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TRIALS FOR ENGLISH HUNTING SPANIELS REGULATION "A" OF THE FCI



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ART. 1

The aim of these “*open*” trials is to showcase the elite breeding dogs that can be distinguished by their qualities of sense of smell, pace, stamina and aptitude for advanced training and are therefore likely to produce other great trial dogs and many hunting dogs of the highest quality.

ART. 2

These trials are characterised by the fact that they must take place during open hunting season on land containing a natural source of game.

If game is introduced on the day of the competition, the CACIT cannot be awarded.

ORGANISATION

ART. 3

All purebred *English Hunting Spaniels* registered in a stud book recognised by the FCI can take part in the competitions.

ART. 4

There are two categories of trials: the first for Cockers taking part in the competition, the second for other varieties of Spaniels.

If the two categories of trials cannot take place at the same time, the organising committee will draw lots for the order in which they are to be held.

All Spaniels will be able to compete together in a single field trial if there are not enough entries in one of the two categories; in this case, only one CACIT will be awarded, as long as the winning dog is of exceptional merit.

ART. 5

Given the scarcity of natural game in Europe, each country is free to set shooting limits.

ART. 6

The instructions in this regulation will be applied rigorously, particularly with regard to the following points:

- Distribution of the dogs within the competitions: if the field trial is divided into several series, no owner, trainer or handler may require the organising association to allow his/her dogs to take part in more than two competitions, unless he/she has an assistant who can act in his/her name in other competitions.
- Registration deadline: no entry will be accepted after the closing of registration.
- Entries will only be valid if accompanied by the entry fee. Participants who are not resident in the organising country will, however, be able to pay the entry fees on the spot before the start of the trial, and must do so for all registered dogs, whether present or not.
- The presence of bitches in season is authorised, but they will be presented after all of the other dogs registered in the series.
- Replacement dogs are not accepted.
- Entry fees will not be refunded after registration has closed.

ART. 7

The following will not be accepted: aggressive dogs, dogs with a contagious disease, dogs belonging to disqualified people or members of societies or clubs that are not recognised by the FCI or people who have not yet settled participation fees for previous trials.

ART. 8

Under penalty of expulsion, dogs must be present at the summons that will be made at the meeting place and subsequently remain constantly at the disposal of the judges.

The workbook is compulsory and the handler must hand it over when the dog is called.

ART. 9

The organising body reserves the right to cancel the competition and it will reimburse entry fees.

ART. 10

The FCI will not confirm the awards unless each series in the trial has at least six dogs in attendance. The maximum number of dogs registered in a series is set at fifteen.

ART. 11

The distribution of the dogs in series and the order of participation will be drawn by lots in public. However in case of handlers competing with several dogs, the latter can be distributed in two series by the organisers beforehand. The series and the grounds will be assigned to the judges by drawing lots also before the draw of lots for the dogs.

DISCIPLINARY MEASURES

ART. 12

As far as disciplinary measures are concerned, those regulations in force in each country will apply, as long as they do not contradict FCI instructions **and the present regulations**.

PRESENTATION

ART. 13

Dogs may not wear coercive devices during presentation.

Dogs must appear bare-necked.

ART. 14

The handler must obey the judges' instructions in all circumstances; he/she will, under penalty of expulsion, refrain from any negative comments during the presentation.

ART. 15

Each dog will be examined for at least 15 minutes, unless it exhibits obvious shortcomings or makes an error resulting in elimination.

At the start of the course, there will be a one-minute period during which the points taken will be counted, while errors committed will not lead to elimination. When the dog takes a point at the end of the minute, the minute is not rung until the action is completed. An unexploited opportunity during the minute will not result in a second turn under the pretext that the dog would not have had another opportunity.

After the first round, the judges have the option of recalling the dogs as often and for as long as they deem necessary.

In order for a “point” to be taken into consideration, it must be complete. This means that the dog must:

- ***have shown that it is aware of game being present,***
- ***have flushed the game or be, with no doubt at all, responsible for the game flying or running away,***
- ***have respected the game’s start off.***

A dog can be ranked if

- ***it has been quiet when the game flew or ran away and the gun was shot,***
- ***it has retrieved correctly in the hand, during the hunt or, if it was not given the opportunity, on the occasion of a cold retrieve.***

ART. 16

The trials must be judged by two or three qualified judges, from countries using Regulation A. This applies for each series. A judge may not be replaced by a person who is not officially qualified.

A judge cannot handle dogs which do not belong to him, unless he is the breeder.

Integrity

A judge in office may not, under any circumstances, handle any dog on the same day. Dogs belonging to parents or people related the judge, 1st and 2nd degree, in direct or collateral line, as well as dogs who live under the same roof may not, under any circumstances be judged by this judge. The judge’s own dogs or those belonging to family members can however be entered as long as the dogs are handled by another person, in another series and judged by another judge.

ART. 17

Two official persons with guns will stand by the judges; the shooters must follow the judges’ instructions. By regulations, for each dog, they are allowed to shoot the first game that flushes, then only the game marked by the dog.

ART. 18

The dogs must run as much as possible on semi-overgrown, brushy and varied terrain. The judges do, however, also have the option of having them run on open ground in order to check their training more effectively.

