

## **USA DIRECTOR of JUDGES**

***There were many different interpretations of the rule changes that had been implemented and distributed by the SV and we did try and make sure that we had the most complete before we attempted to put them in force. We also wanted to wait until the FCI Judges meeting and make sure that we were also in concert with them due to the increased usage of FCI judges at USA trials.***

***Actual handing down of rules occurs as follows : FCI to the AZG which then goes to the VDH which of course relays to the SV, each country may still decide to adopt or not adopt a specific rule or create a variance as to its' interpretation which is usually where the confusion starts to set in.***

***The actual first draft of them was delayed because of unforeseen factors, but the rules were still being meted out as the USA judges attempted to make them known, I hope that you will bear with me for the time frame being as extensive as it was.***

### **TRACKING :**

***There were a few changes that became evident here, head checks on the track with a dog that tracks consistently are not subject to the penalties that may have been marked in the past, also, the vegetation, wind and the temperature are also taken into consideration when scoring and evaluating the track.***

***When the track is laid, there is to be more of a natural pace while actually laying the track, heavy stepping while laying the track is not allowed and the laying of the scent pad must not be heavy, although there may be some extra time ( slight stepping ) here.***

***Also, the articles on the Schutzhund 1 track will be as the articles on the Schutzhund 2 track, first article on the second leg and last article at the end of the track, it is no longer the choice of the handler as to article placement in Schutzhund 1.***

***Praising at the articles may be before or after you show the article to the judge, which means, when you go to your dog upon an article indication, you may praise ( such as petting or verbal praise ) before you pick up the article to show it to the judge or you may do it after you show the article to the judge, you may not praise while you are picking up the article and/or showing it to the judge.***

***The start of the track has not changed greatly other than the complete omission of any obedience commands in your approach to the scent pad, after reporting in to the judge prepared for tracking with the lead played out so the judge may observe the lead, you***

***may stop 3 meters ( approx. 9 feet ) before the scent pad to re-position your lead, such as, under the dogs leg without any type of obedience command ( no sit or down ) you may also do this while moving towards the scent pad, the dog then should go to the scent pad with the handler while under control and be given the track command at the scent pad, the handler's hands may not go below their knee in setting the dog into the track initially and at the re-starts at the articles. The handler may also not go to the scent pad to survey the lay of the track before the beginning of the track.***

***The leash may be tight or loose, but the handler must be 33 feet back of the dog and must not change pace unless the actual terrain would dictate it.***

***The indication of articles should be presented in the same manner as the actual tracking of the dog, such as, a dog that tracks with much enthusiasm and drive should not be slow at the articles to the point where it creates a wholly different picture from the overall track.***

***The dog should also take a good scent pad, not rushing through it from avoidance or nerves, although there is not a set time that the dog must remain at the scent pad that would result in point deduction.***

***There is still encouragement of the dog allowed on the track but may not be extreme and the “ such “ command may only be used at the scent pad and at the re-starts on the articles.***

### **BOETCHER HARNESS :**

- 1 ) You can clip the leash to the metal ring underneath the dog on the harness.***
- 2 ) You can clip the leash to the collar and have the leash go through the metal ring on a BOETCHER harness underneath the dog.***

***The FH1 and the FH2 now have the same start, as in the FH1.***

### **OBEDIENCE :**

***The union between dog and handler is important and will be one of the criteria whereby the judge evaluates obedience. The dog does not necessarily have to have constant eye***

***contact with the handler or always looking up but must show attention to the handler throughout the obedience phase.***

***The left about turn and the military ( international ) about turn are both correct, but are performed as a pivot move ( traveling back over the same ground ) and not a curve back, the same about turn must be utilized throughout the whole routine.***

***The handler must make sure they do the correct heeling pattern in obedience.***

***The handler is also responsible for taking the correct number of steps in all buildups and in exercises where the dog is left in place, one example, in the buildup of the exercise, 10 to 15 steps. Point deduction for failure in this part of an exercise could range from ½ to 1 point.***

***At local trials, the handler may still decide in what direction they wish to do the jump exercises, at national events, all handlers will follow the same direction. The same dumbbells are used by all handlers at all events. The handler may not prepare the dumbbell in any way such as, rubbing it up before throwing and may not use it as an incentive for the dog. Upon completion of the retrieve exercise, the dumbbell must be held at the right side calmly and along the leg.***

***The dumbbell must be thrown at least 10 paces ( approx. 20 to 30 feet ) from the handler, if the handler is unable to make the distance, the judge may help the handler with the throw.***

***Touching the jump may result in a ½ to 2 point deduction in both directions.***

***During any part of an exercise where running is required there must be a noticeable change of pace.***

***Training vests are allowed in local trials but may not be worn in Regional or National events at any time during competition.***

## **PROTECTION :**

***There is still much discussion and different interpretations among some of the judges that come over, about the helper being allowed to move back one step before the search or transport, this is still under discussion although almost foreign judges allow it, some do not, but all are told to adopt this interpretation, the consensus of the majority was that the helper may be instructed to step back one step.***

***If the dog returns to the handler as he approaches the “ live blind “, a deduction of 3 to 4 points may be taken.***

***A dog that goes into the blind and bites the helper, can only receive a “ fuss “ command to regain control, if the handler gives an “ out “ command, the team is disqualified.***

***Call out of the blind is “ Hier, Fuss “.***

***Heavy gripping of the sleeve after the “ out “ may result in up to a 9 point deduction.***

***If a dog holds onto the sleeve before the “ out “, this is not considered faulty.***

***There is only a small deduction for a shallow grip that changes to a full grip at the dog’s first opportunity in an exercise.***

***The handler must wait for the judge’s signal to release their dog on the “ courage test “ because of the varying distances from SchH 1 through SchH 3 and the handler must remain at the spot of release until the judge’s signal to come forward to pick up their dog.***

***( NOTE: According to the FCI, the courage test distance is the same for all )***

***The new title of STP ( Stobenprufung ) Article Search is covered in the new printing of the rulebook.***

***Many of the rules or interpretations described above are not new, just more clearly defined than in the past.***