5. Finnish Rules For Retriever Working Tests (NOWT)

5.1. Purpose of the test

The purpose of the working test is to find the best dogs with good temperament for tasks similar to a shooting day, good marking and good use of nose, with breeding objectives in mind. A retriever shall show independence and initiative, and work in good co-operation with its handler.

5.2. Organizing a working test

When the test is applied for and organized, the general regulations and instructions in general parts of these rules, and general regulations of Finnish Kennel Club (Kennelliitto) must be obeyed. It is a responsibility of the judges to ensure that rules and regulations are followed in a test.

5.3. Judges

Judges must be qualified to judge working test or field trial (A-koe). Judging will be done by a chief judge and at least one other judge.

5.4. Classes

Beginner class (ALO) is for dogs which have passed basic field qualification test (NOU1). After receiving 1st prize in beginner class (ALO1) the dog is qualified to run in novice class.

Novice class (AVO) is for dogs which have 1st prize from beginner class. After receiving 1st prize in novice class (AVO1) the dog is qualified to run in open class.

Open class (VOI) is for dogs which have 1st prize from novice class.

After reaching a result which qualifies for higher class, the dog is allowed to run in lower class until the end of the year.

5.5. Dummies

Standard, commonly available retriever dummies shall be used.

5.6. Conduct of the working test

Working test shall have five exercises, and at least four test stations. Exercises must be designed to simulate shooting day situations as realistically as possible.

5.7. Judging

Each judge can judge one or more exercises. More than one judge can be used at same test station.

Judge must ensure that each dog is given as good and equal opportunity as possible to show its abilities as a retrieving dog. In the beginning of an exercise the judge will give

necessary, similar instructions to the handlers. These instructions can also be given in the morning briefing, when all competitors are together in the same group.

After completion of each exercise the judge will evaluate dogs performance with a few words. Score is not revealed, unless it is zero (0), which has to be told.

5.7.1. Qualities to be evaluated

A retriever should walk steady and quiet at heel, and stay at stand, without requiring attention of the handler.

A retriever should show good hunting on the zone, good initiative, good nose, and good game finding ability. It must not avoid any type of cover or terrain, natural or man made obstacle, and should enter water without encouragement.

A retriever should acknowledge the shots, mark and remember the falls. Straight-forward, independent progression to the fall and fast dummy finding are a signs of excellent marking ability.

When sent to a dummy, which it has not been able to mark, the dog must obey handlers instructions, and work in good co-operation with the handler.

After finding the dummy, dog should pick it up quickly with own initiative. Dog should carry the dummy with tender and balanced grip, return directly to the handler, and deliver it carefully.

5.7.2. SUSPENDING A DOG FROM COMPETITION

If a dog makes an eliminating fault it is not allowed to stay in the competition. If a dog is injured or physically punished by handler on the test grounds, the dog shall be also be removed from the test and suspended.

Eliminating faults:
- Aggressive behavior
- Repeated whining or barking
- Gun shyness
- Failing to enter water
- Refusing to retrieve
- Puncturing the dummy (hard mouth)

5.7.3. POINTS

The maximum score from each exercise is twenty (20).

Faults that lead to zero (0) points:
- Changing dummy
- Running in
- Out of control
- Hunting with dummy in the mouth
- Failing to deliver found dummy
- Failing to retrieve

If the dog makes one of the following major faults, judge decides the effect to score:

- Bad heeling
- Being restless or asking the handler's attention at the post
- Bad control
- Noisy handling
- Being overdependent on the handler
- Working slowly and/or without much initiative
- Bad marking and/or bad memory of the fall
- Sloppy retrieving
- Dropping dummy, when delivering it to handler
- Peeing while working

5.7.4. RUN-OFF

If winner has not been determined after all exercises, and two or more dogs have same total score, a run-off will be organized.

In run-off the dogs will be given as many retrieves as judges deem necessary. Unless the dog makes an eliminating fault, run-off will have no effect on prize the dog will get.

5.8. PRIZES

First (1st) prize will be given to a dog with at least 75 points.

Second (2nd) prize will be given to a dog with at least 60 points.

Third (3rd) prize will be given to a dog with at least 50 points.

A zero (0) from any exercise will disqualify a dog from any award or prize.

In open class (VOI) a certificate can be given to the winning dog, if there were at least 6 dogs in same class, at least two judges were judging, and the winning dog's quality of work has been worth a certificate.

Reserve certificate can be given to 2nd placed dog. Certificate and Res- Cert can only be given to dogs which will get first prize.

If the dog has not enough points for a third prize, or Judge has suspended it, dog will get a zero (0). When the handler has voluntarily dropped out, in a situation when the Judge still considers the dog has the possibility to achieve a prize, the result will be marked with a hyphen (-).