

RULES FOR HUNTING TRIALS FOR HOUNDS (AJOK, BEAJ)

1. Purpose of the trial

The objective of hunting trials is to test and verify the hare hunting ability of the hound breeds specified below to be of use in breeding selection, to develop the skills and cooperation of the people active in the sport, and to create opportunities for competition based on these rules. In hunting trials the objective is not to harm the game animal or the dog, nor to subject them to excessive stress.

2. Trial types

Hunting trials for hounds may be either general, or trials/competitions between members of a club, or trials/competitions for certain breeds and regulated by a separate set of rules and instructions.

3. Participation: eligibility and limitations

3.1. Eligibility

All breeds from FCI group "Hounds" may participate in hunting trials for hounds. Dogs participating in the trial must be registered, ID marked and vaccinated as specified by the applicable regulations, and at least nine (9) months of age. In addition, they must have been awarded a quality grade at an official show approved by an FCI-accepted kennel organisation at the age of at least 9 months; any exceptions to this rule must be specified separately.

The chief steward and chief judge shall verify the eligibility of every dog.

3.2. Limitations

A trial can be arranged if at least three (3) dogs participate in it. The organising committee has the right to limit the number of participants, in the order of entry, if the conditions so require. Any limitations to participation must be clearly stated in the trial applications. Dog owners must be informed at the latest when the entry period ends of whether or not they will be able to participate in the trial.

Participation is not allowed in the following cases:

- 1) the dog is sick,
- 2) bitches 30 days or less prior to estimated time of whelping, and less than 42 days after whelping,
- 3) the dog does not meet the valid anti-doping regulations,
- 4) bitches in heat.

4. Ineligibility of judges due to the likelihood of bias

1. A judge is ineligible to act as chief judge in a trial if any one of the participating dogs is owned by, or residing with, him or his family member. Parents, spouses/life partners, children and siblings are considered to be family members even if they live in different addresses.
2. A judge is ineligible to act as field judge for a dog if he or a member of his family
 - owns the dog,
 - is the breeder of the dog, or
 - the dog lives with him/her.

Parents, spouses (or persons living with the judge), children and siblings are considered family members even if they live in different addresses. The siblings of the breeder are regarded as family members only if they live in the same address as the breeder.

5. Granting the permission to arrange a trial

These rules shall be applied in all hunting trials for hounds granted by the FCI, the Finnish Kennel Club or its local sections (kennel districts). International trials are granted by the FCI. The Finnish Kennel club grants the permission for national championship trials and qualifying trials for these, and for competitions between countries. The local kennel districts grant the other trials.

6. Applying

6.1. Applicant and organiser

The organising club(s) apply for permission to arrange a trial; the organiser(s) must be member(s) of the Finnish Kennel Club. The organiser is responsible for all tasks included in arranging a trial.

6.2. Term of application

Applications for trials must be submitted to the Finnish Kennel Club by the specified dates. Approved trials must be arranged at the time specified in the application; the time can be changed or the trial cancelled only in exceptional cases.

6.3. Content of application

The trial application must contain the following information: organising club(s), type of trial, possible limitations to participation, date and place of the trial, entry fee, when and where the entries shall be sent and how the entry fee shall be paid, the appointed chief judge and deputy chief judge, and the chief steward in charge of the trial.

6.4. Submitting the application

The application must be submitted to the kennel district of the area where the trial will be arranged.

6.5. Information about a trial

Kennel districts shall send a list of all their approved trials for publication in the Finnish Kennel Club magazine.

7. Changing the date or cancelling a trial

The valid regulations of the Finnish Kennel Club shall apply.

8. Chief judge and deputy chief judge

The chief judge and deputy chief judge must be accredited fox hunting trial judges, with a valid judging licence. The chief judge must be a member of the Finnish Kennel Club and of either the Finnish Hound Association or Finnish Beagle Association.

9. Other judges

A judge group consists of two or three field judges. Every judge group in a trial must have the same number of judges. If three judges per group are used, the input of the third judge is only taken into consideration when evaluating the chase time. The group leader must be at least 18 years of age, the other judges at least 15 years.

9.1. Field judges

Field judges must be accredited hunting trial judges, with a valid judging licence. A trainee who has completed the trial judging course may act as a field judge if necessary, unless the rules for the trial in question stipulate otherwise.

9.2. Group leader

The chief judge appoints one of the field judges in each group as the group leader. Instructions given by the group leader must be followed. The group leader must be a member of either the Finnish Kennel Club or a breed club; the other judges must be members of either the Finnish Kennel Club or its member organisations.

10. Entering a trial

10. 1. Entering

The dog must be entered to the trial and the entry fee paid not earlier than one month but not later than five days before the beginning of the trial. Dog owners must be informed of whether or not they will be able to participate in the trial, and this information must be given to them at the latest when the entry period ends.

10. 2. Late entry

Late entries shall not be accepted.

10. 3. Absence from a trial

If a dog entered to a trial does not participate, the entry fee must always be paid if no valid reason is given for the absence. A bitch coming to heat or an illness of either the dog or its handler are considered to be valid reasons for absence. If an entered dog is not going to participate, the organising committee must be immediately informed of the situation.

11. Evaluation according to breed

The abilities and performance of each dog shall be evaluated in accordance with the approved guidelines attached to these rules.

If dogs of different breeds participate in the trial, the judges must be sufficiently familiar with the breed typical behaviour and hunting method of each breed. Ref. Special instructions for Beagles.

12. Trial classes and trial period

The hunting trial for hounds is a one-class, one-day trial that is either arranged on a certain date or held on any one day within a specified two-week period.

A hunting trial event may also be arranged as two separate trials on two consecutive days. In this case each dog shall have a different trial area and different judges on each day. The result and ranking of the dog is determined by the total scores achieved in the two trials.

12.1. Two-week trial

The two-week trial is a separate event and it cannot coincide with other trials. The dog handler may choose the trial day and must inform the chief judge of his choice at the latest one day before the trial. In a two-week trial the participating dogs do not compete with each other. (See separate instructions on organising two-week hunting trials.)

