



OFFICIAL RULES FOR WORKING TESTS FOR RETRIEVERS (NOWT)

Approved by the Council of the Finnish Kennel Club (Suomen Kennelliitto) on 25.11.2018.

Effective from 1.4.2019.

1. GENERAL REGULATIONS

1.1. CHANGES TO THE RULES

Changes to the rules and to the related guidelines are prepared by the judge committee of the hunting tests for retrievers, which is subordinate to breed associations, or the judge committee together with the breed clubs. The boards of the breed clubs approve and propose the changes to the rules to the Finnish Kennel Club (Suomen Kennelliitto – Finska Kennelklubben ry) for verification.

1.2. TEST AND TRIAL TYPES

- Hunting ability tests (NOU) may be either general tests or tests for the members of a certain club or tests for a certain breed
- Field trials (NOME-A) and working tests for retrievers (NOWT) may be either general trials and competitions, national or international trials or championship competitions for a certain breed.
- Cold game tests (NOME-B) may be either general tests or tests for the members of a certain club or tests or competitions for a certain breed or national championship competitions.
- Practical hunting test for retrievers (NKM) is a general test.

1.3. PARTICIPATION: ELIGIBILITY AND LIMITATIONS

All retrievers from FCI breed group 8 may participate in hunting tests and trials for retrievers. Dogs participating in the test must be at least 9 months of age and vaccinated according to the regulations of the Finnish Kennel Club. Dogs must be registered with the Finnish Kennel Club or with other member organizations of FCI. Results required for participation of foreign dogs are decided on a case-by-case basis by the judge committee.

Additional requirements for different test and trial types are given in the rules of the respective test or trial.

Participation is not allowed in the following cases:

- the dog is sick
- bitches in season
- bitches 30 days or less prior to estimated time of whelping, and less than 42 days after whelping
- the dog does not meet the existing anti-doping regulations by the Finnish Kennel Club
- dogs with aggressive behavior

- dogs which have been operated in order to change their appearance against the Decree (1070/200) of Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry in Finland

The organizing committee is required to verify the eligibility of each handler and dog.

The organizing committee has the right to limit the number of participants according to the existing instructions of the Finnish Kennel Club. The participation in the tests for a certain breed or for the members of a certain club is specified in separate instructions approved by the Finnish Kennel Club.

1.4. DISQUALIFICATION OF JUDGES

The cases where the judge is disqualified from judging are given in the effective general rules of the Finnish Kennel Club.

1.5. GRANTING THE PERMISSION TO ARRANGE A TEST OR A TRIAL

These rules shall be applied in all retriever hunting tests and trials granted by the FCI, the Board of the Finnish Kennel Club and the kennel districts. International trials are granted by the FCI. The Board of the Finnish Kennel Club grants the permission for national championship tests and trials, their qualifying trials and competitions between countries. The local kennel districts grant the general tests and the tests for the members of a certain club.

1.6. APPLYING FOR A TEST OR A TRIAL

1.6.1. APPLICANT AND ORGANIZER

The organizing club applies for a permission to arrange a test and the organizer must be a member of the Finnish Kennel Club. The organizing committee appointed by the organizing club is responsible for all the tasks included in arranging a test. The chief steward must be a qualified retriever hunting test steward (NOU/NOME). No application is required for a practical hunting test for retrievers (NKM).

1.6.2. TERM OF APPLICATION

Applications must be submitted within the time limits specified by the Finnish Kennel Club.

1.6.3. CONTENT OF APPLICATION

The application must contain the following information: organizing club, name and type of test, possible limitations and privileges to participation, date and place of the test, classes included, the appointed chief judge, the chief steward, entry fee and how and when it shall be paid and where entries are sent. When applying for a limited participation the existing regulations of the Finnish Kennel club shall be followed.

When applying for and organizing the tests, the effective rules and regulations shall be followed.

1.6.4. SUBMITTING THE APPLICATION

The application must be submitted to the kennel district of the area where the test will be arranged.

1.6.5. INFORMATION ABOUT A TEST OR A TRIAL

The kennel districts shall send a list of all their approved tests and trials for publication in the Finnish Kennel Club magazine by the specified dates.

If dummies are used as the retrieving articles in a cold game test (NOME-B), it should be informed before the beginning of the registration time.

1.7. POSTPONING OR CANCELLING A TEST OR A TRIAL

When postponing or cancelling a test or a competition, the existing regulations of the Finnish Kennel Club shall apply.

