list several species using an either/or format.)
- After approval, prepare and mail out flyer. Flyer must state that ALL owners of entered dogs must be members of the WCA. (Entries may also be limited either for the whole trial or for various levels of competition. Must be announced in flyer)

- Mail flyer to each judge and to National Rating Test Chairman
- Draw for running order, prepare poster of same
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- Prepare grounds—
Shooting Rating Tests—Courses for each level must be timed, marked and set up before start of first test, Set and mark cast off line and birdfield area. Indicate specific area for spectators for safety and to prevent possible interference with dog being tested.
Retrieving Rating Tests—All distances for tests must be measured and marked, decoys securely anchored, circles of hose positioned and secured. Indicate specific area for spectators and dogs waiting to be tested for safety and to prevent possible interference with dog being tested.

DAY OF TEST

- Prepare birds
- Post running order
- Give instructions to all handlers regarding cast off line, etc.
- Line Marshall shall call first dog (brace) at announced starting time and give name(s) of next dog(s) and begin timing limit.
- Examine for disqualifying faults.
- Judge first dog or brace
- Upon completion, judges may take time to make notations before judging next dog.
- Proceed until completion of all tests. Exception: breaks for judges, and/ or lunch breaks. Should be announce to all participants.
- Present qualifying ribbons to dogs earning them.

EQUIPMENT

Shooting Rating Tests—

- Bright colored strips to mark courses and birdfield
- Birds, crates, carrying sack, gloves
- Shotguns and shells
- Poster board for running order, stopwatch, hand held score sheets
- Clipboards, note pads suitable for carrying on horseback
- Copies of AKC Standard and WCA Rules
- Horses should be provided for judges and marshall (bird planter)

- AKC Wicket
- Retrieving Rating Tests—
- Garden hose for circle
- Stakes to mark measured distances & measuring tapes
- AKC Wicket
- Decoys and anchors, boat and/or waders
- Birds, gloves, waterproof tape
- Poster board for running order, hand held score sheets
- Blank guns and blanks, shotguns and shells
- Stopwatch, note pads, chairs and table for judges
- Copies of AKC Standard and WCA Rules
- Materials to construct blinds for bird throwers/gunners

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Dogs should be prohibited from being off lead on the test grounds, except for the actual time they are being judged.

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Guidelines for Rating Test Judges

This is prepared to supplement and enhance the understanding of the Rules. It also clarifies the duties and limitations of the judges.

Purpose of Rating Tests

The Tests are offered to allow for the non-competitive evaluation of Weimaraners in hunting and retrieving. The levels of difficulty are intended to be a natural progression in the development and training of dogs in each area. The levels very often also reflect the experience of the handler. For the sake of judgement, the two types of tests are completely separate. From a breeder's standpoint the dog who accomplishes advanced degrees in both areas is the ideal. The tests give breeders and prospective puppy buyers a realistic tool in evaluating a dog and/or a line for natural abilities and trainability. These tests also are frequently the stepping stone for novice Weimaraner owners into the world of field trials and other competition. The judges must remember that the dogs are judged solely on their performance according to the rules and not in competition with other dogs.

Problems

The WCA Representative is the judges' means of questioning the procedure of any test, handler, etc. that may present a problem. The judges may not conduct the test per se but are responsible for reviewing the rules with the WCA Representative and Test Chairperson before any testing begins.

Responsibilities

- Complete impartiality
 - Undivided attention to each dog being tested
 - Thorough knowledge of the written rules
 - Honesty
 - Independence from the other judge
 - Dignified and courteous attitude with handler, club and fellow judges
- Duties
- Review the rules and grounds with the WCA Representative before any tests begin
 - Bring any problems with rules application to the attention of the WCA Representative
 - Witness examination of dogs for disqualifying faults
 - To have an adequate view of each dog's performance
 - To keep notes as needed on the performances
 - To give an independent opinion of the dog's performance
 - To rejudge without bias any dog who has a mis-test
 - To judge all dogs in any given level on the same grounds on the same day
 - To impose no criterion not stated in the rules
 - To accurately transfer any notes into the pass/fail system of scoring
 - To give the benefit of the doubt to any dog, especially in Novice levels where the inexperience of the handler interferes with the dog's performance
 - To remember the intentions of the rating test program and good sportsmanship throughout the tests.

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