12.2. Terminology

- 1) Dog handler decides to withdraw before the trial is over – Withdrawn
- 2) Judge interrupts the dog's performance – Interrupted
- 3) Dog is barred from the trial – Barred

These terms are defined in more detail in the guidelines attached to these rules.

13. Injury to dog

If a dog is injured, its trial must be interrupted. The decision on interrupting is made by the chief judge, or in the trial area by the group leader if the chief judge cannot be immediately reached. The group leader must present the grounds for the interruption to the chief judge as soon as possible. Any results achieved prior to the injury shall remain in force.

14. Responsibility

The dog owner is responsible for any damage or injuries caused by, or suffered by, the dog during the trial.

15. Judging, results and prizes

15.1. Judging

The final result of a hunting trial for hounds is the sum of performance points and points given on the basis of hunting time.

The dog's performance during the trial is evaluated as follows:

Maximum points for chase time	70 points
Maximum points for performance	30 points

15.2. Points for chase time

Points for chase time are calculated as follows:

Chase points = $70 \times t / 240$ (where t = total chase time, minutes)

15.3. Performance points

Performance points are either merit points or penalty points.

Field judges evaluate the dog's performance during each of the heats, using a scale of 1–10 for merit points and 0–10 for penalty points.

Performance points are calculated as an average of the points given by the field judges.

The final score is obtained by first calculating the sum of the performance points given in each of the trial periods and then deducting the total sum of penalty points from the result.

If any aspect of the dog's performance cannot be evaluated, this is indicated by a dash as instructed in the guidelines for field judges.

Merit points

- Searching 1–10
- Barking 1–10
- Hunting zeal 1–10

Penalty points

- Over-excitability during search 0–10
- Over-excitability during chase 0–10

15.4. Points and prizes

Large hounds

- 1. prize minimum points 75
- 2. prize minimum points 60
- 3. prize minimum points 50

Beagle & Estonian Hound

- 1. prize minimum points 60
- 2. prize minimum points 50
- 3. prize minimum points 40

16. Trial results

16.1. Checking the results

The secretary of the trial checks and verifies all calculated points, ensures that the results are correctly entered in the trial report form and dog performance reports, and submits these without delay to the chief judge for verification. The chief judge checks the results and confirms them with his signature and judge number.

If any omissions or errors are observed in these documents, the kennel district or breed club or Finnish Kennel Club are required to correct them.

16.2. Sending the results

Within one week of the end of the trial the organising committee shall send the trial report and dog performance reports, verified by the chief judge, to the party that granted the trial.

The kennel district sends the required report copies to the Finnish Kennel Club and the breed clubs within two weeks of the end of the trial.

17. Changes to these rules and instructions

Changes to these rules and guidelines must be approved by the Finnish Kennel Club.

18. Complaints and protests

The general rules of the Finnish Kennel Club, valid at the time of occurrence, shall be applied.

19. Special cases

In exceptional cases the Finnish Kennel Club has the right to limit participation to trials or give other special instructions.

GUIDELINES FOR HUNTING TRIALS FOR HOUNDS

1. TRIAL CENTRE

The trial centre must be suited for the purpose and located as centrally as possible with regard to the trial areas.

2. ALLOTMENT OF TRIAL AREAS

A separate trial area must be reserved for each participating dog, and additionally a sufficient number of reserve areas must be available. The areas must be sufficiently large and located not too close to each other. The organising committee decides which areas will be used. The chief judge approves the trial areas for each group of field judges.

The trial must be carried out in the allotted or appointed area. A reserve area can be used instead if the conditions become such that the trial cannot be carried out in the allotted or appointed area. The available reserve areas shall be chosen before the beginning of the trial.

3. PROGRESS OF THE TRIAL

The trial begins with a briefing by the chief judge, and it ends when the chief judge gives a closing speech, the results are read and any prizes given.

The briefing is held on the morning of the trial day, or on the previous night if necessary.

3.1. Allotment of trial areas

A dog may participate in the trial if it is included when the areas are allotted.

The trial area for each dog is drawn by lot after the chief judge's briefing, unless the situation demands that the allotment be carried out in advance. In any case the allotment shall be carried out using an unbiased method approved by the chief judge.

If insurmountable difficulties arise after the allotment, the chief judge has the right to move field judges from one group to another as necessary.

In a two-week trial the dog handler has the right to propose a trial area for his dog, to be approved by the organising committee. The trial areas shall be drawn by lot if necessary.

3.2. Trial period

The trial must start at the time specified by the chief judge, unless some insurmountable problem causes a delay.

The total search time is 240 minutes. The trial day consists of two separate chase heats of 120 minutes each. The second heat is used if the dog still has unused search time left after the first one.

The trial period ends when the total search time of 240 minutes or the total chase time of 240 minutes (in two heats) has been used.

3.3. Actions in trial area

The group leader decides the direction of the group's movements in the trial area, after consulting a member of the group who is familiar with the terrain. Reasonable requests expressed by the dog handler shall be taken into consideration. The dog must not be in any way disturbed or assisted when it is searching, chasing or trying to find a lost track.

3.4. Search time

The total search time during the trial day is maximum 240 minutes. If the search results in a chase for any other game animal than hare, only the time during which the judges know with certainty that the dog was searching for a hare shall be evaluated.

3.5. Chase time

The dog is allowed two chase heats of 120 minutes each. When the first heat is over, the dog must be recalled and put on lead, and taken to another part of the trial area to search for another hare.

Only a chase during which the dog is barking shall be accepted. When the dog is not barking and tracking a hare, this is interpreted as losing the track.

Every minute during which the dog has been barking and chasing a hare shall be included in the total chase time. If the dog loses the track for five (5) minutes or more, this time shall not be included in the total chase time. If the dog loses the track within the last minutes of a chase, the chase period shall be continued until the field judges are able to see whether or not the time must be detracted from the chase time.

If the dog has not been able to find the track again in 40 minutes or more, the dog handler has the right to suggest moving to another part of the trial area, without putting the dog on lead, so as to give it the chance to find new game. The decision on moving to another place is made in accordance with the guidelines for field judges.

