

**MEETING OF THE FIELD TRIALS LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 12 JUNE 2024 AT 10.30 AM IN THE BOARDROOM, THE KENNEL
CLUB, CLARGES STREET**

A G E N D A

ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

**ITEM 2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 MAY
2023**

The Council is requested to approve the minutes of the meeting.
(Annex A refers)

**ITEM 3. TO ELECT A COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE TO THE FIELD TRIALS
COMMITTEE FOR RETRIEVERS**

**ITEM 4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING AND
RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS PASSED TO THE FIELD
TRIALS COMMITTEE (RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS)**

- a. The Council is invited to note the Results of Recommendations document.
(Annex B refers)

Handlers with more than one dog and dogs entered at more than one trial on
the same day

- b. As noted within the Results of Recommendations document, the Retriever Field
Trials Working Party has been working on analysis of data relating to the above
subject. The Council is invited to note that the Working Party's report will be
discussed at the Field Trials Committee meeting in April.

A report will be circulated to the Council as soon as possible following the
Committee meeting.

ITEM 5. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES

- a. German Longhaired Pointer Club Mr D Elliot
Import Register Breeds – J6 Entries

The Council is requested to consider an amendment to regulation J6 to make it
clear which breeds are eligible to run in field trials if listed on the import register.

Amendment to Regulation J6

TO:

A dog must, at the time of entry for a trial be registered on the Kennel Club
Breed Register **or be registered on the Kennel Club Imported Breeds**

Register and be a member of a breed that has been approved by the Board to compete in field trials or have recorded an Authority to Compete (ATC) Number as required by Kennel Club Rules and Regulations in the owner's name (or registration of transfer applied for). In the case of joint registered owners the full name of every registered owner must be given. (Insertion in bold)

An appendix to Annex J(E) Breeds Which Hunt, Point and Retrieve that lists all the eligible breeds for HPR trials is also proposed.

Rationale

During the creation of field trial statistics there was some confusion regarding whether the Braque d'Auvergne was eligible to run in HPR field trials. In the current J regulations they do not currently meet the criteria, however that breed and other import registered breeds are eligible if approved by The Kennel Club Board. However, this is not reflected in the J regulations.

It would also be useful to add an appendix in the J regulations that lists the eligible breeds for HPRs so field trials secretaries are aware of what dogs are eligible for trials and judges know what breeds hunting styles they are supposed to be familiar with.

For context the B regulations state:

1. **Introduction.**—The Kennel Club Board shall maintain a number of separate registers including:—

- a. The Breed Register for each purebred dog of a breed that has been accorded full recognition by The Kennel Club. In special circumstances, dogs of impure or unverified breeding may be entered, at the discretion of The Kennel Club Board, in the Breed Register in accordance with Regulation B2c.
- b. The Imported Breed Register for each pure bred imported dog of a breed not previously recognised, or of a breed which has been accorded full recognition by The Kennel Club but in which there has been no registration activity for 10 years.

b. Westward Gundog Society

Mrs S Jenkins

Draw Preference – Regulation J6.e

The Council is requested to consider an amendment to regulation J6.e so that the draw preference must be listed on the result of the draw.

Amendment to Regulation J6.e

TO:

e. If entries or nominations exceed the number of permitted runners, the right to compete in a Trial shall be decided by ballot (subject to Regulation J6.i. which related to preference in the draw for open stakes). Societies must ensure that all eligible owners/members are given the opportunity of having their preferred dog entered into the first ballot (See J6.j). The society must publish the result of this ballot in full to all applicants. **This must include the draw preferences the dogs are entered under.** Where an online system, approved by the Kennel Club, has been used to take entries, the ballot must be carried out using the

same online system, and the result forwarded to the Kennel Club at the same time that competitors are notified.
(Insertion in bold)

Rationale

This amendment is suggested to add clarity to a draw result. An entrant can clearly see which part of the draw preference they have been entered in. This could be listed by either the draw preference next to the owners/dog name or list the owners/dogs under the relevant draw preference headings.

- c. Golden Retriever Club Mr G Bird
Three Judge System – J(B)3.(f)

The Council is requested to consider a new regulation to ensure that the three judge system is only used under exceptional circumstances.

