

USCA Sieger Show Performance and Evaluation Test

All dogs entered into the Working Classes (male and female) at the USCA Sieger Show must participate in the **Performance Test** prior to proceeding to the other phases of the show (stand and exam, ring work). Dogs that do not earn a rating of Pronounced “a” (minimum point rating of 3/3 out of possible 5/5) will not proceed to the other phases of the show (stand and exam, ring)

The “Performance Test” will be held on the first day of the Sieger Show as the first event of the show. The “Performance Test” will use two (2) helpers, one (1) for the front half exercise “Attack on handler” and one (1) for the back half exercise “Attack on Dog Out of Motion” (courage test), and will be judged by the USCA Director of Judges or in his/her absence a designee appointed by the Director of Judges and approved by the USCA Breed Advisory Committee.

The “Performance test” is the first event of the show. Before the start of the “Performance Test” during approved practice, commonly used corrective devices may be used in a commonly accepted humane manner unless specifically directed by the host club or organization that they are not allowed. Abuse of corrective training methods or aids may lead to disqualification (DQ) or unsportsmanlike charges and sanctions. Motivational training methods (aids) may also be used during practice and for warm up at USCA events. At the start of the “Performance Test”, throughout the show, until the end of the show (which is recognized as either the awards ceremony or the return of paperwork to the handlers/owners) NO corrective training devices or aids (electric, pinch, choke, dummy collars, heeling sticks, etc.) may be used on or within the sight of the “Performance Test” venue. The “Performance Test” venue is considered to be the protection field (including warm up area), competitor parking area or any area within the spectator’s sight of the venue. Motivational training methods and aids may be used during the “Performance Test” while not on the protection field (parking areas, prior to stepping onto the protection field to report in for protection). All motivational training aids must be discarded before entering the protection field (a line will be designated by the person checking in dogs to the field). The judge has the right to determine if a handler is wearing an item that may signal or change the behavior of the dog and have the handler remove it prior to competing (training vests or the like).

There will be no protection work, helpers, sleeves, or whips allowed in or near the immediate warm up area. The warm up area will be determined at each unique venue and an announcement will be made immediately preceding the Performance Test.

Collars – the single row, large link type collar (fur saver, links must be 1.5” or larger) loose fitting on the dog must be worn throughout the “Performance Test”. The handler must at all times have a leash during the test. It must be carried in a way that when not in use is over the shoulder opposite the dog, around the waist or in a pocket and at all times the clip away from the dog. The handler must be able use the leash if needed to control the dog or if instructed by the judge to leash the dog.

1. "Attack on Handler" (Front Half exercise, "Attack out of the Blind"). The distance from the starting point of free heeling (off leash) to the blind will be 60 feet. The dog will have three (3) attempts to perform the free heeling exercise to the "Attack on Handler" and it must reach the predetermined minimum distance of twenty feet (20) from the blind to pass. The actual attack will commence when the dog has passed the marked distance of twenty (20) feet from blind but before it reaches fifteen (15) feet from the blind. The judge will signal the helper to attack the dog when it is between fifteen (15) and twenty (20) feet from the blind. The judge will evaluate performance work as it is described in USCA's Rule Book, "The dog should counter the attack securely and energetically in stopping the attack by the helper." A lack of self confidence in the work shall be evaluated as "sufficient" (vh) in courage earning a score of less than 3 points in either portions of the 5/5 point evaluation as described below, an unwillingness to engage or leave the helper or continue to work will be evaluated as "insufficient" (ng) with a score of 0 or 1 and be Disqualified (DQ). The "out" should show the dog clearly off the sleeve and in the guarding phase. The only command permitted is one (1) word for the out such as: out, aus, or any other single command meaning out or release. The handler has up to three (3) attempts using the out command to make the dog out (release the sleeve). The first out command is at the handler's choice within 3-5 seconds after the pressure phase has ended (helper has stopped drive/moving). If the dog requires additional commands to out the handler may give an additional two (2) commands or the judge will indicate to the handler to give additional out commands as needed to show the dog clearly off the sleeve. If the dog is not out after the third (3) out command the dog is disqualified (DQ) "no out". The commands of sit or down to affect the out are not permitted here and will result in "sufficient" (vh) or "insufficient" (ng) and/or disqualification (DQ) as determined by the judge based on how it influenced the dogs performance. The dog, however, may sit, down or stand upon the out command, but may not bother the helper during the guarding without incurring deductions. As the handler approaches the dog, the sit may be reinforced at a distance of up to 10 (ten) feet from the dog if necessary. Only with a single command of sit, additional commands are faulty. The use of the command "down" or "platz" or similar to keep the dog with the helper are a disqualification (DQ). The handler may after the attack, leash their dog without physical restraint (such as, grabbing the dog to prevent re-grip) or choose not to leash the dog. The dog may receive an extra command to out in order to put the leash on the dog as long as it does not exceed the total of three (3) out commands with no penalty; however, a dog that must be physically restrained or taken off of the sleeve physically will be disqualified. Once the dog is secured on lead it may be "heeled on leash" or "free heeling off leash" may be displayed to move the dog away from the helper a minimum of five (5) paces. Exercise completed.

