

2012 SMCNA Bird Championship Guidelines

All dogs must be kept under control and on leads at all times when not in the field!

Field: The field shall be approximately 20 to 40 acres and hopefully of grass between 1 ft to 2ft high, so that dogs can be seen at all times by the judges and spectators. There will be boundary markers indicating that boundaries in which are considered in or out of bounds. There should be water tanks available for the dogs to drink or be cooled down in the fields at all times.

Birds: Quail or chuckars are preferred, there will be 5 birds placed for the first run and 4 for each run thereafter. If a bird flies off during planting another will be placed.

Field Time: 20 minutes

Judging:

Hunter Class: These dogs will be judged as a finished hunting dog, when the dog establishes point he must remain steady to wing, once the bird is in the air the dog may break and at this point the retrieving will begin. If the dog starts breaking prior to the bird being flushed, no score will be awarded. The dog should aggressively run to retrieve and retrieve to hand; handler may take a step to the dog in order to retrieve the bird to hand.

Hunter Scoring: 10 points for a point, 10 points for retrieve, minus 2 points for each shell spent.

In the event the bird flushes wild prior to the handler getting to the dog and the dog was steady, the handler can shoot the bird and get full credit on the score. If the dog takes out the bird the handler will receive a zero on the point and if the bird is shot and retrieved, full score will be awarded on the retrieve. If the dog takes the bird out and catches the bird, no score will be awarded it will be considered a lost bird.

If a bird is produced and the gunner misses the bird and the dog takes off and retrieves it, full score shall be awarded for retrieve. If the handler/gunner/judge accidentally flushes the bird the bird can be shot for the retrieve and scored only for a retrieve.

Non-productive points by a dog, there will be no score given. In order to score there must be a productive point with bird being flushed. No dead birds will be scored on, but if the judge determines the bird is fresh, the point will be scored and the handler will then throw the bird with a shot fired in the air and the retrieve will be scored accordingly.

Gunners: All gunners under the age of 18 years must have completed a hunter safety course and have a certification card. Each gunner and handler should be briefed for safety issues and counseled by the Field Marshal and Judges. At any time an individual is deemed not safe in the field, at the discretion of the Judge and Field Marshal the brace can be terminated immediately. **Safety is a must.**

A gunner that will be shooting for a handler will always walk behind the handler. There will be no talking with the handler at any time unless instructed by the Judges. The handler will handle the dog and the gunner will handle all pointed birds to be shot. The gunner will locate and produce the bird into the air for the shot and after the bird is killed or downed the gunner will then walk, to the back of the handler and judge and not say anything. The handler will then take over on the retrieve and handle the dog for the score.

Safety: In the event a gunner produces the bird into the air and the bird fly's in the direction that is not safe to shoot, the gunner or Judge can call a safety, and all scores (2 points will be deducted as if a shell was spent) will be awarded. The retrieve will be scored based on a previous retrieve or the handler can throw a dead bird if there were no other retrieve situations.

Running: There will be no running at any time in the field by anyone with a gun in their hand period, the Judge can take away a bird plus the score or stop the brace and disqualify the handler and his dog.

Blaze Orange: Any person entering the field whether running their dog or walking as a spectator, shall wear blaze orange at all times.

The Judges and Field Marshals shall have full control of any or all situations that occur prior to or entering the field. Any unsportsmanlike conduct by any handler, the brace will be terminated and no scores will be awarded.