If the dog has lost the track and begins to search for another hare, the search shall be evaluated in every respect as specified in the guidelines for field judges, however the search time shall be calculated as chase time.

The time when the dog is barking even though it is not actually chasing a hare (over-excitability in chase) shall not be included in the chase time.

Accepted chase time is obtained by deducting any instances of losing the track and ascertained over-excitability times from the total duration of a chase heat.

Observations on a chase obtained by using dog tracking systems shall not be accepted.

3.6. Withdrawing

The dog handler has the right to withdraw from the trial at any point before the end of the trial period. The dog's performance shall be evaluated up until the moment when the handler informs the judge of withdrawing.

3.7. Interrupting the trial

The decision on interrupting is made by the chief judge, in the trial area by the group leader if the chief judge cannot be immediately reached. The group leader must present the grounds for the interruption to the chief judge as soon as possible.

The trial may be interrupted in the following cases:

- The conditions become such that continuing the trial would be in violation of animal protection regulations, for example: an icy crust that may injure the dog, hard crusted snow, very cold or very hot weather.
- The dog is injured during the trial in such a way that continuing the trial would be in violation of animal protection regulations.
- Natural conditions change in such a way that the dog's performance cannot be reliably assessed (for example a storm).
- Darkness makes it impossible to continue the trial.
- If the last chase heat ends in some excessive disturbance, the dog handler has the right to ask for the trial to be interrupted.

3.8. Barring from trial

The dog shall be barred from the trial if it refuses to work, shows such disobedience that continuing the trial becomes impossible, or barks either so much or so little that the field judges are not able to follow its work. The dog shall also be barred if it gets a total of ten (10) penalty points in one heat for over-excitability during search or chase.

The dog shall be barred if it begins to chase hoofed game and chases it for a total of 30 minutes during the trial, or if it chases and attacks and mauls a hoofed game animal. If this occurs and the dog cannot be recalled and put on lead, the chase shall be followed even after the trial period is over in order to see whether or not the dog must be barred.

The dog may also be barred from the trial if the dog handler knowingly breaches the trial rules, recalls and puts the dog on lead without permission from a field judge, or disregards the field judges' instructions.

The dog may be barred if persons following the group at the request of the dog handler and with the permission of the chief judge purposely disrupt the trial or the work of the field judges or disregard the field judges' instructions.

3.9. Calculating the result

Results are calculated for a completed or interrupted trial. If the dog is barred or the dog handler decides to withdraw during the trial, results shall not be calculated.

The reason for interruption, barring and withdrawing shall be noted in the trial reports.

4. EXCESSIVE DISTURBANCE DURING THE TRIAL

4.1. Excessive disturbance

An excessive disturbance unrelated to the dog may occur during the search or chase and interrupt the trial.

4.2. Verifying the disturbance

If there is reason to believe that the search or chase was interrupted by some excessive disturbance, the field judges must take immediate action to find out what caused the interruption. The field judge decides what can be accepted as an excessive disturbance.

4.3. Exceptional situations

The field judges should always do their best to ascertain if the dog's behaviour during the trial has been affected by the presence of large predators or birds of prey, so as to avoid incorrect interpretation of the situations. The animal in question shall be noted in the scoring card and trial reports.

5. CHANGING THE EVALUATION OF A FIELD JUDGE

The chief judge shall ensure that the approved rules and guidelines for hunting trials are followed exactly in the trial. The chief judge is to change the evaluation of the field judges if he, after watching the trial or discussing with the field judges, is convinced that the evaluation does not correctly reflect the dog's performance.

6. CHANGES TO THE RULES

All changes to these rules must be approved by the Finnish Kennel Club at the proposal of the breed club.

GUIDELINES FOR FIELD JUDGES

1. TRIAL GROUP

A trial group consists of field judges and the dog handler. The group may also include one or two field judge trainees and a field guide.

There may be also other people who are allowed to watch the trial under the supervision of the group leader; this must be approved by the chief judge on a case by case basis.

1.1. Duties of field judges

- 1) The field judge must always carry with him the trial rules and proof of his authorisation and qualifications for the task. Field judges should always be present at the chief judge's briefing.
- 2) The trial rules must be followed to the letter. When applying the rules and guidelines, the field judge has the right to use his own discretion, as long as he is able to give grounds for his decisions and his interpretations are in accordance with the trial rules and guidelines.
- 3) If the conditions during the trial and in the trial area become such that continuing the trial would be in violation of animal protection regulations, the field judge must interrupt the trial, contact the chief judge and consider the possibility of moving to a reserve area.
- 4) Every dog's performance must be evaluated neutrally and truthfully. The judge must not allow any previous acquaintance, hearsay, the dog handler's words or any earlier trial results influence his evaluation. The field judge shall only take into account what he can see for himself and what he considers to be true. However, the field judge is also allowed to base his evaluation on the observations made by the other field judge in the group.
- 5) Hasty conclusions and excessive self-confidence must be avoided. The field judge must be adaptable and flexible, and he must always behave in a friendly manner towards all other members of the group. The field judge may taken into account any reasonable requests from the dog handler, provided that these are not excessive or in violation of the rules and do not disrupt the progress of the trial.
- 6) The field judge must watch the performance of the dog as closely as possible throughout the trial period, however without disturbing it. The evaluation of the different qualities should not be mixed with each other.
- 7) After the first chase heat the dog shall be put on lead and taken to search for another hare.
- 8) The trial must be carried out in the allotted trial area, unless the group is forced to move outside the area while following the dog.
- 9) The group may move to a reserve area if the conditions in the allotted area make the trial impossible. However, the group is not allowed to move to a reserve area just because the allotted area is estimated to have a very low hare population. The group leader makes the decision on moving to a reserve area, if the chief judge cannot be contacted without delay.
- 10) If the dog comes to danger during the trial, all members of the trial group must take immediate action to rescue it.