1.8. JUDGES

The chief judge must be an accredited retriever hunting test judge by the Finnish Kennel Club or an accredited judge by a kennel organization in an FCI member country and approved by the Finnish Kennel Club. If the chief judge is Finnish, he/she must also be a member of the Finnish Kennel Club and a member of a breed club.

1.9. ENTERING A TEST OR A TRIAL AND CANCELLING THE ENTRY

1.9.1. ENTERING A TEST OR A TRIAL

Entries must be sent in by the date given by the organizing club. Only paid entries are accepted unless the organizing club has not indicated otherwise.

1.9.2. LATE ENTRY

The organizing committee has the right to accept late entries if the test is not full. Late entries must be agreed by the chief judge.

1.9.3. CANCELLING THE ENTRY

The entry fee shall not be refunded without an acceptable reason. The entry fee must be refunded if the entry is cancelled because a bitch has come in season or the dog or the handler has fallen ill (medically certified by a veterinarian / a doctor). The organizing committee must immediately be informed of cancellations, however at the latest before the competition starts.

1.10. DOG HANDLER

The dog handler is the official representative of the dog during the test regardless of the ownership of the dog. The dog must be handled by the same person throughout the entire test. The dog handler must follow the instructions given by the judge. The dog owner is responsible for any damage or injuries caused by, or suffered by, the dog during the test.

1.11. RESULTS

1.11.1. CHECKING THE RESULTS

The secretary of the test verifies all the results, ensures that the results are correctly written in the official test report form approved by the Finnish Kennel Club and in the dog performance reports approved by breed clubs and submits these without delay to the chief judge for verification. The chief judge must confirm the test reports approved by the Finnish Kennel Club with his signature.

1.11.2. SENDING THE RESULTS

Within one week of the end of the test the organizing committee must send the test report forms and the dog performance reports, verified by the chief judge, to the party that granted the test.

1.12. JUDGING

More detailed information about judging is given in the official rules for hunting tests for retrievers attached to the general rules.

All the dogs are judged according to the same principles regardless of breed.

1.13. DETAILED REGULATIONS

The tasks and responsibilities of chief judge, deputy chief judge, dog handler, organizing committee and chief steward are detailed in the instructions approved by the boards of the breed clubs.

1.14. COMPLAINTS AND PROTESTS

Complaints cannot be made against legitimate judging and legitimate views presented by the judge.

All complaints and protests shall be handled in accordance with the effective appeal procedure approved by the Finnish Kennel Club.

1.15. OVERRIDING REASONS

The Board of the Finnish Kennel Club has the right, by overriding reasons, to limit participation to the tests or trials or give other special instructions about conducting them.

5. RULES FOR WORKING TESTS FOR RETRIEVERS (NOWT)

5.1. PURPOSE OF THE TEST

The objective of the working test for retrievers is to test and verify the working abilities of retrievers for breeding selection and to select the best dogs having good temperament during a shooting day, natural marking, good use of nose and showing initiative and independence. A retriever shall work in good cooperation with its handler.

5.2. ORGANIZATION OF A TEST

When applying for and organizing the tests, the general part of the working test rules and the general rules of the Finnish Kennel Club must be followed. The judges see to that rules and regulations are followed in a test.

5.3. JUDGES

Judges must be accredited working test or field trial judges. The judging is done by a chief judge and at least one deputy chief judge.

5.4. CLASSES

Beginner class (ALO) is for dogs that have qualified in the hunting ability test for retrievers (NOU1). After receiving the 1st prize in the beginner class (ALO1) the dog is qualified to enter the novice class.

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

Open class (VOI) is for dogs that have qualified in the novice class.

After qualifying for a higher class the dog is allowed to enter the lower class until the end of the year.

5.5. DUMMIES

Commonly available standard dummies will be used as the retrieving articles.

5.6. CONDUCT OF A WORKING TEST

A working test must include five exercises and at least four test stations. The exercises must be designed to simulate events that occur on a shooting day as well as possible. **A mock trial is conducted according to field trial rules.**

5.7. JUDGING

Each judge can judge one or more exercises. There can be several judges at the same test station.

The judge must ensure that each dog is given as good and equal an opportunity as possible to show its abilities as a retriever. In the beginning of an exercise the judge must explain what is expected similarly to all the handlers. Instructions can also be given to all the competitors in the morning's briefing.

