

Field Trials Newsletter

Summer 2024



The Kennel Club Cocker Spaniel Championship report

By Kate Broers

The 93rd Kennel Club Cocker Spaniel Championship was held Friday 5 and Saturday 6 January 2024 at The Kennel Club's Emblehope & Burngrange Estate in Northumberland. The Championship is generously sponsored by Skinner's Pet Foods, Sporting Saint Gundog Equipment Suppliers and the British Association for Shooting and Conservation (BASC).

Day one

Wolferton Candy, owned by His Majesty The King, started the Championship on the right hand side under judges Paul Rawlings and Gareth Davies. Handled by Ian Openshaw, the golden bitch worked across the white grassland, hunting up to a covey of partridge, one of which was shot and neatly retrieved.

Mick Walsh was next in with Mallowdale Jaffa, as the working line travelled across the hill towards the Alan Rountree Cabin and began working through the wide gully which runs below the cabin. The bracken filled valley proved fruitful and the left hand side of the line rapidly began moving down the running order. Mallowdale Jaffa was sent for a bird which couldn't be located by the dog or by the judges, moving on to complete his run on a loose bird which was shot and picked.

The wide gorge provided excellent viewing for the spectators and waiting competitors who looked down onto the working dogs from atop the heather covered hill. Breckmarsh Jana, owned & handled by Lee Cooper and Heathcroft Flynn of Tarncrag, owned & handled by Ms Fran Ardley both achieved tidy runs, both dogs flushing cock pheasants and retrieving well.

FTCh Delphaven Gina of Smallbrooks, owned & handled by Garret Marson came in on the right and was rewarded for her hunting efforts with a double flush on a pair of pheasants. As



The gully used for day 1 morning
© Alan Doyle WetDog Photography / The Kennel Club

A round-up from the editor

Welcome to the summer 2024 edition of the Field Trials Newsletter.

As the 2024/25 season starts to get underway, we hope that you all have a successful season!

This edition of the newsletter hosts the full Cocker Spaniel Championship report from January 2024, as well as some of our usual features including reminders to judges, secretaries and competitors, Working Gundog Certificate awards and the dates for the Kennel Club Championships for 2025.

We would like to give our congratulations to those competitors who have been awarded the annual Kennel Club trophies, which are also listed in this edition.

Sadly, the decision was made to cancel this year's Gundog Working Test, due to the bad weather conditions causing severe flooding at the estate. However, we do hope to see the return of this event in 2025 at the beautiful Capesthorne Hall in Cheshire.

If you have any questions relating to The Kennel Club's field trials, please contact Kate Broers at the following email address – ft.secretary@thekennelclub.org.uk

If you have any queries relating to field trials or have general questions relating to licences, judges etc, please email the team at gundogs@thekennelclub.org.uk

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the line of judges, guns, handlers and dogs neared the end of the gully, Garret and Gina had a retrieve on a loose bird. The line then rotated to head back to the start of the valley to take in the last area of uncovered ground.

Damien Kelly's Int. FTCh Clentohill Jessie Jay made a nice impact on her first run, achieving a flush on a cock pheasant which was brought down hard into thick bracken cover but was accurately picked by the bitch.

The line had moved more quickly through the even numbered dogs which were running on the left making the steward's role more taxing. As Garret Marson's run was concluded at number 11, FTCh Heathcroft Flora, owned by Mr Guy Stubbings, handled by Mr J Walton was brought in on the left at number 36, under judges Nick Gregory and Jeremy Davies. The little black dog completed her run with a nice flush and retrieve on a cock bird. The atmosphere in the gallery was jovial as the morning session drew to a close. The bracken filled gully



Judges Cocker Spaniel Stick
© Alan Doyle WetDog Photography / The Kennel Club

had produced multiple flushes and retrieves for the hard working little spaniels and everyone was looking forward to the afternoon.

Having been sustained by hot cups of tea and burgers kindly provided by Becky at The Game Cart, the handlers and spectators set off heading east into the rush filled paddocks. FTCh Mallowdale Flair of Endashaw, had a flush and retrieve just below the farmhouse. Owned by Mr Simon Dixon and handled by Mr Ian Openshaw, Flair was the second of six dogs handled by Ian in this year's Championship.