1.2. Duties of group leader

- 1) The group leader is appointed by the chief judge. He is responsible for ensuring that the group acts in accordance with the trial rules and guidelines and any instructions given to them, in good kennel spirit. The group leader must be present at the chief judge's briefing, unless the chief judge has given the leave of absence for some special reason.
- 2) The group leader makes sure that all field judges set their clocks to the same time before the trial begins. The group leader has the final say about the direction and speed of the group's movements, when and where the dog is let loose, and when the dog must be recalled and put on lead, taking into account any reasonable requests that the dog handler may express. The group leader instructs the group members as to which positions they are to take and how they are to act. He supervises and guides the work of any field judge trainees in the group. The group leader ensures that any persons outside the group do not disrupt the trial or disturb the work of the field judges.

- 3) The group leader must use his discretion and possibly interrupt the trial if the dog is injured during it. The trial may be continued if the injury is so minor that continuing the trial will not cause a violation of animal protection regulations.
- 4) The group leader may call the field judges to a negotiation if necessary. The group leader compares the notes taken by the field judges and calculates how much of the search time has been used and how much is still left, and what the chase time is. The group leader also notes in his scoring card the averages of the merit points and penalty points given by the field judges, compares them to any additional notes and discusses the final score with another judge if necessary.
- 5) When the trial period is over and the scoring cards have been filled in, the group leader must show them to the dog handler.
- 6) The group leader hands the scoring cards to the chief judge and gives an oral report about the progress and events of the trial and the grounds for the evaluation. The field judges, trainee judges and dog handler should be present during this report. The field judges must for their part make sure that the scores and notes in the dog's trial report are correct and confirm them with their signature.

1.3. Guidelines for dog handler

- 1) The dog handler (the owner or his representative) must follow the instructions given by the chief judge, group leader and field judge. The dog must be handled by the same person throughout the entire trial; in exceptional cases the chief judge may approve a change of handler.
- 2) The dog handler is not allowed to assist the dog in any way, to interfere with its work without permission from a field judge, or to put the dog on lead unless he wishes to withdraw from the trial.
- 3) If the first chase heat is interrupted by some excessive disturbance, the dog handler has the right to decide how the trial is continued: by allowing the dog to continue working until the heat is over, or by starting the next heat. If the last chase heat is interrupted by some excessive disturbance, the dog handler has the right to decide whether the trial is continued until the heat is full or ended immediately.
- 4) The dog handler has the right to give reasonable suggestions and requests to the field judge, regarding for example the speed or direction in which the group will move, but he must not disrupt the work of the field judges with repeated suggestions or his other behaviour.
- 5) If the dog handler disregards the judges' instruction, breaches the trial rules, disturbs the work of the field judges or otherwise behaves in an inappropriate manner, the group leader may bar the dog from continuing the trial. The same applies to persons who follow the group at the request of the dog handler and with the permission of the chief judge. The chief judge must be immediately informed of the barring and the grounds thereof.
- 6) If the dog handler withdraws from the trial, the group leader must be immediately informed. Withdrawing is possible during the time between the confirmation of allotted trial areas and the end of the dog's trial period.
- 7) If the dog handler's idea of the events during the trial differs from that of the field judges, he is allowed to express this to the field judges when in the trial area, and to the chief judge when at the trial centre.
- 8) During the trial the dog handler and field judges are to work in good confidence and cooperation.

2. OPERATION OF FIELD JUDGES DURING TRIAL

2.1. Evaluation of dog's performance

The two most important requirements for a hound are the ability to find game and the ability to chase it even over long distances. A good hunting hound works in such a way that the game being chased can be seen several times.

The dog's performance is evaluated during two separate heats. The observations of the dog's actions and performance during one heat must not be allowed to influence the judging of the other heat.

During the trial day the field judge must write down notes and observations of the dog's actions and performance in his scoring card, and also note the search time left for the second heat as required.

The condition or age of the dog shall not affect the evaluation.

2.2. Excessive disturbance

The following situations are considered as excessive disturbances that may make it necessary to put the dog on lead and move to another area:

- 1) The chased hare goes into a hiding place from which the dog cannot flush it out on its own. The group is not allowed to flush it out, either.
- 2) During the search or chase the dog enters a place or area where both the field judge and the handler consider it to be in serious danger; for example a road with heavy traffic, a railroad, thin ice, etc.
- 3) The dog catches the hare it chases.
- 4) Someone shoots the hare being chased.
- 5) Another dog interrupts the search or chase.
- 6) Another dog joins the chase before the chase has lasted for 60 minutes. If the dog has been chasing the hare for at least 60 minutes and the other dog cannot be caught or driven away despite repeated attempts, the chase may continue provided that the other dog does not clearly assist or disturb the chasing dog.
- 7) When the chase begins so late in the day that there is not enough daylight to follow it, the trial is interrupted when darkness falls. However, a chase that starts in the evening shall not be interrupted before the time is up if at least 60 minutes of the chase has taken place in daylight and the field judges consider that they have already been observing the dog's performance long enough to make correct evaluations even without sufficient light.
- 8) The dog is found to be chasing any other game than hare. If the dog was first searching or chasing a hare, the search or chase shall be accepted up until the point when the field judge was able to ascertain without a doubt that the dog has started to chase other game. Hoofed game is not considered "other game" in this situation.
- 9) A large predator or bird of prey moving in the area interferes with the dog's work or causes an obvious threat to the dog.

Also other situations unrelated to the dog can be accepted by the field judges as an excessive disturbance. If the excessive disturbance makes it necessary to recall the dog, the dog handler is allowed to choose the spot where the dog is let off lead again.

Interruptions caused by excessive disturbance

The interruption caused by an excessive disturbance shall not be included in the search or chase time. The field judge decides when the disturbance began, based on his observations in the situation. Also the time required to recall the dog and to take it to another place shall be included in the interruption time. The dog must be recalled, taken to another place and let off lead again without undue delay.

If the chase is interrupted by some excessive disturbance, the dog handler has the right to decide how the trial is continued: by allowing the dog to continue working until the heat is over, or by starting the next heat (if still available). If the last chase heat is interrupted by some excessive disturbance, the dog handler has the right to decide whether the trial is continued until the heat is full or ended immediately.