New Regulation J(B)3.(f)

TO:

The three judge system should only be used in exceptional circumstances where there is insufficient time to find a replacement judge when the appointed judge is suddenly unable to take up his/her appointment.

(Insertion in bold)

Rationale

The three judge system is unfair and outdated and should only be used under exceptional circumstances.

- d. Labrador Retriever Club of Wales Mr G Bird
Amendment to Regulation J6.h – Preference in the Draw

The Council is requested to consider an amendment to regulation J6.h to ensure a clear and transparent process where a club is holding two stakes of the same denomination in the same season. The current regulation currently allows clubs and societies to give preference in the draw to members who were not successful in the draw for the first stake to have first preference in the second or subsequent stakes, where two stakes of the same denomination are being held in the same season.

Amendment to Regulation J6.h

TO:

~~A society which runs two or more stakes of the same denomination in a season which are drawn on the same date may ask a member, who has been successful in the draw for more than one stake, which of the stakes he/she wishes to run in. Similarly, where a society holds two or more stakes in a season of the same denomination which are not drawn on the same date, it may have discretion to give priority in any subsequent draws to members who were not successful in the previous draw/s. This must be clearly stated on all relevant schedules.~~

Where a society holds two or more stakes in a season of the same denomination it must give priority/preference in any subsequent draws to applicants who were not successful in the previous draw/s. This

regulation will apply whether the draws for these stakes are held on the same date or not. Any applicant who applies for a run in the first trial and is drawn in the main draw and thereby obtains a run, must therefore be classified as second preference in any subsequent draws for other same denomination stakes. If an applicant subsequently withdraws from their run in the first trial at any stage, they will still be regarded as second preference in any subsequent draws.

Where an applicant is offered a run from the reserves in any of these stakes and accepts the run, they must therefore be treated as second preference for any subsequent stakes that they have applied for. If at the time of acceptance of a run in the first stake, the applicant is in the main draw for a subsequent stake, they will be deemed to have withdrawn from that subsequent stake and will be placed at the bottom of the main reserves list and that place offered to the next available reserve.

Where an applicant is in the list of reserves on the first stake and contacts the society and withdraws from the reserve list, they will remain as first preference in any subsequent stakes.

Where a society contacts an applicant and offers them a run from the reserves and the run is declined, they will be treated as having had an opportunity to run and any application for a subsequent stake will be treated as second preference.

This regulation must be clearly stated on all relevant schedules.

(Insertion in bold)

Rationale

The Labrador Retriever Club of Wales believes that the current regulation is ambiguous and in need of clarification and updating. It is also concerned that whilst the vast majority of clubs do apply this regulation, which is currently 'club optional', some do not and moreover, actively promote a policy of allowing their members to apply and run in two or more trials by being successful in all of these draws, whilst other members who apply for a run in the same two or more stakes are unsuccessful in all of these draws and are therefore on the reserve lists of these stakes. The LRCW does not consider this either fair or in the best interest of the sport overall and has the potential to discourage newer competitors from continuing to participate.

The proposed regulation change will bring a clear and transparent process that is fair to all, whether they are members of the society or not and will not affect members' first preference priority in the draws. It will prevent members and non-members alike from running in two or more trials in the same season, whilst other applicants are not offered a run at all.

The LRCW operates this policy and whilst it might appear complex at first, please be assured that it is very straightforward and simply requires field trial secretaries to record a 'communication log' which we regard as best practice for all secretaries. It does ensure that every applicant has the same opportunity to run their dog as the next applicant, all be it within the members' first preference system as per J6.j whereby members will always have priority over non-members in novice stakes.

- e. Yellow Labrador Club Mr G Bird
Walked-Up Certificate – Amendment to Regulation K2.c.(3)

The Council is requested to consider an amendment to the above regulation to require a dog to have been issued a walked-up certificate before being granted the title of Field Trial Champion.