The next pair of dogs; Delphaven Fern, owned & handled by Mr Chris Slater in on the right, and FTCh Endashaw Desire, owned & handled by Mr Gavin Lockyer in on the left. Delphaven Fern had an efficient run, flushing and retrieving two consecutive hen pheasants.

Gavin Lockyer's neat black bitch had a fantastic run flushing two birds off the nose, the cock bird being hit and tucking in tightly into the verge alongside the track which was dutifully located and collected by the dog. She then successfully eye wiped the right hand side dog on a hen pheasant, completing her run by delivering her final retrieve on a hen bird neatly to hand.

The second round began on the left starting with dog 3 under judges Paul Rawlings and Gareth Davies. Mallowdale Jaffa, owned and handled by Mick Walsh hunted well as the line moved round the high stone walls crossing the paddocks, the dog flushing a hen bird and tidily retrieving.

His Majesty The King's Wolferton Candy was in next, handled by Mr Ian Openshaw and was brought across from the left to retrieve a partridge which had not been located by the dog on the right. Candy did a tidy job of the retrieve, eyewiping her running partner. The King's dog then completed her run on a flush and a retrieve on a cock pheasant.



Wolferton Candy and partidge on second run
© Alan Doyle WetDog Photography / The Kennel Club

Martin Deacon's black and white bitch; Woolpitts Lossie hunted her way across the rashes and was compensated for her hard work with a flush and retrieve on a hen pheasant.



FTCh Woolpitts Shin of Poolgreen
© Alan Doyle WetDog Photography / The Kennel Club

Heathcroft Flynn of Tarncrag, owned & handled by Ms Fran Ardley had a flush and retrieve almost immediately as he was slipped off the lead and was hunted on, completing their run.

Simon Dixon's FTCh Mallowdale Flair of Endashaw, handled by Mr Ian Openshaw brought the first day's proceedings to a close with a solid flush on a partridge that was sitting tightly in the reeds. Though shot the hardy bird managed to slip through the stock fencing leaving the picker up with the final task of the day.

Day two

FTCh Mallowdale Flair of Endashaw, owned by Mr Simon Dixon and handled by Mr Ian Openshaw started the morning, being brought over to pick after a shot cock bird proved too much temptation to the dog on other side of the line. FTCh Baildonmoor Bielsa, owned & handled by Mr Paul Deal executed their first run well as the gentle breeze and light winter sun improved the scenting conditions, as well as warming the backs of the watching spectators.

Chris Slater's Delphaven Fern had a flush on a rabbit which appeared to take several barrels at as it sped over the crest of a small mound, however both dogs were sent and neither the spaniels or the judges could find the elusive bunny.

Woolpitts Lossie, owned & handled by Martin Deacon and FTCh Tiptopjack Firebug, owned by Mr Nigel Partiss and handled by Mr Ian Openshaw had a stylish retrieves across the beck which was flanked by bracken covered banks.



Martin Deacon's Woolpitts Lossie
© Alan Doyle WetDog Photography / The Kennel Club

FTCh Woolpitts Shin of Poolgreen, owned & handled by William Clulee did a brilliant job of retrieving an elusive English partridge which had been flushed and shot on the other side of the line, and had tucked tightly into the bank of the bubbling burn. The spectators had excellent viewing as the line moved along the river's edge, the shaded bracken and white rashes still covered in morning frost.

Ant Myer's Popsheath Abbie hunted very stylishly, and the chocolate bitch made a lovely job of retrieving a large cock pheasant, completing her second run in the bright sunshine.

FTCh Uplands Bluebell of Badgerford, owned by Mr P Lewis and handled by Mr Will Clulee, was in at number 47 as the final dog of the first round. The black and tan bitch was sent across the burn and strongly retrieving the shot bird, eye wiping her running mate.

The breeze was increasing as the final few dogs were called into line, Lee Cooper's Breckmarsh Jana picked a loose bird from the left, then flushing a cock bird which was well shot by the gun team and neatly retrieved. Int. FTCh Clentohill Jessie Jay, owned & handled by Damien Kelly and FTCh Heathcroft Flora, owned by Guy Stubbings and handled by J Walton hunted the riverbank enthusiastically as Head Keeper Raymond Holt moved the line up into a sun filled valley. Gavin Lockyer's FTCh Endashaw Desire brought the Championship to a close as she hunted through bracken filled sheep crofts and finished her run with a flush and retrieve.