If the dog handler decides to continue until the heat is full, the dog is allowed to search for another hare or a hare it has already chased. The search time is included in the total search time, and the dog is allowed to use any unused search time it still has left for the heat. The search and chase is evaluated in all respects in accordance with the rules and guidelines.

2.3. Actions during search

The dog should not be let off lead directly on a night track, so as to ensure that its ability to search game can be fully assessed and the dog is given the opportunity to gain search points for locating a track that is not immediately identifiable.

For the second heat the dog must be let off lead in such a place that it will not chase the same hare for a second time on the same day.

The group leader decides when and how the field judges will split up to monitor the dog's actions in the area without disturbing the dog.

Searching for any other game than hare shall not be assessed. If the dog is found to be searching a fox or any other animal, the dog shall be put on lead. See section 2.2.8. Excessive disturbance.

If the search results in a chase or search for other game, only the part that the judges have been able to ascertain as a search for hare shall be evaluated. The judges make a note of the game animal in the scoring cards.

2.4. Actions during chase

Once a chase begins, the group leader gives such instructions for the group that the progress of the chase and the dog's performance can be monitored and assessed with maximum ease and certainty. The group is required to follow the dog tenaciously even if it moves far away. The field judges should be positioned in the area suitably, and act and move with such coordination and persistence that their observations complement each other and give a truthful picture of the events. The field judges should take their positions in the same way as hunters take their stands.

The field judges must waste no time in finding out whether the dog is chasing a moving hare or some other game, or whether it is barking on an old track or without a reason. Field judges must endeavour to see both the dog and the game it is chasing, and to observe the tracks they make.

Field judges must observe every aspect of the dog's performance during the chase, how it works after losing the track and in case of eventual obstacles. If the dog starts to bark within a very limited area, its actions must be immediately verified.

If the dog has lost the track and has not been able to find it again in 40 minutes or more, the dog handler has the right to suggest moving to another part of the trial area, without putting the dog on lead, so as to give it the chance to find new game. The decision on moving to another place can be made as soon as the performance of the dog in the event has been fully assessed and there is no reason to let it continue its efforts to relocate the game.

If the dog has lost the track and begins to search for another hare, the search shall be evaluated in every respect as specified in the guidelines for field judges, however the search time shall be calculated as chase time. The judges must in any case be absolutely certain that the dog is really searching for another hare.

The time when the dog is barking even though it is not actually chasing a hare (over-excitability in chase) must not be confused with possible over-excitability during search.

Accepted chase time is obtained by deducting any instances of lost track and ascertained over-excitability times from the total duration of a chase heat.

Observations on a chase obtained by using dog tracking systems shall not be accepted.

The field judge must attempt to see the hare and the dog in order to estimate the distance between them, but his movements or position must not in any way disturb the hare or the dog. When the hare is close, all members of the trial group must remain motionless and then move far enough away before the dog comes close, so as not to disturb the dog. The field judges must not position themselves in the places where the hare moves, nor move in those areas where the dog is repeatedly chasing the hare; they must find spots from which they can watch the situation from a suitable distance and thus assess the events truthfully.

Even if the field judges cannot see a hare or its tracks during the chase, the dog's performance shall be evaluated as a chase for hare unless the field judges have good reason to believe that it was chasing some other game.

2.5. Chasing hoofed game

If the dog begins to chase hoofed game during the trial, all members of the trial group must do their best to recall the dog and put it on lead. If this does not succeed, the chase shall be followed also after the trial period is over, even if the chase cannot be heard, until the field judges are able to decide whether or not the dog must be barred.

2.6. Chase by another dog

If the dog from another trial group enters the trial area while chasing game, the field judge must note its chase time if this does not distract him from his primary duty and does not disturb the dog in his trial group. Any notes on the chase time of the other dog shall be given to the group leader of the group in question, or to the chief judge, for the calculation of the total chase time.

2.7. Weather conditions

When the ground is covered with snow to such an extent that any tracks can be easily followed almost without interruption in the area where the search and chase took place, this is marked as "snowy ground".

This also applies when the ground is covered by hard snow on which the tracks are not visible enough to be followed.

The field judges determine how the weather conditions are marked. In unclear cases or if there is disagreement, the chief judge makes the final decision.

If at least one of the trial heats has taken place over snowy ground, the result is marked as having been obtained in snowy conditions.

The depth of snow means the depth of the soft snow layer where the dog has been working.

3. FILLING THE SCORING CARD

3.1. General instruction

The field judge must fill the scoring card with due care. If the dog still has unused search time left after the first heat, the judge shall fill in two scoring cards. The judge must keep a spare card with him during the day for use in special cases.

Before the trial starts, the field judges write in the scoring card the trial area, time, dog and handler.

As soon as the dog has been let off lead for a heat, the judge must write down in the scoring card the available search time and indicate the hours in the timing table.

All notes and evaluations of the dog's performance must be made immediately after the situation has been verified. This general instruction is also applied when noting the times when the dog was let loose, when a chase began, when the dog and the game were seen, and all other events during the trial.

3.2. Noting the chase time

A chase is indicated in the timing part using qualitative notation: continuous chase with a continuous line (_____), fragmentary chase with a dashed line (- - - - -), separate barks with dots (.....) and chase time copied from another judge's scoring card with a serrated line (^^^). Separate barks are not included in chase time, unless the judge is able to verify that the dog is moving.

If a generally air-scenting dog has already chased along a track and then chases it again but this time working on ground scent, this shall not be interpreted as over-excitability during a chase; however, the ground-scented section of the chase shall not be included in the chase time.

The field judge must always endeavour to note the chase time as accurately as possible in the timing table. The reason for losing the track (if observed) is also entered in the timing section, as well as any other observations about the chase: what kind of mistakes the dog makes and when, when the hare and dog were seen, and how the dog performs especially when dealing with obstacles or particularly difficult terrain.

3.3. Characteristics and additional information

At the end of the trial day the dog's performance is scored using numbers and any additional information is written down. When deciding on the final scores also the notes and additional information noted during the trial shall be taken into account. The final score is the judge's overall evaluation of the qualities shown by the dog during the trial.