Amendment to Regulation K2.c.(3)

TO:

Before any Retriever is entitled to be described as a Field Trial Champion it must also have a Water, Drive **and Walked-Up** Certificate. The Water Certificate may, but not necessarily, be gained at a special water test. The special water test must have been conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A Panel, at one of the following: the Retriever Championship, a Field Trial Open Stake, or at a subsequent special test. (J(A)2 refers.) The Drive Certificate must be conducted before two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A Panel, at the Retriever Championship or a Field Trial Open Stake. **The Walked-Up Certificate must be issued by two Panel judges, one of whom must be an A Panel, at the Retriever Championship or a Field Trial Open Stake.**

(Insertion in bold.)

Rationale

The introduction of a walked-up certificate required to make up a dog to Field Trial Champion would ensure that the dog has been tested on all aspects of its ability. Heelwork and steadiness in line are two area where we can see some dogs fail in this regard, but as the regulation states at present, there is no requirement for this aspect of a dog's ability to be tested. You can make a dog up to field trial champion by winning multiple driven stakes where heelwork and steadiness are not always tested.

ITEM 6. DISCUSSION ITEMS

- a. Weimaraner Association, Hungarian Vizsla Club
and German Shorthaired Pointer Club Mr N Wroe
HPR Judging

The Council is requested to discuss issuing a notice to HPR judges via the Field Trials Newsletter to direct that judges at HPR trials should not stipulate, at the start of the Trial, that "Pointed Birds Only" are to be shot.

Rationale

This practice seem to be becoming more prevalent and goes against regulation J(E)3, which stipulates that 'the trial should be run as nearly as possible to an ordinary day's rough shooting for a small party of guns numbering not more than 4 in total.'

In an ordinary rough shooting situation, guns would not ignore a bird that lifted on or proximate to the dog's beat. To have, depending on a judge's stipulation, such a restriction imposed at one trial, which may not prevail at another trial, is contrary to J(E)3, and introduces a selected variability between trials.

It should be appreciated and taken into account that the guns on the day have usually paid a considerable amount of money to shoot, which helps with the financial cost of trials.

Regulation J(A)3(d) states that 'all judges, chief steward and other responsible for the organisation of the trial should be courteous and co-operative with the host and steward of the beat and fall in with their arrangements to achieve the best result possible in an atmosphere of friendliness and confidence.' By restricting when and whether birds are to be shot is not likely to achieve the best result possible.

With respect to regulation J(A)3(g) which states 'judges should ask the steward of the beat what the game position is likely to be and regulate the amount of work or number of retrieves for each dog accordingly.' This should not be taken as an injunction to restrict the guns from shooting, but rather, as stated, to regulate the amount of work or retrieves for each dog.

For example, if the dogs are not able to catch up to and point the birds, which happens a lot with end of season birds especially at novice trials, there will be an artificial limit to shooting or even be no shooting at all for the guns and a trial with 'no results'.

It is not suggested that all unworked birds that get up on a particular dog's beat should be shot, but if a bird comes over the dog's beat, or lifts within or proximate to the dog's beat, and the dog has a chance to mark it, it should be shot and may well afford an opportunity to show the dog's retrieving ability as well as it's steadiness to shot and fall.

- b. Cornwall Field Trial Society
Coventry & District Gundog Society
Number of Spaniel Trials

Mrs M Cox

The Council is requested to discuss how to alleviate the problem of too many spaniel trials (English Springer Spaniel & Cocker Spaniels) and how to avoid there being too many trials in a short space of time in the coming season.

Rationale

In November 2023 the number of trials was:

23 Open AV Spaniel
19 Open Cocker
32 Novice AV Spaniel
12 Novice Cocker

This equates to 86 trials in 26 trialling days (30 days of November with 4 Sundays). This explains why clubs struggled with entries, resulting in some

open cocker trials being cancelled and novice cocker trials being changed to AV.

Even if trials are on different days, dogs cannot trial every day or every other day on a regular basis and handlers have to take into account the time off work and financial implication of attending trials.

Additionally, if there are many trials on the same day or back to back then competitors will enter all the trials and then pull out, usually at the last minute due to dogs not going well enough, too tired, or having been offered a run closer to home/preferred ground/judge, which leaves the club secretary rushing around to fill the card.