Presentation

Owned and handled by Gavin Lockyer, winning spaniel FTCh Endashaw Desire - known at home as Ria - was awarded first place in the competition to much applause from the crowd.



Winner of the Championship,
FTCh Endashaw Desire and Mr G Lockyer
© Alan Doyle WetDog Photography / The Kennel Club

Speaking about their win, Gavin said: "I am absolutely delighted to win the Cocker Spaniel Championship with Ria, and to have had the opportunity to compete against the best Cocker Spaniels in the country. Ria's a great all-round dog and I've really enjoyed competing with her. I was extremely proud of her performance over the two days and would like to thank all those involved in the organisation and the running of the Cocker Spaniel Championship. I would also like to thank everyone who has helped me along the way."

Kate Broers, Kennel Club Gundog Events Manager, said: "The Championship was a great success, and thanks must go to all who were involved in the planning, preparation and running of the event. Head Game Keeper Raymond Holt prepared the ground wonderfully, which was an impressive setting of bracken filled grassland on the edge of the spectacular Kielder Forest. The Estate was the ideal setting for the dogs and handlers to demonstrate their skills.

"Thanks must also go to the judges; Paul Rawlings, Gareth Davies, Nick Gregory & Jeremy Davies for their time and expertise when judging the dogs. They handled the two days with patience, understanding and skill.



Judges L-R Gareth Davies, Nick Gregory, Jeremy Davies and Paul Rawlings © WetDog Photography

"Finally, we would also like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to our sponsors, Skinner's Field & Trial, Sporting Saint Gundog Equipment Suppliers and BASC. Skinner's give an awful lot to the world of working dogs and are passionate about providing the best nutrition for our gundog needs. Sporting Saint are one of the UK's leading suppliers of gundog training equipment and BASC work to promote and protect sporting shooting and the well-being of the countryside. All our sponsors

are greatly appreciated, and we would not be able to run these events without their generous support."

Judge, Paul Rawlings, added *"I was honoured to be part of the judging team and we were able to test every competing spaniel fully for their hunting, game-finding and retrieving ability. The award winners were outstanding and fully deserved such high recognition."*



Popsheath Abbie awarded 2nd place © Alan Doyle WetDog Photography / The Kennel Club

The awards were as follows:

1st place – FTCh Endashaw Desire,
owned & handled by Mr Gavin Lockyer

2nd place – Popsheath Abbie,
owned & handled by, Mr Ant Myers

3rd place – FTCh Tiptopjack Firebug,
owned Mr Nigel Partiss, handled by Mr Ian Openshaw

4th place – Breckmarsh Jana,
owned & handled by Mr Lee Cooper

Diploma of Merit to:

Wolferton Candy,
owned by His Majesty The King,
handled by Mr Ian Openshaw

Mallowdale Jaffa,
owned & handled by Mr Mick Walsh

Heathcroft Flynn of Tarncrag,
owned & handled by Ms Fran Ardley

FTCh Delphaven Gina of Smallbrooks,
owned & handled by Mr Garret Marson
(Also Gun's Choice)

FTCh Mallowdale Flair of Endashaw,
owned by Mr Simon Dixon, handled by Mr Ian Openshaw

Delphaven Fern,
owned & handled by Mr Chris Slater

Int. FTCh Clentohill Jessie Jay,
owned & handled by Mr Damien Kelly

Woolpitts Lossie,
owned & handled by Mr Martin Deacon

FTCh Heathcroft Flora,
owned by Mr Guy Stubbings, handled by Mr J Walton

FTCh Baildonmoor Bielsa,
owned & handled by Mr Paul Deal

FTCh Woolpitts Shin of Poolgreen,
owned & handled by Mr William Clulee

FTCh Uplands Bluebell of Badgerford,
owned by Mr P Lewis, handled by Mr Will Clulee

The Peter Hall Trophy was also presented by the Cocker Spaniel Club to the Cocker Spaniel with the most points in the season, Woolpitts Lossie, owned & handled by Mr Martin Deacon.