Each field judge enters the scores using full numbers. The total points of the group are calculated as an average of the scores given by the field judges.

Additional notes describe the conditions during the trial and various aspects of the dog's performance, and they help the field judges to determine the scores.

4. EVALUATION OF DOG'S PERFORMANCE

Each aspect of the dog's performance is assessed separately in each heat by giving full points. For merit points the scale is 1 through 10.

Excellent	9 or 10
Very good	7 or 8
Good	5 or 6
Satisfactory	3 or 4

Poor

1 or 2

When giving penalty points, the observations given by both field judges separately but unanimously are taken into account and their sum is calculated.

If the dog has been given no penalty points or the errors are so minor that there is no reason to give penalty points, this is indicated with zero (0) in the scoring card.

If the field judge is not able to assess some aspect of the performance, this is indicated by a dash (–) in the corresponding column.

4.1. Searching

The field judges assess the dog's ability to search and locate a night track, the efficiency of its performance, and its ability to find game even if no tracks are present in the area.

Searching must be considered efficient if the dog quickly locates and flushes out a hare. If the search cannot be adequately observed, efficiency is assessed based on how long the dog is searching and how far from the handler it is when a chase begins.

The dog should not be let off lead directly on a night track, so as to ensure that its ability to search for game can be fully assessed and the dog is given the opportunity to achieve good search points.

The search is evaluated in two parts: searching without track, and working a night track, both using a scale 1–5. The overall score is not necessarily the sum of the two parts; the field judge decides the final score based on the number scores and additional notes.

Searching without night track 1–5

An attempt should always be made to assess the dog's ability to search for game over terrain where no tracks can be observed. The dog's ability to locate a night track or find game in an area without tracks is evaluated.

Merits: Determination and zeal, good cooperation with handler, quickly finds a night track, dog moves independently and extensively enough.

Faults: Dog stays close to handler, does not work on its own.

Efficiency on a night track 1–5

How efficiently the dog works a night track and gets results.

Merits: Confident, determined work on a night track, quickly locates a hare.

Faults: Slow, uncertain or rushed performance, straying from the night track.

4.2. Barking 1–10

When evaluating the bark, audibility and other qualities are marked in the corresponding columns and fields, and the overall score is based on this information.

The most important quality is audibility; other qualities can either increase or decrease the score.

In order to get a good score (5–6) the barking must be so loud that the progress of the chase can be easily followed by listening to it.

If there is no chase or it cannot be heard, a dash is used instead of a number.

Audibility 1–5

Audibility is the most important quality.

When evaluating, the judge must take into account the distance to the dog and the effect of external conditions: terrain, height differences, vegetation, wind, snow.

Other qualities 1–5

Other qualities of the bark are descriptiveness, passion, frequency, melodious quality and masculinity/femininity.

Descriptiveness: the barking reflects the distance between the dog and the chased quarry.

Passion: expression of the intensity, fervour and excitement of the chase. A dog barking passionately while chasing game is a delight to hear.

Frequency: how much and how often the dog barks.

Melodious quality: how many different tones the bark contains.

Masculinity/femininity: is it possible to say whether the barking dog is a dog or a bitch purely by listening to how it barks.

4.3. Chasing 1–10

A good hunting hound works in such a way that the game being chased can be seen several times. The dog chases well if it moves fluently and confidently, keeps good contact with the chased game, its speed matches the conditions, and even a long chase progresses almost without interruptions.

The chase points shall be satisfactory or poor if the chase contains numerous breaks or losses of track caused by the dog working in a rushed manner and moving too fast for the conditions and its own abilities, or if the dog moves only walking, trails very far behind the game, or quickly loses the track and cannot find it any more.

When evaluating the chase, the actual chase time shall be taken into account. The actual chase time is obtained by deducting breaks or losses of track shorter than five (5) minutes from the total chase time.

If the chased hare makes use of roads, attempts to go under obstacles or is found to be very small and prone to hiding, this shall be taken into account when evaluating the chase. The chase is excellent or very good if the dog is able to chase its game even on roads with regular traffic and in difficult terrain, or when the behaviour of the hare is exceptionally challenging.

4.4. Hunting zeal

Independent, enthusiastic work while searching for game or after losing the track are the most important characteristics. Persistent, tenacious performance even in difficult conditions and regardless of stress and fatigue indicates excellent hunting zeal.

Particular merit must be given when the dog eagerly searches game even if there are no obvious tracks in the area, or works tenaciously to find a lost track even after a long search or chase. Especially difficult conditions must be taken into account.

A dog with a normal hunting zeal works independently to find a night track and to find the game again after losing it, and is able to chase game without assistance. If the dog moves at a moderate speed but with good determination or keeps suitable contact with the handler, this must not be interpreted as inadequate hunting zeal. The condition or age of the dog shall not affect the evaluation.

Any shortcomings in hunting zeal shall be indicated in "additional information" fields 40 and 41 in both heats.

The hunting zeal of the dog during the entire trial is assessed based on the observations made throughout the trial and entered in field 42 in the scoring card of the last heat.

If the score in field 42 is either 5 or 4, there must be no notes in fields 40 and 41 for either heat.

If the dog refuses to work at all, the field judges can make an unanimous decision to bar it from the trial. This is indicated in the scoring card and dog performance report in field 42 as "barred".

Hunting zeal during search

The dog's hunting zeal is assessed both when it is searching without an obvious track and when it is working a night track.

The evaluation must take into account the overall conditions, search time, length of night track, and the dog's performance (determination, tenacity, independence); any shortcomings shall cause a deduction in the score.

Hunting zeal during chase

The dog's hunting zeal is assessed when it is chasing game or searching for game after losing the track. The duration of chase and any losses of track is taken into account, as well as the conditions; any shortcomings shall cause a deduction in the score.

4.5. Over-excitability during search 1–10

The dog is over-excitabile during search if it barks when following a night track, or if it barks while searching for game and the hare is not yet moving.

Any barking heard while the dog is searching for game is always interpreted as over-excitability, unless a clear reason for the barking is clearly observed.

