

COONHOUND ADVISOR

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Dogs Treed Before Timeout

Q: I was on a hunt recently where dogs were getting out of pocket quickly. In the process of them doing so, one hound was declared treed. Another member of the cast suggested a timeout be called to round up dogs, as they were getting out of hearing in opposite directions and leaving the ground we had permission to hunt. Following a 3-1 vote, time out was called, and all strike and tree points were deleted. The guy with the dog treed, voted against the time out and was pretty upset with the call, considering he didn't get to score his dog. Did we get the call right in this situation?

A: This is a good question and one that it seems like the bulk of the hunters get wrong. While I understand some of the confusion due to the wording in Rule 5(g) which says to delete points, *If Judge has to call time out in accordance with Rule 7, there is further clarification in Rule 11(a). That line reads, Dogs declared treed within hunting time are eligible for scoring.*

Rule 11 is tucked in the end of the nite hunt rules and is ESSENTIAL. The four bullet points under that section include information and clarifications for many key situations. In this situation, the treed dog was declared treed within hunting time and is absolutely eligible to have his tree scored. As a matter of fact, every effort needs to be made to score that tree. The other dogs in the cast, assuming they had been struck in, would have their strike points deleted.

In the event that dogs are trailing in to dangerous or posted territory, dogs' safety is the main concern. The handlers should get their dog wrangled up while the handler(s) with treed dogs go to handle their dog. After dogs are caught, you can always convene at the tree for scoring. Hunt time should be called in while shining and scoring the dog's tree and immediately called out once again when shine time has concluded.

Using Tone or Shock During Timeout

Q: I was judging a cast and we voted to call a timeout and gather up dogs. One of the handlers on the cast had been running a TT15 collar on his hound and had to go back to his truck to get his handheld in order to catch his dog. During the course of that happening, the handler let it be known that he had been using the controlling features on the Garmin to wrangle his dog. He was scratched for doing so. The call was questioned and brought back to the Master of Hounds for ruling and the call was upheld. What is the official interpretation for this rule?

A: The Master of Hounds and Judge on this cast got it exactly right. Rule 6(l) plainly states that a handler related scratching offense is, *For use of any device used to control dog prior to cast completing hunt time.* In this case, though

timeout is called, hunt time has not been completed and the use of a controlling device is not to be used. Not only that, but if you look at the Telemetry Rules that are sent to each club to be posted for an event, there is a bullet point under the General Information portion that points this out very directly by saying, "Any handheld device capable of both locating (tracking) and controlling (stimulating or toning) may not be carried by the handler during hunt time. The handheld must be left in the vehicle. However, the handheld may be used during time out situations during the hunt for locating purposes only."

Let's take it a step further. Not only should the handler and dog be scratched in this situation, but this is an act that can and has resulted in suspensions. If you must use a collar that is capable of controlling a dog by shock, tone, vibrate, etc., be careful to read all telemetry rules very carefully because misuse of those devices can have some pretty serious ramifications.

Let's Talk Stationary

One thing that I get a few questions about at each hunt I attend is the stationary rule. To be frank, it's probably one that is talked about more than ever actually having any major implications on a cast but it's important to know and understand the rule.

- **What is the stationary rule?** When someone is discussing the stationary rule, they are referring to Rule 6(k) which reads that it is a handler related scratching offense, *If handler fails to declare treed a dog obviously treeing (Judge's decision) for a period of five minutes. Dog may be declared treed while five is running but not after the five has expired. Judge must verify dog to be at a tree before it can be scratched. If the cast is in the process of shining a separate tree time shall be canceled or not be applied to another dog.*
- **How long is the stationary time?** I get this question a lot and if you refer to the rule above you will get your answer. The stationary has remained five minutes even though tree time is three minutes for dogs declared treed now.
- **When do you start the stationary?** Again, this is referenced in the rule above. If a dog is obviously treeing (Judge's decision), you will start the five-minute stationary clock on that dog. A previous Advisor Column added that three things need to be happening for the stationary clock to be applied. 1) the dog is obviously treeing and treeing right, 2) you don't think the dog sounds to be in a hole or place of refuge, and 3) for whatever reason the handler is not calling the dog treed. Also, pay attention to that last sentence of the rule that points out you cannot start the stationary on a dog if you are in the process of shining another dog's tree.

- **What breaks the stationary?** There are multiple occurrences that can break the stationary time being ran on a dog. The most obvious is the handler of the dog treeing the dog the stationary is running on. The stationary is broken if it becomes obvious to the Judge that the dog has moved. The stationary is broken if the dog shuts up, triggering a two-minute clock be ran, and it expires before the dog opens again. The stationary is broke when shine time is started on another dog's tree (You must continue to the tree and start shine time at your normal pace). The stationary will be broke at the conclusion of hunt time or if a timeout is called for one of the reasons outlined in Rule 7.
- **What do you do with the other dogs when the stationary is running?** Nothing changes for the other hounds in the cast. Continue hunting. It doesn't stop you from striking or treeing dogs, advancing to trees, shining trees, or recasting dogs.
- **What do you do when the stationary time runs out?** At that time, you will proceed to the stationary dog. Remember, the Judge has to verify that the dog is treeing on a tree for the dog to be scratched. The main word in there is tree, not in a hole, brush pile, fence, tile, creek bank, barn, or milling around in an area. It's also important to remember that once the time has expired, the handler no longer has the opportunity to tree the hound on that tree.
- **What is the result?** After the five-minute stationary period has elapsed AND the Judge has verified that the dog is in fact treeing, the hound will be scratched from the hunt.