The repositioning down field for the "Attack on Dog Out of Motion" will be a minimum of fifty (50) paces or the full field as determined by the judge based on the USCA Rulebook. The dog must remain under the handler's control, a loss of control while repositioning will be reason for disqualification (DQ). Special merit in the Performance Test (5/5) Rating will be placed on dogs that show control and wait in the "watch position" in a calm manner.

2. "Attack on Dog Out of Motion" (back half exercise, "long grip, courage test"). With the dog and handler in "basic position" at the predetermined distance for the exercise, the dog may be held

by the collar (dog remaining on handler's left side in "basic position") but not verbally or physically encouraged / stimulated. The dog should be in the basic position as the helper runs from the "blind" and proceeds to the middle of the field and turns towards the dog / handler to start the exercise. The helper will be verbal and physically threatening as he/she turns towards the dog. The handler will release the dog upon a signal from the judge. A dog that is released or breaks away before the helper has made the turn towards the handler will be disqualified (DQ). A dog that is released or breaks away from the handler after the helper makes the turn towards the handler but before the judges signal will be considered faulty and be evaluated at a lower Performance rating. The performance work and the out will be evaluated the same as described above in the "Attack on Handler" exercise. The handler may not move down field towards the dog until the dog has clearly shown the out and the judge signals the handler to pick up the dog. The handler must walk at a normal pace to his dog (running to pick up the dog is faulty and will cause a lower Performance rating). During the guarding phase (as described above in "Attack on Handler") the handler may reinforce the dog's position with an additional sit command as the handler approaches and is within 10 paces of the dog. In this exercise the dog will not initially be placed on leash (lead), the dog/handler must attempt to free heel away from the helper five (5) paces to report out to the judge. The handler will be allowed up to three (3) commands /attempts to free heel (off leash heel) the dog away from the helper without a mandatory Performance Rating (5/5 scoring) deduction. If the handler is unable to free heel the dog away from the helper with three (3) commands / attempts or less the dog may then be placed on leash (lead) and show five (5) paces on leash (lead) heeling away from the helper to the judge. If the leash (lead) is required to heel the dog away from the helper the dog may still be rated "Pronounced" ("a") based on the dog's "TSB" (instinctive behavior, self-confidence, ability to handle stress) behavior shown in the "fighting / guarding" portion of the exercise, but the total "Performance Score" cannot be rated higher than four (4) points and the dog will not be eligible for a Performance Award. Any handler not following the judges directions (example: not waiting to be called in to pick up the dog at the judges signal, encouraging the dog), will be evaluated at a lower rating for "handler help / extra commands" to help the dog complete the exercise and this will earn a lower Performance Rating (5/5 scoring). If it affects the dogs performance this may change the "TSB" rating as well. If the dog is unable to be heeled away from the helper after being placed on leash it will be disqualified (DQ) with no TSB rating and will not proceed to the ring due to DQ out of control. Loss of control of the dog during any part of the Performance Test is cause for Disqualification (DQ).