When evaluating over-excitability, the decisive factors are how much and how long the dog barks.

Penalty points for over-excitability during search are not given if it is only slight (maximum 10 barks).

If the search work during a heat is assessed based on several separate searches, the score for over-excitability shall be determined by the search where the over-excitability was at its worst.

If the dog is so over-excitabile that the field judges are not able to tell when it is barking at nothing and when it is chasing a hare, it shall be barred from the trial.

Over-excitability during search shall give penalty points as follows:

- Minor = dog only barks infrequently and at long intervals (6 minutes/point)
- Disturbing = short instances of barking, or intermittent barks (4 minutes/point)
- Misleading = series of barks that sound like a chase (2 minutes/point)

Only the minutes when over-excitability is observed shall be included in the over-excitability time.

4.6. Over-excitability during chase 1–10

The dog is over-excitabile during chase if it barks when chasing a track it has already chased, or when following a track backwards, or when chasing without a track, or if it barks in normal conditions on a track that is older than 20 minutes and cannot be easily followed.

The dog shall not be given any penalty points for over-excitability if it barks a few times right after losing the track.

The dog is chasing a track backwards if it is barking and chasing a track it has not yet chased and is moving in the direction from which the hare has come.

Giving penalty points for over-excitability during chase requires visual confirmation.

A flushed-out hare is a hare that begins to move even if its track may already be old. If the dog begins to bark and chase a flushed-out hare, this is interpreted as a new or continued chase. If the dog is observed to bark and follow a flushed-out hare, it is chasing the hare; if the dog has flushed out a hare and barks on the track but cannot follow it, this is interpreted as over-excitability during chase.

If the dog is so over-excitabile that the field judges are not able to tell when it is barking at nothing and when it is chasing a hare, it shall be barred from the trial.

Over-excitability during chase shall give penalty points as follows:

- Minor = a few separate barks while the dog is working to find the lost track (3 minutes/point)
- Disturbing = short instances of barking while working to find the lost track (2 minutes/point)
- Misleading = dog barks while following a track it has already chased, chases on a track backwards, or barks without a track (1 minutes/point)

Only the minutes when over-excitability is observed shall be included in the over-excitability time.

4.7. Evaluation without a chase

If there is no chase during a heat, only the searching and eventual over-excitability during search are evaluated and a dash is used in all other fields.

5. ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Only things that the judge has been able to witness or verify shall be assessed. The scores must be in accordance with the given performance points.

Each of the two field judges assesses the dog's performance separately, following these guidelines, unless otherwise specified below:

- 5 = excellent
- 4 = very good
- 3 = good
- 2 = satisfactory
- 1 = poor

The field judge makes notes of any additional information by either ticking the appropriate alternative or using full numbers.

Conditions

- 11. Bare ground
- 12. Snowy ground, depth of soft snow in centimetres
- 13. Moderate or strong wind
- 14. Dry weather
- 15. Humid weather
- 16. Moderate or heavy rain
- 17. Temperature, degrees
- 18. Terrain

When evaluating the terrain, the judge must pay attention to the hare population as well as any details of terrain that may complicate a chase, such as roads, waterways, fields, logging areas, bare rock or very thick undergrowth. Any machinery operating in the area (logging, agriculture) may also complicate the dog's work.

- 5 = excellent
- 4 = very good
- 3 = good
- 2 = satisfactory
- 1 = poor

SEARCHING

20. Searching without night track

The evaluation shall be descriptive, not assess what is good or poor.

- 5 = very extensive search, does not keep contact with handler
- 4 = extensive
- 3 = moderate, normal
- 2 = only searches close to the trial group
- 1 = does not search on its own

21. Scenting method

Evaluation shall be descriptive, not assess what is good or poor.

- 5 = only uses air scent
- 4 = uses mostly air scent
- 3 = alternates between air and ground scenting
- 2 = mostly follows ground scent
- 1 = only uses ground scent

22. Over-excitability during search

- 5 = very minor
- 4 = minor

- 3 = disturbing
- 2 = misleading
- 1 = dog barks so much that it is impossible to know if it is chasing or barking at nothing

BARKING

30. Audibility

- 5 = excellent
- 4 = very good
- 3 = good
- 2 = adequate
- 1 = poor

31. Descriptiveness

- 5 = excellent
- 4 = very good
- 3 = good
- 2 = adequate
- 1 = poor

32. Passion

- 5 = excellent
- 4 = very good
- 3 = good
- 2 = adequate
- 1 = poor

33. Frequency

- 5 = excellent
- 4 = very good
- 3 = good
- 2 = adequate
- 1 = poor

34. Melodious quality

- 5 = very melodious
- 4 = mostly melodious
- 3 = dual-toned
- 2 = mostly single-toned
- 1 = single-toned

35. Masculinity/femininity

- 5 = very obvious
- 4 = obvious
- 3 = ambiguous
- 2 = incorrect
- 1 = quite misleading

36. Beagle: barking

Evaluation shall be descriptive, not assess what is good or poor.

- 5 = not in use
- 4 = barking
- 3 = mostly barking, some howling
- 2 = mostly howling, some barking
- 1 = howling

HUNTING ZEAL

40. Hunting zeal during search

- 5 = some minor shortcomings when searching for game without obvious tracks
- 4 = some minor shortcomings when working on a night track
- 3 = clearly reluctant to search for game in a terrain without obvious tracks
- 2 = does not search for game on its own in a terrain without obvious tracks
- 1 = strays from a night track and is unwilling to work

41. Hunting zeal during chase

- 5 = some minor shortcomings when working to find game after a long loss of track
- 4 = some minor shortcomings when working to find game after losing the track
- 3 = clearly reluctant to find game again after losing the track
- 2 = stops searching for game after losing the track and is reluctant to work
- 1 = strays from a track it is chasing and is unwilling to work

42. Hunting zeal during entire trial

- 5 = dog works persistently and tenaciously in stressful or difficult conditions throughout the trial period
- 4 = dog works persistently and tenaciously throughout the trial period
- 3 = some minor shortcomings in the dog's hunting zeal during search or chase
- 2 = obvious shortcomings in the dog's hunting zeal, disturbing its performance in the trial
- 1 = clearly lacking hunting zeal, trial cannot be completed

CHASE

50. Skill

- 5 = very fluent chase with very few breaks and good contact with chased game, actual chase time over 110 minutes
- 4 = very fluent chase, good contact with chased game, actual chase time over 90 minutes
- 3 = fluent chase, good contact with chased game, actual chase time over 60 minutes
- 2 = adequately fluent chase, short or slowly progressing, or poor contact with chased game, actual chase time under 60 minutes
- 1 = poorly progressing chase or dog only walks while chasing, poor contact with chased game, chase ends at the first loss of track or actual chase time is under 30 minutes

51. Speed

Descriptive evaluation.