ART. 19

The main consideration for the judges will be the characteristics and aptitude for work specific to each variety, in particular:

- intelligent exploitation of the terrain,
- the appropriate scale of search in relation to the range of the shotgun, the type of terrain ***and the depth of the search depending on the wind.***
- a lively and swift pace in accordance with the variety,
- enthusiastic and continual action,
- the communication between dog and handler,
- the nose in the air or on the ground,
- confidence and control in exploiting a track and speed of performance,
- ***quietness*** when the game takes flight or runs,
- authority in the point: only counted as a point if the game is flushed without assistance from the handler,

- indifference to shotgun blast,
- the speed and accuracy of locating the spot where the game has fallen,
- perseverance in searching for wounded game,
- speed of seizing dead or wounded game,
- a quick retrieval with a soft mouth, both on land and in water,
- persistence and stamina in the dog's efforts,
- and especially courage on covered terrain, particularly in brambles.

ART. 20

Serious faults leading to disqualification

- a failure to search, or a lack of range of search (the ideal search takes place within a radius corresponding to the range of the shotgun),
- blatant lack of initiative,
- lack of enthusiasm,
- fear of shotgun blast or of game,
- inadequate sense of smell,
- inadequate pace for the variety,
- obedience error (to disobey is to fail to do what has been ordered)
- a dog that gallops around without actually hunting,
- flush game beyond the range of the shotgun more than once,
- barking *or whining excessively* or without justification,
- refusal to retrieve a live game, on land or in water,
- hard-mouthed retrieval,
- *insisting* incorrect indications,
- passing game that should have been flushed,
- dog physically stopped by its handler
- ***Dog running behind the game or not stopping after his handler's first command***

ART. 21

The dogs must be handled as they normally are in a hunt, preferably guided by hand signals; the handler may only use voice or whistle with considerable discretion; unduly frequent calls, whether by voice or by whistle, will be counted as an obedience error.

The handler must stay with the judges at all times to follow their instructions. The judges may give orders concerning retrieval of the game.

ART. 22

In order for the dog to be classified, it must have worked its terrain correctly, have taken at least one point on game and retrieved all game killed (+ water retrieval, ART. 24).

A retrieval is perfect when the dog picks up the game immediately, takes it back directly with a soft mouth and places it into the hand of the handler on command; if, on the other hand, the handler has to intervene in the search to guide the dog with ground tracking or air scenting, this will be interpreted as a lack of initiative or scenting ability.

- A stationary dog will only be sent to retrieve by order from the judges.
- Failure to retrieve wounded game does not automatically lead to disqualification if the dog displays determination in tracking it. The judges have the option of calling another dog to double check; if the game is tracked and found, the first dog will be disqualified. On the other hand, retrieval of wounded game may, depending on the difficulty, be considered as a merit.
- Retrieving a hare is compulsory for all Spaniels, but for Cockers a failure to retrieve the hare does not lead to elimination whereas the retrieval is considered as a merit.

- If the shotgun blast has damaged the game to the extent where a refusal or bad retrieval is excusable, the jury can decide on a second retrieval test with a fresh and sound piece of game.
- Seizing unmoving game does not constitute a demerit.

ART. 23

If through lack of time, terrain or game, it is not possible to carry out a 'hot' retrieval, then a 'cold' retrieval will be resorted to in a hunting situation:

- as far as possible, only game that has not been seized by other dogs will be used.
- game is placed on the ground out of sight of the dog at a distance of about 20 or 30 metres.
- the terrain is then worked as a normal running, and, after a shoot, the dog is sent to retrieve.

WATER RETRIEVAL

ART. 24

A water retrieval is required before a dog can qualify for an award in a CACIT field trial.

As many competitions are held when it is frosty, each country will organise water retrieval tests during the hunting season that lasts from August to March, preferably during a trial at the start of the season; tests completed at any other time of year will not be valid.

A water retrieval may be required during the European Cup and national cups when weather conditions allow.

The water retrieval test will be judged by two judges authorised to judge CACIT field trials for Spaniels; they will make sure all dogs perform in the same conditions:

- the retrieval will be of a freshly killed duck
- the same person will throw birds for all the dogs
- a gunshot blast will be fired when the bird is thrown ***while the handler stands next to the dog without physically preventing it from moving in any direction.***
- the duck will fall between 7 and 10 metres from the waterside (in the case of a river retrieval, it will be thrown far enough upstream to pass within range in front of the dog)
- the dog may not enter the water without the authorisation of the judges
- access to the water will be via a gently sloping bank that does not require the dog to jump or dive
- the retrieval will be from deep water requiring the dog to swim for several metres
- the handler has, if necessary, a maximum period of one minute to encourage the dog, by voice command only, to enter the water

EVALUATION

ART. 25

To qualify for an award, no serious errors may have been made.

To obtain the CACIT, the dog must have achieved an impeccable and first-rate presentation without a single error.

ART. 26

The CQN (*Certificat de Qualités Naturelles* – Certificate of Natural Abilities) can be awarded to dogs showing excellent natural abilities (including retrieval), after taking a good point but not qualifying due to a training error.

ART. 27

If a number of CACs have been awarded in the different series of a competition, there will be a run-off between them; ***The organisers will decide whether to run it in solo or couple (“side by side”). However, the type of run-off has to be indicated in the catalogue and on the entry forms. For the type of ground for the run-off, please refer to Art.18. During a run-off in couple (“side by side”), the use of a whistle will be particularly discreet, if it is necessary, and it can in no cases trouble the other competitor.***

ART. 28

The judges will base their evaluation on the quality of points rather than the number of points taken, while taking account of the style of the variety and its other inherent natural abilities.

ART. 29

At the end of the competition, the judges will immediately announce the results on the terrain and will comment on them at the meeting-place before the prizes are awarded; they will make sure that their signed evaluations are handed to the organisers before they leave.

These regulations were approved by the FCI General Committee in Seville, February 2018. They are valid as from June 1st 2018.

In the event of disputes (especially concerning translations in the other languages) the French text is the authentic one.