

PHILOSOPHY

The goal of the UKC Elite Shed Dog Series is two-fold. First is the improvement of dogs used for the purpose of recovering shed antlers by the recognition of individual dogs of outstanding merit. Second is to provide individuals a family friendly environment in which to enjoy participating in an activity that promotes a healthy lifestyle for all individuals and their dogs. The structure of the UKC Elite Shed Dog Series rules is specifically devised to aid in the identification,

selection and classification of dogs that hunt in an appropriate style effective for the recovery of shed deer antlers.

As a UKC licensed Judge for the Elite Shed Dog Series (ESDS), it is your responsibility to ensure to the best of your ability that all participants are having a fun and positive experience with their dogs, and that the event is conducted according to all UKC rules and guidelines for the Elite Shed Dog Series.

JUDGE STANDARD OF BEHAVIOR AND CONDUCT

As a licensed ESDS Judge, it is your responsibility to present yourself in a manner consistent with the tenets of the United Kennel Club. The United Kennel Club promotes fun, family oriented events, open to everyone. As a licensed ESDS Judge, you are a representative of the United Kennel Club and are expected to be courteous and professional throughout the duration of the ESDS event. You may be someone's first impression of UKC or their first introduction to UKC and its programs; it is important to present the organization and its values in a commendable manner by being organized, timely, positive and knowledgeable. You should present a neat appearance and exercise consistency in your assessment of each dog's performance during the event.

Judges should avoid situations of impropriety, and exercise good judgment in regard to possible conflicts of interest. Ask yourself if your assessment of a particular dog or person would make others think the assessment to be unfair or would seem to give an advantage to one person over another. If the answer is yes, then the situation should be avoided. All ESDS Judges are expected to use the UKC Judges Code of Ethics as a guideline for appropriate behavior. Please keep in mind, when evaluating a run, you must be objective and evaluate all dog and owner teams against the same standard as provided in this guide.

The following list is a reminder for Judges of their basic responsibilities in judging ESDS events. It may also be used as a quick reference for Judges while in the field. For complete description of rules and procedures, please refer to the Official UKC Elite Shed Dog Series Rulebook.

CONDUCT A HANDLER MEETING PRIOR TO THE START OF EACH DIVISION

Explain:

- Course boundaries
- Starting gates
- Holding blinds
- On deck procedures
- Spectator area and handler restriction until run(s) completed
- Where to warm up/air dogs
- Awards presentation
- Any other items specific to event

GO OVER SHED PLANTING PROCEDURES WITH SHED PLANTER FOR YOUR COURSE

The Judge and the shed planter must have a good understanding of the numbering system you will be using for your imaginary course zones. Encourage your shed planter to walk/ride the course prior to the running of the first dog to determine multiple likely shed plant locations. Determine who (Judge or Shed Planter) will carry plant cards and conduct the draw with each handler. In the event that a dog does not pick up all sheds during a run, communicate approximate location of finds with shed planter in case the next draw requires shed planter to pick up a previously planted shed to satisfy the empty zone requirement.

IF HANDLER WISHES TO RUN ELECTRIC OR GPS COLLAR, ASK FOR HANDHELD DEVICE

The handheld may be left at the line or carried by the Judge. If a handler requests to use the hand held prior to the completion of the run, the dog is disqualified.

START AND STOP CLOCK ACCORDINGLY

Clock may be stopped at Judge's discretion for questions or interference. If a question cannot be resolved, notate on scorecard that handler has a formal complaint. If another dog interferes with a dog on the course, or a situation arises which prevents consistent scoring, a re-run may be awarded.

NO RUNNING ON THE COURSE

Self-explanatory. Second offense results in a DQ.

DOG MUST REMAIN STEADY AT STARTING GATE OR FAIL

Working class dogs may be on leash, champion class dogs may not. For the time being, champion class dogs are not required to walk to the starting gate from the holding blind off leash at heel.

DOGS MAY BE CAST TO HUNT IN A GENERAL DIRECTION BUT MAY NOT BE HANDLED TO A FIND

This is self-explanatory, but judges need to be aware of this practice. It will typically begin by getting the dog's attention, which would be followed by a signal from the handler.

HANDLERS MAY POSITION NO CLOSER THAN 15 FEET FROM A SHED THAT THEY SEE ON THE COURSE

Experienced handlers will typically confirm with the judge that the distance they are standing from the shed is acceptable in the judge's opinion. Inexperienced handlers may not think to do so and it would be preferred that a judge inform the handler that they need to back up as opposed to letting the retrieve take place and then not crediting the retrieve.

JUDGE MUST VERBALLY VERIFY FINDS AND CREDITED RETRIEVES

It is very important that a judge indicate a find because a handler may not advance after a find has been declared. Judges should withhold indicating a find until the dog has made some sort of contact (nose or mouth) and is not simply trying to locate shed. Verification of a credited or non-credited retrieve is important feedback to the handler and may or may not have an effect on how the handler proceeds.

HANDLERS MAY NOT PHYSICALLY ASSIST NOR COERCE DOG DURING RETRIEVE

Delivery to hand is an important aspect to judge in the Champion class. Judges need to be mindful that handlers do not force a retrieve by using an ear or toe pinch or any other method where contact with the dog is made during the retrieve.

WORKING SHED DOG CLASS HANDLER MAY RETREAT DURING RETRIEVE

Champion class dogs may not. It is important to remember that a handler may not advance after a Judge indicates a find in either class. Working shed dog class handlers may retreat to encourage a full retrieve but Champion class handlers may not.

DQ HANDLER FOR POOR SPORTSMANSHIP OR MISTREATING DOG

Judges need to have zero tolerance for poor sportsmanship and mistreating dogs. We want it to be very clear from the beginning that neither will be tolerated. The disqualification rule clearly lists the mistreating of a dog offense as including anywhere on the event grounds. That includes before, during and after you judge them on your course. While the poor sportsmanship reference does not specify this, we would advise the same parameters for issues of that nature.

COMPLETE ALL SCORECARDS AND ASK FOR HANDLER SIGNATURE/INITIALS IN FIELD

Signing a scorecard in the field is an important first step in reducing missing information, errors and questions. Be sure to include a question mark on the scorecard for any handler who was not satisfied with an answer to a question they brought up during their run. Keep in mind there is not a specific place on the scorecard to indicate the handler has a formal complaint but a question mark on the card in an obvious place will suffice.

SEND SCORECARDS TO THE HUNT SECRETARY AS OFTEN AS POSSIBLE DURING THE TRIAL TO SPEED UP POST EVENT PROCESSING

It is going to be helpful for you as a judge to encourage your host club to keep up with the processing of event related responsibilities. The more a club can keep track of placements throughout the trial the less will have to be done at the conclusion. Judges should be well versed in this regard in order to assist new clubs or inexperienced club officials. Two items to address will be keeping the running order updated so that handlers can plan to have their dog ready when it is called. Also, it is important for the hunt secretary to be calculating run times and keeping track of the placement order throughout the trial to speed things up at the conclusion. Suggestion – download and use the app for H&M Lite to calculate combined run times in minutes and seconds.

JUDGE RESPONSIBILITIES

Copy and paste the abbreviated list below to be used as a reminder in the field.

- Handler meeting
- Shed plant procedures
- Check for hand held devices
- Start and stop clock accordingly
- No running on the course
- Dogs must be steady at gate
- Dogs may not be handled to a find
- Handler 15 feet min from a shed they find
- Verbally verify finds and retrieves
- May not coerce dog during retrieve
- Working class only may retreat during retrieve
- DQ for poor sportsmanship / mistreating dog
- Complete scorecard with handler initials
- Update running order and process results