- 5 = varying, dog adapts its speed to the situation
- 4 = fast
- 3 = average
- 2 = slow

1 = very slow (walking)

52. Effect of roads and obstacles

- 5 = dog chases game without breaks over obstacles or on a regularly used road
- 4 = short breaks in chase when encountering obstacles or a regularly used road
- 3 = quickly overcomes obstacles, is able to chase game on forest roads
- 2 = overcomes obstacles, is able to chase game on forest roads if close to the game
- 1 = chase ends when dog encounters an obstacle or even a small road

53. Scenting method

Descriptive.

- 5 = only uses air scent
- 4 = uses mostly air scent
- 3 = alternates between air and ground scenting
- 2 = mostly follows ground scent
- 1 = only uses ground scent

54. Excitability

The greatest observed distance to game when dog is barking while chasing it, minutes.

55. Over-excitability during chase

- 5 = minor, some separate barks after losing the track
- 4 = disturbing, some series of barks after losing the track
- 3 = misleading, barks while chasing an already chased track
- 2 = misleading, barks while chasing a track backwards
- 1 = misleading, barks even without a track

56. Observation of chased game

How many times the chased game was seen.

OTHER QUALITIES

60. Chasing other game or hoofed game

Field judges shall indicate in their scoring card and performance reports what animal the dog was chasing.

- 5 = dog shows no interest in other animals
- 4 = dog chases the animal away, follows it for some time and then returns to handler on its own
- 3 = dog chases the animal but returns to handler when called
- 2 = dog chases the animal and cannot be recalled by handler
- 1 = dog begins to follow a cold track, follows it intensively and cannot be recalled by handler

61. Obedience

- 5 = dog can be recalled from a chase (when out of sight)
- 4 = dog can be recalled from a night track or after losing the track (when out of sight)
- 3 = dog can be recalled when it is within sight and close enough to the handler
- 2 = dog cannot be recalled by handler
- 1 = dog cannot be caught and put on lead

Any observations of large predators or birds of prey in the area shall be indicated in the scoring card and performance report, in case these in any way disturb the dog's performance during the trial.

6. CHANGES TO THE GUIDELINES

All changes to these rules and guidelines must be approved by the general meeting of the breed club and proposed to the Finnish Kennel Club for approval.

APPENDIX:

Special instructions for Beagles

When evaluating the speed and extent of searching, the field judge must bear in mind that the Beagle is a small hound breed. In addition, because the Beagle was traditionally used for hunting in packs, some dogs may keep more frequent contact with the handler than breeds that have long been bred to hunt alone. Therefore this tendency must not cause any deductions in the scores, provided that the dog otherwise shows excellent hunting zeal.

If the Beagle mostly vocalises by howling (field 36, score 1 or 2), the most important criterion must be audibility. The quality of the sound (howling/barking) shall not affect the score given for barking, audibility is paramount.

Prizes: see section 15.4. of the Rules.

Total chase time, minutes	Points	Total chase time, minutes	Points	Total chase time, minutes	Points
1	0.29	25	7.29	49	14.29
2	0.58	26	7.58	50	14.58
3	0.88	27	7.88	51	14.88
4	1.17	28	8.17	52	15.17
5	1.46	29	8.46	53	15.46
6	1.75	30	8.75	54	15.75
7	2.04	31	9.04	55	16.04
8	2.33	32	9.33	56	16.33
9	2.63	33	9.63	57	16.63
10	2.92	34	9.92	58	16.92
11	3.21	35	10.21	59	17.21
12	3.50	36	10.50	60	17.50
13	3.79	37	10.79	61	17.79
14	4.08	38	11.08	62	18.08
15	4.38	39	11.38	63	18.38
16	4.67	40	11.67	64	18.67
17	4.96	41	11.96	65	18.96
18	5.25	42	12.25	66	19.25
19	5.54	43	12.54	67	19.54
20	5.83	44	12.83	68	19.83
21	6.13	45	13.13	69	20.13
22	6.42	46	13.42	70	20.42
23	6.71	47	13.71	71	20.71
24	7.00	48	14.00	72	21.00

Total chase time, minutes	Points	Total chase time, minutes	Points	Total chase time, minutes	Points
73	21.29	97	28.29	121	35.29
74	21.58	98	28.58	122	35.58
75	21.88	99	28.88	123	35.88
76	22.17	100	29.17	124	36.17
77	22.46	101	29.46	125	36.46
78	22.75	102	29.75	126	36.75
79	23.04	103	30.04	127	37.04
80	23.33	104	30.33	128	37.33
81	23.63	105	30.63	129	37.63
82	23.92	106	30.92	130	37.92
83	24.21	107	31.21	131	38.21
84	24.50	108	31.50	132	38.50
85	24.79	109	31.79	133	38.79
86	25.08	110	32.08	134	39.08
87	25.38	111	32.38	135	39.38
88	25.67	112	32.67	136	39.67
89	25.96	113	32.96	137	39.96
90	26.25	114	33.25	138	40.25
91	26.54	115	33.54	139	40.54
92	26.83	116	33.83	140	40.83
93	27.13	117	34.13	141	41.13
94	27.42	118	34.42	142	41.42
95	27.71	119	34.71	143	41.71
96	28.00	120	35.00	144	42.00