

COONHOUND ADVISOR

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For this month's column we are going to revisit some articles that have been written in the past, that we still field calls about regularly. Hopefully bringing these topics back to the spotlight will help everyone freshen up on these rule interpretations.

Let's Tighten Up

Q: Recently I was judging a Champion Division cast at my local club. There wasn't much stirring, so the dogs were starting to split up and getting deeper in the country. We had two dogs opening periodically to our left and tightened up on them a bit. The third guy's hound had not been heard from since the dogs were cast. He told us the dog had gotten deep to the right of the cast and was probably out of hearing at this point. As the judge, am I required to walk towards a dog that hasn't opened, and no one can hear?

A: If you take a look at the telemetry rules that are provided with the club packets and posted in the clubhouse, you will find a rule that should answer your question for you. It reads, *at no time may a handler demand the cast walk in the direction of a hound that has not been heard opening. The judge, or majority of the cast when hunting judge is used, may agree to walk in that direction.*

I'm sure we have all been involved in casts where a certain handler was pushing for the Judge to tighten up in a direction that nothing can be heard, just because his handheld is indicating that his hound is barking through the country. Basically, without hearing the dog open, you aren't required to walk in that direction, depending on how the cast votes. As the rule reads, in your situation being the hunting judge, the majority of the cast would rule. You are at the mercy of that cast vote. If the majority votes to move in that direction, that's what the cast will do and if the majority votes to stay put, that's what the cast will do.

As for the other handler, if you go to enough of these nite hunts, you will run into some unfortunate situations. A dog blowing out of pocket is something that each of us has dealt with before and will probably deal with again in the future. Those are the breaks.

Removing the Prongs on a Tracking Collar Does not Allow Handler to Carry Handheld

Q: If I remove the prongs from my training collar, would it allow me to carry and use the handheld during a hunt for locating purposes only?

A: Telemetry rules state; {the handheld of locating only (tracking) systems may be carried and used during the hunt.} With your collar having training capabilities, it would be a violation for the handler to carry and/or

use the handheld, linked to the collar, during hunt time. Even though you might remove the controlling prongs, the collar is still capable of controlling the dog by means of the tone feature.

One might question what the tone, by itself, would really hurt? We asked and discussed the same thing in depth before we allowed the use of tracking only systems to be used during hunt time. With the prongs, you're essentially able to control your dog. The same is true with tone. However, a dog close by another dog that is being toned might very well react to the beep of the tone and also react. Therefore, a handler might actually be able to bring in (tone) a competing dog in the cast. That would not be good and the reason why we do not allow the use of a system capable of shocking and or toning. But if the handheld is linked to a locating only collar, you're good to go to carry and use that handheld during hunt time.

So, the rule is that the handler must leave the handheld, if linked to a training collar, in the vehicle during hunt time. However, UKC does allow the handler to use this system in a timeout during the hunt for locating purposes only. Lastly, handlers will run into other cast members who suggest they don't care if a member carries and uses a collar with controlling capabilities during the hunt. Before you get caught up in a clear rules' violation, be aware that a rule's infraction is a violation regardless of what anyone else might suggest disregarding. In other words, don't do your dog a disservice and put him out of the hunt for agreeing to a violation that might get you busted eventually.

Caught with a Painted Module on a Controlling Collar

Q: Last weekend at a hunt I drew out in a cast where we had an issue come up during the hunt. One of the handlers in the cast was accused of shocking his dog, based on the reaction of the dog, during the hunt. He argued that he has a Garmin T5 collar on his dog and those collars are not capable of controlling or shocking the dog. He was quick to point out that all T5 collars come from the factory with an orange module on the collar and all TT15 collars have a black module on the collar. He further advised the cast that these two-color variances are how one can quickly identify which collar is being used.


Long story short, all dogs were eventually handled, and he showed us all that the module on his dogs' collar was in fact the orange one, the identity of the T5. The judge then took a closer look, first, by sliding his hand around the collar to find that the collar did in fact have shocking prongs on it. Further inspection suggested that the module on this collar had been painted orange over the original factory black. At this time the judge scratched the handler and his dog from the hunt. The handler didn't say anything but was obviously upset and left the cast at that point. My question is; what else, if anything, can or should be done if this happens?

A: You may want to ask a couple guys, now on the

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barred list, what happens if it is determined that a handler is using a TT15 collar where they painted the black module orange. It's a serious matter and one UKC takes seriously. They may try to play innocent and say it wasn't them that painted the module. That is a weak defense that won't be considered because they know full-well their dog was wearing a TT15 collar and they carried the handheld, a clear violation of telemetry rules. They simply got caught with their silly attempt. A silly idea that will take them out of the game for a good while.

The Telemetry Rules you see on the back of the Master of Hounds checklist indicates that, *Controlling device rule violations may result in suspension*. The intent of this rule is for handlers who are found to have used their "control" features during a hunt when the rules did not allow it. But it also covers any individual found to be using a TT15 collar where the module was found to be painted orange as a fraudulent perception and a way to try to be able to

use the feature if they can get away with it. Scratching the dog and handler was obviously the correct first step. The second step should be following up and officially reporting the incident as a misconduct. 

ATTENTION!

The following person's Nite Hunt Director and Nite Hunt Judging privileges have been suspended until the date listed.

Justin Crockett • Senatobia, MS • May 1, 2024
Andrew Ratliff • Winchester, KY • January 1, 2025
Cliff Monroe • Mooresboro, NC • Indefinitely
Chris Simmons • Cramerton, NC • Indefinitely

Violations to these privileges should be reported to the United Kennel Club.



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ukcdogs.com/coonhound-standings-results



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