After each exercise the judge will evaluate the dog's performance in a few words. The points will not be revealed at this stage. The judge must tell the points to the handler only if the competitor gets a zero (0).

5.7.1. ASSESSMENT OF DOG'S WORKING QUALITIES

A retriever should walk steady at heel and be quiet and steady at the post without asking for any attention of his handler.

A retriever should show a good hunting ability, good initiative, good use of nose and a good game finding ability. A retriever must not refuse any sort of cover or terrain, natural or artificial obstacles and it should enter water without encouragement.

A retriever should pay attention to the shots and mark and remember the falls well. An excellent marking ability involves running to the fall straightforwardly and independently and finding the dummy fast.

When the dog is sent to a dummy, which it has not been able to mark, it must willingly obey the handler's instructions and work in good cooperation with the handler.

When finding the dummy the dog should pick it up quickly and spontaneously. The dog should have a firm and balanced grip of the dummy, a direct return and a careful delivery to the handler.

5.7.2. ELIMINATION

If the dog makes an eliminating fault, it is not allowed to stay in the competition. Additionally, if the dog is injured or physically punished by the handler, the competition will be interrupted.

ELIMINATING FAULTS

- aggressive behaviour
- gun shyness
- refusing to retrieve
- puncturing the dummy

5.7.3. POINTS

Each exercise is scored 20 points maximum.

Faults which lead to zero (0) points:

- running in
- out of control
- whining or barking repeatedly
- failing to deliver found dummy
- failing to enter water
- failing to retrieve

- hunting with dummy in the mouth
- switching retrieve
- **being eye wiped = the dog fails to find a dummy that is picked by another dog or picked by hand by the judge under the corresponding conditions.**

The score will be lowered by the judge in case of the following major faults:

- bad heeling
- being restless or asking for 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
- sloppy delivery
- peeing during the exercise

5.7.4. RUN-OFF

If the winner has not been determined after all the exercises and two or more dogs have the same overall score, a run-off will be organized. In the run-off the dogs will be given as many opportunities to retrieve as judges find it necessary. The dog's performance in the run-off will not effect on its prize unless it makes an eliminating fault.

5.8. PRIZES

5.8.1. Working test with stations

The first (1st) prize will be given to the dog with a minimum of 80 points.

To receive the first prize the dog must achieve at least half of the points (10 points) at every station.

The second (2nd) prize will be given to the dog with a minimum of 65 points.

The third (3rd) prize will be given to the dog with a minimum of 50 points.

A zero (0) from any exercise will disqualify the dog from any prize.

In the open class (VOI) a certificate (CERT) can be awarded to the winner if there have been at least six (6) dogs in the class, the dog has been judged by at least two judges and the dog's performance has been worth a certificate. A reserve certificate (res-CERT) can be awarded to the dog in the second place. A certificate and a reserve certificate can only be awarded to dogs that have been given the first prize.

If the dog cannot be awarded based on its total score or the dog has been suspended from the competition by the judge, the dog will be given a zero (0).

When the handler voluntarily terminates the test of his/her dog in a situation, where the judge still considers the dog has a possibility to achieve a prize, the result will be marked with a hyphen (-).

5.8.2. Mock Trial

A mock trial is judged according to field trial rules.

The first (1st) prize will be given to the dog with an excellent performance. To receive the first prize, no eliminating fault or fault which leads to zero can be allowed. The ranking of the dogs awarded with the first prize will be determined by the judges. The winning dog of the open class (VOI) can be awarded with a certificate (CERT). To obtain the CERT there should have been at least six dogs in the competition and the winning dog should have had at least 5 (five) retrieves. A reserve certificate (RES-CERT) can be given to the dog in the second place.

The second (2nd) prize will be given to the dog with a very good performance. One major fault can be allowed if the dog's performance is otherwise perfect.

The third (3rd) prize will be given to the dog with a good performance.

To be classified in any prize the dog should retrieve at least three dummies without any faults which lead to zero. If the dog makes a fault which leads to zero or the overall performance of the dog disqualifies it from any prize, the result will be marked as a zero (0).

If the dog cannot be awarded based on its total performance or when the handler voluntarily terminates the test of his/her dog in a situation, where the judge still considers the dog has a possibility to achieve a prize, the result will be marked with a hyphen (-).

At the award ceremony the judges proclaim and comment briefly on the results and the performance of the awarded dogs.