For more information about The Kennel Club Cocker Spaniel Championship, please visit www.thekennelclub.org.uk/events-and-activities/field-trials-and-working-gundogs/already-competing-in-field-trials/kennel-club-field-trial-championships/

Dates of upcoming Kennel Club field trials

OPEN ANY VARIETY RETRIEVER STAKE

Venue: Emblehope & Burngrange Estate, Northumberland

Date: Friday 18 and Saturday 19 October 2024

Judges: Mr George Buchan (3695), Mr David Logan (3509), Mrs Sarah Winter (3880) and Mr John Yarwood (3484)

OPEN ANY VARIETY HPR STAKE

Venue: Emblehope & Burngrange Estate, Northumberland

Date: Friday 1 November 2024

NOVICE ANY VARIETY HPR STAKE

Venue: Emblehope & Burngrange Estate, Northumberland

Date: Saturday 2 November 2024

NOVICE ANY VARIETY RETRIEVER STAKE

Venue: Emblehope & Burngrange Estate, Northumberland

Date: Thursday 14 November 2024

Judges: Mr Kevin Haynes (3731), Mrs Philippa Williams (2800), TBC and TBC

OPEN ANY VARIETY SPANIEL (EXCLUDING SPANIEL [COCKER]) STAKE

Venue: Witham on the Hill, Leicestershire

Date: TBC

NOVICE ENGLISH SPRINGER SPANIEL STAKE

Venue: Wentworth Park Estate, South Yorkshire

Date: Saturday 28 December 2024

ALL AGED ANY VARIETY SPANIEL (EXCLUDING SPANIEL [COCKER] AND SPANIEL [ENGLISH SPRINGER]) STAKE

Venue: Witham on the Hill, Leicestershire

Date: TBC January 2025

Dates of upcoming Kennel Club Championships

HUNT, POINT AND RETRIEVE CHAMPIONSHIP

Venue: Facombe Estate, Hampshire

Date: Monday 18 and Tuesday 19 November 2024

Judges: Ms Suzi Burton (2996) and Mr Roy Cullen (3083)

COCKER SPANIEL CHAMPIONSHIP**Venue:** Ayot Shoot, Brocket Park, Hertfordshire**Date:** Thursday 2 and Friday 3 January 2025**Judges:** Mr Justin Lascalles (3480), Mr Stuart Morgan (2725), Mr Eddie Scott (2006) and Mr Steve Winspear (2830)**Reserve Judge:** Mr Aled Jones (3412)**2nd Reserve Judge:** Mr Jeremy Organ (3412)**ANY VARIETY SPANIEL (EXCLUDING SPANIEL [COCKER]) CHAMPIONSHIP****Venue:** Blenheim Palace, Oxfordshire**Date:** Wednesday 22, Thursday 23 and Friday 24 January 2025**Judges:** Mr Will Clulee (2029), Mr Wayne Greig (2985), Mr Gerry Meehan (3309) and Mr Louis Rice (3144)**Reserve Judge:** Mr Adrian Slater (2364)**2nd Reserve Judge:** Mr Ian Clarke (3222)**The Kennel Club Pointer & Setter 2024 field trials awards****ALL AGED POINTER AND ANY VARIETY SETTER STAKE****Venue:** Six Mile Bottom, Newmarket**Date:** Friday 12 April 2024**Judges:** Mr Lester Anderson and Mr Jon Kean**The awards are as follows:****1st and Gun's Choice - Sparkfield Arrow (Pointer)**
owned & handled by Mr T Harris**2nd - Sparkfield Sidekick (Pointer)**
owned by Mr T Harris & Mrs M Jaques, handled by Mr T Harris**NOVICE POINTER AND ANY VARIETY SETTER STAKE****Venue:** Six Mile Bottom, Newmarket**Date:** Friday 12 April 2024**Judges:** Mr Lester Anderson and Mr Jon Kean

There were no awards given at this trial.

OPEN POINTER AND ANY VARIETY SETTER STAKE**Venue:** Six Mile Bottom, Newmarket**Date:** Saturday 13 April 2024**Judges:** Mr Lester Anderson and Mr Jon Kean**The awards are as follows:****1st - Sparkfield Steel of Mullenscotte (Pointer)**
owned & handled by Mr H Kirby**2nd - Morness Duke of Burncastle (Pointer)**
owned & handled by Mr A W Young**3rd - Int FTCh Shanrycon Diamante (Irish Setter)**
owned & handled by Mr S Robinson**4th - Koram Kayleigh Sparkfield (Pointer)**
owned & handled by Ms M Jaques**Gun's Choice and winner of the Riverstown Ranger Cup for the best performance of an English Setter****Troy de Coriam (English Setter)**
owned & handled by Mr P Whitaker

Judge Jon Kean and Lester Anderson sharing a joke © The Kennel Club



Brace mates © The Kennel Club

Working Gundog Certificate

Congratulations to the following handlers and their dogs who have achieved the Working Gundog Certificate on dummies.