Evaluation of the Performance Test

Dogs that do not demonstrate a correct performance test cannot receive the rating of Excellent–Select (VA). Dogs that continue to bump or re-grip after the "out" will be faulty and rated at lower ratings. Dogs that do not perform the "out" exercise, or receive the evaluation of "sufficient" ("vh") or "insufficient" ("ng") cannot continue in the Show (Stand and Exam or Ring). No show rating will be given.

Explanation of Performance Test Ratings

In order to improve the Performance Test (TSB) rating system for the Sieger Show the SV implemented a rating scale of 5/5 as described below. USCA will also use this 5/5 rating system

for performance to help further clarify the overall performance of dogs in each rating category (insufficient “ng”, sufficient “vh”, pronounced ‘a’) in the Performance Test for the Sieger Show. This 5/5 scoring system better defines the differences in performance as it applies to each category and will be given in addition to the normal rating of “ng” – “vh” – “a”. This brings more transparency and a more specific description of the performance in each category (Front Half exercise “Attack on Handler” and Back Half exercise “Attack on Dog Out of Motion”).

The following contains a more detailed description about the 5/5 performance rating as it applies to the particular phases of the TSB test.

- Pronounced “a” is a rating of 3-4-5. These dogs will proceed to show in the ring.
- Sufficient “vh” is a rating of 2. These dogs will not proceed to the stand and exam or ring.
- Insufficient “ng” is a rating of 1 or a “DQ”. These dogs will not proceed to the stand and exam or ring.

Only dogs receiving an overall score of 4/5, 5/4 or 5/5 (total of 9 or 10 points) will be awarded USCA Performance Awards at the Sieger Show.

General Explanation of 5/5 Rating for Performance

Rating: 5

The dog reacts immediately to the attack with behavior to include confidence, directly to the attacker, energetic and convincing manor. It shows an effective, calm, firm and full grip in all phases of the defense exercise (engagement, drive and transition). The dog releases after the allowed command to out and then shows powerful guarding with natural intensity, aggression and willingness to take direction from the handler. The dog must perform off leash healing five (5) paces away from helper before handler can leash the dog.

Rating: 4

The dog reacts immediately and convincingly, it shows a good grip but may not be completely full and/or calm. It may be somewhat anxious in all phases of the defense exercises. It releases after the allowed command (may be slightly slow out) and shows good natural intensity in the guarding phases with good intensity, aggression and willingness to take direction from the handler.

Rating: 3

The dog reacts with a slight /a little hesitation in the attack, it should show more speed and commitment in the attack (may slow a little). It shows a shallow grip and/or a hectic active grip which should be clearly fuller and calmer. It may regrip under the pressure from the Helper. The dog must still show sufficient intensity and hardness. It releases after the allowed command (may be slightly slow out) and still shows sufficient natural intensity in the guarding phases.

Rating: 2

The dog reacts with a clear hesitation, is unsure in its commitment to engage, the grip is hesitant, very shallow, ineffective and weak. The dog is anxious and shows weakness during the pressure phase (drive) from the helper. It releases after the allowed command (may be slightly slow out) but it should be much more attentive and powerful in the guarding phases.

Rating: 1

Doesn't react to the helpers threat, engage or guard.

Terminate (Discontinue) the Performance Test, TSB = Ng:

- The dog cannot handle the stress of the defense exercise and does not engage or leaves the field.
- The dog leaves the helper during the guarding phase before the handler is within 3 meters of the dog and returns to the handler.

Disqualification (DQ):

- Unable to show the heeling to the "Attack on Handler" after three (3) attempts.
- The handler "excites", pumps up the dog prior to the release after being stopped by the judge one time.
- The handler intentionally leaves their position and moves closer to the dog prior to the judges' command to pick up the dog.
- The dog doesn't release (out) after three commands.
- The dog grips anything or part of the helper other than the protective sleeve.
- Any intentional unsportsmanlike action of the handler.