9. WORKING TESTS FOR RETRIEVERS – RULES FOR ORGANIZING, CONDUCTING AND JUDGING THE TEST

9.1. GENERAL

The assessment of dogs' working and hunting abilities with hunting tests requires that the conditions during the test are as equal as possible and give equal challenges and level of difficulty for each dog in the same class. No certain conduct of the test is followed, on the contrary, the conduct of the test varies according to the grounds of the test and the hunting event simulated. The exercises are not necessarily the same for all the participants. The running order shall be decided by lot at the draw.

9.2. ORGANIZATION OF THE TEST

When inviting the judges the preliminary number of participants should be taken into account. As a rule, there can be 20 dogs per each judge in the test. The chief judge is appointed by the organizer of the test.

The judges are always sent a written invitation and the number of dogs must be informed to the judges immediately after the end of the registration time. Each test should have a chief steward who is responsible for all the arrangements during the test.

Certificate (CERT) and reserve certificate ribbons shall be allocated for the test.

9.3. DOG HANDLER

The dog handler must follow the instructions given by the judges and the test officials.

The dogs must be kept off lead when they are under judgment, unless the judge decides otherwise. The dog can be sent with a clear hand signal. When handling the dog using a whistle is recommended.

The dogs must not wear a collar or any other equipment during the test. During the exercises the handler must not have in hand any means of coercion. No corporal punishment is allowed on the grounds of the test or during the test.

9.4. CONDUCT OF THE TEST

The exercises are designed to simulate events that occur on a shooting day as well as possible. The exercises should be conducted in a way in which the dogs can be judged at the post, moving forward in the beating line (walking up) and working in the water.

The novice (AVO) and the open (VOI) class can be conducted entirely or partly as a so-called mock trial. A mock trial is conducted similar to a field trial (NOME-A) and the exercises are designed to simulate the events in field trials.

Each dog shall be given an opportunity to show its marking ability and to use its natural hunting abilities as a retriever. Dummies must not be placed so that the dog, when retrieving, is required to pass unreasonably close to another dummy. The retrieve distance must not exceed 150 meters.

The marked retrieves should be conducted in a way in which the dog has a good opportunity to see and mark the falls. When a dummy is thrown a shot is fired. The gun shall be positioned a plausible distance from the retrieve. The shots are primarily fired with blanks with a shotgun or with another registered gun. The thrown dummies must be the same colour for each dog during the exercise.

In the search exercises the search area is told to the handlers. Dummies can be so replaced that the conditions are as equal as possible for each dog. Wide search areas are not a part of a working test. The search exercise can also be combined with a blind retrieve: the dog is directed to search a certain area.

In a blind retrieve the handler is told where the placed dummy is. The exercise shall be so designed that despite the terrain or the waters the handler will be able to see his/her dog most of the time. The distances in blind retrieves are designated according to the class, the difficulty of terrain and the prevailing circumstances.

In the novice (AVO) and in the open class (VOI) calling the dog in voluntarily before the dummy is found shall be judged as the handler's decision to interrupt the exercise. In the beginner class (ALO) calling the dog in before the dummy is found halves the maximum points.

The dummies used shall be canvas dummies, weighing about 0,5kg, and preferably green in colour.

9.5. JUDGING

When judging the judge wishes to see following working qualities:

A retriever should walk steady at heel and be quiet and steady at the post without asking for any attention of his handler.

A retriever should show a good hunting ability, good initiative, good use of nose and a good game finding ability. A retriever must not refuse any sort of cover or terrain, natural or artificial obstacles and it should enter water without encouragement.

A retriever should pay attention to the shots, mark and remember the falls well and have a good marking ability. An excellent marking ability involves running to the area of the fall straightforwardly and independently and finding the dummy fast.

When the dog is sent to a dummy, which it has not been able to mark, it must willingly obey the handler's instructions and work in good cooperation with the handler.

After finding the dummy, the dog should pick it up spontaneously and quickly. The dog should have a firm and balanced grip of the dummy, a direct return and a careful delivery to the handler. Readjusting a bad grip should not be judged as a fault.

In general, the best dogs need least handling and they can make even the difficult exercises look simple and easy.

If the dog makes an eliminating fault, the handler must be informed by the judge. The dog is not allowed to participate in other test stations or stay in the competition. If the dog makes a fault which leads to zero (0) points, it is allowed to stay in the competition, unless otherwise instructed by the judges.