MY DIAMOND GEM

Spaniel (Cocker), Ms C Phillips

ORIGINAL PIPPA OF THORPECREEK

Crossbreed, Ms S Toparti

HENHAMGHYL TELLY AT AUDREMO

Retriever (Labrador), Mr N Smith

HANVILLE JET SETS RAVEN

Retriever (Labrador), Mr G Grant

KINAGAR FIRST KNIGHT

Retriever (Labrador), Ms J L Skelton

CHARMPARK MANDALIN

Spaniel (Cocker), Mr P Verity

BOLEBROKEOLD CILANTRO

Retriever (Labrador), Ms J D Mitchell

DUKESHOLT ATLAS OF ROOSTHOLE

Retriever (Labrador), Mr D Bevan

JOSANDER ROCKET MAN

Retriever (Labrador), Mrs S M Drury

ACHOUFFE FENTONS FABLE

Slovakian Rough Haired Pointer (Imp), Mrs F Bailey

STARSHOT FRONTIER OF ROOSTHOLE

Hungarian Wire Haired Vizsla, Mr D Bevan

FACANVADASZ CSILAR OF CSILLOGO

Hungarian Vizsla, Mrs R Swallow

SOLWAYPOINT GEORGIA AT MANNLICHER

German Shorthaired Pointer, Ms K Joy

TAWNYHILL HAMLET

Spaniel (Cocker), Mrs S Garratt

BELLESBANK ZODIAC

Retriever (Labrador), Mr A Adams

KENZDUO MISTY SUNRISE

Spaniel (English Springer), Miss A Weeks

LUNEVALLEY MAVERICK

Retriever (Labrador), Miss M Perry

DACLJALICHY SHOOTING STAR

Spaniel (Cocker), Mrs H Hilburn

MOONTORN BACK FOR GOOD

Retriever (Flat Coated), Mrs L Parker

OVERMARSH SIXTH SENSE (A.I.)

Retriever (Labrador), Mrs W Manning

TARNEDGE RUN A MILE

Retriever (Labrador), Miss J Burniston

SHORK'S JIGGLE

Retriever (Labrador), Mrs C Lambert

KENXTWEN GRANDIFLORA

Spaniel (English Springer), Miss K E Ballingall

KENYNTEN NEAPOLITAN NOBLE

Spaniel (Cocker), Mrs L Endicott

KITEHILL KIMONO

Retriever (Labrador), Mrs J E Wright

CHATERVALLEY AMBER

Retriever (Labrador), Mrs L Smith

GORSWENLO BELLA'S ANGEL

Spaniel (English Springer), Mrs N McCue

Field Trials trophies

Congratulations to the following winners of The Kennel Club field trial trophies.

The Gavosie Cup

For the lady gundog handler with the most points in field trials during the season, awarded to Mrs Laura Hill with Retriever (Labrador) Jarailstar Hogen of Stauntonvale, and Retriever (Labrador) Stauntonvale Lemon Posset.

The Routledge-Rank Cup

For the Retriever which had gained the most points at field trials during the season, awarded to Mr Matthew Gould with Retriever (Labrador) Mitforton Tout De Suite of Hawkerline.

The Hanlye Trophy

For the breeder of the winner of the Routledge-Rank Cup, awarded to Mrs Louie Robertson.