It is appreciated that clubs have to work around the keepers but most are helpful and give a couple of dates to choose from.

c. Golden Retriever Club Mr G Bird
Preference in All Aged Trials

The Council is requested to discuss whether preference conditions for All Aged Trials should be stipulated in the regulations.

Currently preference conditions for All Aged Trials are determined by societies. This can cause confusion and errors in the draws. The Golden Retriever Club suggested the following change to the regulations to solve this:

Delete regulation J6.k and replace with new regulation J6.j.(3):

All Aged Stakes

- i) Members first preference dogs that have gained an award in any Stake**
- ii) Members second preference dogs that have gained an award in any Stake**
- iii) Non-Members first preference dogs that have gained an award in any Stake**
- iv) Non-Members second preference dogs that have gained an award in any Stake**
- v) Other dogs**

d. Yellow Labrador Club Mr G Bird
Restriction of trials per club

The Council is requested to consider introducing a restriction on the number of retriever trials a club can hold in a year to one novice, one open and one all-aged stake.

Rationale

The sport is getting congested with the number of novice and all-aged stakes being run each year which puts a lot of pressure on judges and field trials secretaries to find quality grounds. By limiting the number of stakes a club can hold per season, it would help ease the pressure off judges and officials arranging trials.

e. Eastern Counties Spaniel Society
Flushing deer during a trial

Mrs W Knight

The Council is requested to discuss, when a spaniel is hunting during a trial and it moves/flushes a deer, whether the dog can be credited with a flush if it remains steady to the movement.

There are widely differing views from A Panel judges, leading to confusion amongst B and Non Panel judges.

One view is that deer are not game or legal quarry in these circumstances and their presence should be ignored. (Obviously if the dog was out of control by chasing it would be eliminated.)

Another view is that if the dog indicated the presence of the deer and remained steady to the movement then it can be credited with a flush. This last scenario seems more prevalent where game is short.

However, when the judges with the latter view are asked if they would put a dog out if they passed/missed the deer, the answer is always in the negative.

The view of Eastern Counties Spaniel Society is that spaniels should not be credited with flushes on deer for the following reasons:

Although the dog may stay steady to the movement of the deer, it can never be shot therefore taking away one of the elements of steadiness. Deer's reaction to dogs is completely different to that of game and spaniels and handlers should not be encouraged to hunt deer. Deer are not game or legal quarry in these circumstances. Crediting spaniels with flushes on deer can and does lead to the dog winning a trial having never flushed legal quarry during the course of that trial.

Crediting dogs during a trial with flushes on deer should not be used to validate the trial when there is a shortage of game. If you are prepared to credit a dog with a flush on a deer, then it follows that the dog should be eliminated if it passes deer on its beat. Neither should be the case.

ITEM 7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Council is invited to note that the next meeting will take place in June 2025. The exact date will be confirmed in due course.

ITEM 8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

THIS WILL BE TAKEN AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION

Please give at least three weeks' advance notice of matters to be raised under 'Any Other Business' as this assists the office if research is required.

NOTES:

1. The Kennel Club will reimburse standard rail fares to all representatives attending the meeting, from their addresses as recorded at The Kennel Club. Claim forms will be available at the meeting.
2. Those resident in Northern Ireland or Scotland may apply in advance for authority to substitute shuttle air travel for standard rail fare, although it is requested that tickets are booked well in advance to take advantage of any reduction in fares.
3. Please give advance notice of matters to be raised under Any Other Business. This assists the Office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Council Chairman.
4. Kennel Club Liaison Council Regulations state that The Kennel Club will bear the cost of all reasonable and externally incurred costs connected with a Council, if agreed in advance. Therefore, representatives should apply to The Kennel Club for approval of any costs they may wish to claim prior to the expense being incurred.

THE KENNEL CLUB'S STRATEGIC AIMS

- *Champion the wellbeing of dogs*
- *Safeguard and enhance the future of pedigree dogs, addressing breed-associated health issues*
- *Protect the future of dog activities together with our grassroots network*
- *Become relevant to more dog owners to increase our impact*
- *Deliver an excellent member experience and widen our community*
- *Ensure we are financially secure and sustainable*