

# Hunting Dog Stakes

## Rules and Guidelines

### **Defined:**

The Hunting Dog Stake is a nonregular field event that is designed to award those dogs that demonstrate proficiency as 'hunting dogs'. Specifically, the stake is designed to focus on dogs that have completed their JH title and are working towards the SH title and/or dogs that need a chance to compete and obtain fieldwork to both improve their hunting abilities and to showcase their existing talents.

These stakes are different than formal AKC hunt tests and field trials in that there is a greater focus on a dog's performance in actual hunting conditions. For example, it is not as essential that a dog stay steady to flush or shot or display a stylish point. It is more important that the winning dog be the companion that the judges would most like to hunt with. Hunting Dog Stakes may be held at any TBVC event, including but not limited to: field trials, hunt tests, and fun days.

### **Hunting Dog Chairman/Secretary:**

A Hunting dog chairman will be designated at the start of each season to track cumulative seasonal placements and to award the seasonal ribbons and trophy. This position should also ensure that standings are available to club members and that placements/# of eligible dogs from each stake are printed in the next newsletter and/or on the club website.

A stake secretary will be designated for each event. The secretary is responsible for accepting entries with payment, tracking the # of dogs running in the stake, organizing braces and running orders, and ensuring that the course is properly planted with birds, as well as announcing placements/awarding ribbons at the end of each day. The secretary is also responsible for appointing gunners/judges for each stake. The stake secretary does not necessarily have to be the same person as the seasonal chairman.

### **Eligibility:**

- 1) Any dog that is eligible to compete in licensed AKC field trials or hunt tests is eligible to run in Hunting Dog Stakes.
- 2) No dog is eligible for placements in a stake that:
  - Has completed a Senior Hunter or Master Hunter title,
  - Has placed 1<sup>st</sup> in a broke dog stake,
  - Is being handled by a professional handler, or
  - Is owned or handled by one of the judges in the same stake.
  - Is a previous winner of the Hunting Dog of the Year traveling trophy.
- 3) Bitches in heat cannot run in Hunting Dog Stakes.
- 4) Only Vizslas owned by TBVC members are eligible for cumulative seasonal placements and the Hunting Dog of the Year traveling trophy.
- 5) If a dog becomes ineligible, (as described in #2) during the year:
  - All points earned to that point shall be retained,
  - From that point forward, the dog will no longer be eligible for placements in an individual stake, and
  - The dog will still be eligible for cumulative seasonal placements and the traveling trophy.
- 6) Other breeds, or Vizslas not owned by TBVC members, are eligible for placement at individual stakes only

### **Pairings and running orders:**

- 1) It is highly encouraged to pair a more experienced, broke dog with a greener bracemate. This provides for a more controllable environment.
- 2) The stake secretary or the judges/gunners reserve the right to rearrange braces and/or the running order, either to achieve the scenario described in #1 or to assist the efficient running of the stake.
- 3) Each placement-eligible dog is required to run with a bracemate.

### **Running and Handling:**

- Each brace should last at least 15 minutes.
- Check cords and collaring dogs is permitted.

## **Ribbons and Prizes:**

- 1) Individual placements:
  - Placements will be made at the end of each day and ribbons will be awarded for places 1-4.
- 2) Scoring:
  - **Points:** Points will be awarded for each dog defeated according to the following scale:
    - 1<sup>st</sup> Place: # of dogs defeated \* 4
    - 2<sup>nd</sup> Place: # of dogs defeated \* 3
    - 3<sup>rd</sup> Place: # of dogs defeated \* 2
    - 4<sup>th</sup> Place: # of dogs defeated \* 1
  - Only dogs placed 1-4 will be awarded points.
  - # of dogs defeated equals the # of dogs eligible for placement that placed below the dog in question. Dogs ineligible for stake placements are not included. Dogs that run multiple times are only counted ONCE.
- 3) Cumulative seasonal placements:
  - Placements are determined by total points earned during a field season, from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - 1<sup>st</sup> place will be awarded the Hunting Dog of the Year traveling trophy and a ribbon at the first field event of the following season, (fun day, hunt test, etc). This is a traveling trophy and must be passed from the previous winner to the new winner.
  - Ribbons will be awarded for places 2-4 at the same time that the trophy is awarded.

## **Standards of Performance:**

The general guideline provided to the judges of hunting dogs stakes is simple: choose the dog that you would most like to hunt with. Each dog is to be judged based on its actual performance and its potential as a worthy hunting companion. The following qualities should be considered when judging:

- **Potential:** Most of these dogs are still being trained, so a finished performance is not expected or required. Evaluate what you see and consider which dogs have the most potential to be the best hunting dog.
- **Trainability, responsiveness:** Does the dog obey its handler?
- **Running style:** Does the dog work the grounds intelligently and thoroughly, seeking out cover and objectives?
- **Pointing:** Does the dog have a nice, staunch point?
- **Retrieving:** Considering these are not broke, fully trained dogs, does the dog make a reasonable attempt at a retrieve? The bird should be retrieved at least ½ the distance to the handler.
- **Steadiness:** Steadiness to wing and shot is NOT required but any degree of steadiness exhibited by the dog should be evaluated and graded accordingly. Backing should be considered in the same regard; nice, but not required. Generally speaking, a dog should not interfere with the gunner's opportunity to shoot the bird; the use of a check cord is a perfectly acceptable way to accomplish this since, again, the competing dogs are generally not broke.
- **Ability to find game:** Number of finds is an important factor and should be scored accordingly, but it should NOT be the sole means of scoring and determining placements.

The single, best run of each dog should be used when determining placements for each day/stake.

## **Judging:**

Judges and typically are the official gunners of the event that the stake is held at. They should be active hunters who know what makes a good hunting dog.

There can be 2-4 judges appointed; 2 primary judges and 2 additional. Either one of the two primary judges should be present for every brace and determining placements. Judging an entire stake can be tiresome. By allowing judges to alternate, this will allow them to rest during the stake.