TROPHY POINT SYSTEM AMENDS

From the 2024/25 season onwards, the points system for the Routledge-Rank Cup has been amended to the following, and should only be claimed for open stakes and the Championship:

Place	Championship	2 Day Stake	1 Day Stake
1 st	8	6	3
2 nd	6	3	2
3 rd	5	2	1

Kennel Club Field Trial Panel Judges List

The following judges have been added to the official panels of Field Trial Judges:

RETRIEVERS "A"

Mr James Bailey (3250)

Mr Paul Dukes (3744)

Mr Tom Forgie (3448)

Mr Kevin Haynes (3731)

Mrs Kim Jinks (3430)

Mr Jason Mayhew (3701)

Mrs Jo Rollinson (3838)

Mr Wayne Skett (2905)

RETRIEVERS "B"

Mr Kevin Butler (3632)

Ms Kirsty Cousins (3310)

Mr Douglas Laffin (3353)

Mrs Ellena Nunneley (3917)

Mrs Sarah Winter (3880)

SPANIELS "A"

Mr Matthew Armstrong (3813)

Mrs Natalie Cannon (3742)

Mr Ryan Kay (3804)

Miss Terri Siwek (3772)

POINTER & SETTERS "A"

Mr Lester Anderson (2190)

Following notification of retirement from the field trials panel of judges, The Kennel Club wishes to thank the following judges for their contribution to the gundog fraternity over the years:

Mr Simon Allison (1936) – A Panel Spaniel

Mr Paul Bates (2199) – A Panel Retriever

Mr Clarence Colclough (1950) – A Panel Spaniel

Mr Guy Croft (2234) – A Panel Spaniel

Mr G A Gwynne (1973) – A Panel Spaniel

Mr Peter Heard (2091) – A Panel P&S

Mr John Lambert (2298) – A Panel HPR

Mr William Sparrow (2750) – B Panel P&S

Approved applications for permission to hold field trials

North Antrim Gundog Club

1 day Open AV Retriever Stake

South Western Golden Retriever Club

1 day Open AV Retriever Stake

Ulster Select AV Retriever Club

1 day Open AV Retriever Stake

Mid Ulster Gundog Association

2 day Open AV Retriever Stake

Amendments to Field Trial J Regulations

[**NOTE:** All regulation changes for the forthcoming season are listed in the back pages of the J Regulation booklets for reference]

The following regulation amendment has been approved and become effective on Friday 2 February 2025:

J8.b.(11) Control of dogs and competitors under trial

TO:

(11). ~~Only in cases of physical disability, and~~ **With the permission agreement** of the judges, ~~may a~~

handler **may** carry a stick whilst ~~working his dog~~ **competing**.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

(Effective from 2 February 2025)

Note: *Handlers may carry a stick, provided they ask the judges for permission before the trial commences. However, no handler should enter any trial if they do not have a good level of physical fitness required for the terrain they are on. Should a handler be seen by any of the judges to use their stick in an improper manner, appropriate action must be taken at that time.*

Update to the championship levy payment

At its recent meeting the Field Trials Committee agreed the following increases to the Spaniel and HPR championship levy payments, which will be in effect for the 2025/26 season.

HPR – increased to £50

Cocker Spaniel – increased to £75

Any Variety Spaniel (Excluding Spaniel [Cocker]) – increased to £100

Reminder and guidance to judges on completing the field trial judges evaluation form

As a panel Judge you are required to complete evaluation forms on your co-judges to assist the Field Trials Committee in making informed decisions regarding the suitability of candidates to join either the B or the A panel. The information gathered from these forms plays an important part in ensuring that only suitable candidates are approved, and this maintains the integrity and high standards expected of panel judges.

Regulation J(A)3.n. states that judges on the A panel and the B panel must submit assessments on B panel or non-panel judges, as appropriate, with whom they officiate. All evaluations forms to be received by The Kennel Club within 30 days of the trial.

Regardless of the judging system that has been used you must ensure that you make opportunities to assess the B or non-panel judges with whom you are judging. For example, you will have opportunities to assess their attributes such as attitude and politeness to officials at the start and end of the day and when you are discussing the dogs' marks you will be able to consider their ability to keep their book and how they handle differences of opinion.

As well as completing the questions on the form it is important that you provide additional comments as an overview of the person's performance. The more detailed the answers are that you provide the more assistance it gives. The opportunity to expand on any of the stated questions is there and you should try to take it. The additional information provided should fully explain anything which may be of significance to the Field Trials Committee in considering the candidate's nomination.

Standing over game

Following recent discussions, we would like to draw the attention of judges to the updated description of standing over game in the Guide to Kennel Club J Regulations for Retrievers document (previously named seminar script).

A good retrieve will include a quick and unfussy pick-up followed by a fast return. The handler should not have to snatch or drag game from the dog's mouth. Whilst Judges should not penalise a dog too heavily for putting game down to get a firmer grip, they must never, however, condone sloppy retrieving. A good game-finding dog should not rely on the handler to find the game. It should, however, be obedient and respond to its handler's signals where necessary. Dogs showing game-finding ability and initiative when hunting and retrieving should be placed above those which have to be handled to their game. Usually, the best dog seems to require the least handling. It appears to have an instinctive knowledge of direction and makes a difficult find look simple and easy.

Judges should reward tidy retrieving and good delivery. All too often Judges are to be seen with their books out writing a mark in the book before the game has been delivered to hand. Judges should watch the whole retrieve before awarding a grade and should penalise sloppy retrieving and bad delivery rather than taking clean retrieving for granted.

Game finding is of first importance but dogs should also handle well when required. Judges should not confuse a well-trained dog which handles well and easily with a dog which relies too heavily upon its handler in game finding. A dog should not be penalised because it can easily be handled to a fall, when others have struggled, and hunts for itself when it gets there. It should instead be given credit for the fact that it handles well. This should not be confused with the dog which requires continuous handling when it should not.

Equally, a dog should not be penalised for obedience if it had, for example, been stopped on the whistle by the handler on reaching the fall area, and it coincided with the dog being at the point of picking. The judges would have to make a decision whether the dog had already stopped to stand over the game (and eliminate) or it had stopped because it was obedient to the whistle. 'Standing over game' is when the dog finds the retrieve but instead of picking it stands over it, looking at the handler, waiting for an instruction. This should not be confused with dogs locating the game with a slight indication/point before picking a bird, especially if it is still alive.

Judging of partners or spouses

We would like to remind competitors and judges of regulation J12.a.(6), which states a dog may be disqualified if it has 'been handled at a trial, boarded or prepared for competition by one of the scheduled judges within the previous 12 months prior to the trial. This provision does not apply to judges appointed in an emergency'.

It is advisable not to run under a partner or spouse at a trial or working test, as there may be a perception that the partner or spouse had played a role in preparing the dog for competition.

This has been republished from the Spring 2022 field trials newsletter, with the addition that this should also apply to judging and competing at working tests.

Ownership of dogs

We wish to remind competitors that it is not an acceptable practice to amend a dog's ownership in order to gain additional runs in field trials.

Field trial application form and licences

We wish to remind field trial secretaries to use the online field trials application form where possible.

The online form can be found here - [Field trial licence application form | Forms | The Kennel Club](#)

If you are logged in using your personal log in, the club should appear in the 'Please select your club' drop down after a few seconds.

You can also access the online form by logging in to your online account directly on The Kennel Club website using your personal account and switching to your club account.

Once you are logged in to your club account, and we have received payment, you will find your licences in the 'show diary' section for you to view. Please ensure this is in your account before the date of your trial.

If you have any issues, or the club name is not appearing once you have logged in on the website, please contact the team at gundogs@thekennelclub.org.uk

Find a Club

The Kennel Club has announced that its new and improved 'Find a Club' service is now available online. The new service includes a list of field trials clubs and the purpose of the service is to enable new dog owners to find local clubs in their area.

The Find a Club service can be found here:

thekennelclub.org.uk/findaclub

Please ensure that you have reviewed your club information. Any amendments, including secretary details, can be updated via your online account.

Looking for a club in your area? Visit Find a Club

Visit thekennelclub.org.uk/FAC

The Emblehope & Burngrange Estate Northumberland

A centre of excellence for working Dogs

This beautiful moorland estate stretches to some 7,550 acres and is absolutely ideal for walked up trialling and training for retrievers, spaniels and heel, point and retrievers. The estate offers both pheasant and partridge shooting and the varied terrain offers opportunities for all breeds of gundog to demonstrate their natural working abilities. Woodland cover provides excellent hunting for spaniels whilst the stretching moorland is ideal for challenging retrieves and for the pointing breeds to show off their hunting abilities to the full.

As a centre of excellence for working dogs, the estate also welcomes the full range of working dog activities including:

- Field trials including Pointer and Setter Spring Stakes
- Gundog working tests
- Gundog training days
- Live game training days
- Pointing tests
- Working trials
- Bloodhound trials
- Activity training days
- Shooting and gundog activities



Book your training activities with the Emblehope Estate:
thekennelclub.org.uk/emblehope | emblehope@thekennelclub.org.uk
01296 318 540 ext 290