

FIELD TRIAL JUDGE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Before being eligible to judge AKC Member or Licensed Field Trials for English Springer Spaniels, prospective Judges must complete the following requirements in this order:

- #1 Attend a Parent Club approved JUDGES SEMINAR.
- #2 Pass a Parent Club prepared written test.
- #3 Pass two (2) APPRENTICESHIPS.* (An Apprentice Evaluation Form MUST be filled out and approved/passed by each Teaching Judge. If the Apprentice is not approved/passed by either of the Judges, the Apprenticeship for that trial will NOT count.)

A Canadian Judge may judge in the USA after judging 3 Canadian All-Age Pheasant trials and passing the written test.

RULES

JUDGING SEMINARS

Rules for Judging Seminars are developed and in the custody of the Interclub Chairs. Interclub Chairs will be responsible for arranging to have seminars in their area each year. Individual clubs or any of the Interclub Chairs can conduct these seminars. Prior written approval to put on a seminar must be obtained from the Parent Club Vice President, Field. Upon completion of seminar, the Interclub Chair, or the club holding the seminar, shall notify the Apprentice Program Administrator as soon as possible, with names and addresses of all prospective/student judges that attended as full participants. People who attend the seminar who are not interested in becoming judges need not be recorded.

WRITTEN TEST

Once a prospective Judge completes the Judges Seminar and wishes to pursue becoming a judge s/he will be required to pass a test that has been developed from the AKC "FIELD TRIAL RULES and Standard Procedure for SPANIELS", "The Conduct and Judging of Spaniel Field Trials" (Blue Book) and the AKC "Dealing with Misconduct" book. The test will be prepared and printed by the ESSFTA and will be sent to the prospective Apprentice Judge upon request and when seminar attendance is verified. Upon completion of the test, the test will be graded by the test provider, and upon passing the test, the prospective Apprentice Judge will be notified as to whether s/he has successfully completed the test and is eligible to apprentice at a trial.

APPRENTICE JUDGING

The Apprentice Judging Program is an excellent way to develop prospective judges, BUT, regardless of this added educational process, the ultimate decision to find and choose qualified apprentices AND judges is still up to each local Field Trial Committee.

Additionally, in this program, a profound responsibility is given to the Teaching Judges as they are the final "gate" to determine whether a new judge is ready for assignment. The

community depends on these four people to carefully assess the capabilities of the Apprentice Judge who works closely with them during the trial.

WHO: Service at a trial as an Apprentice Judge must be solely at the invitation of the club Field Trial Committee, not on request or application from a particular individual. ***A club may only invite one apprentice per trial.** An invitation should be considered an honor, however, a dog is not eligible to be entered in any stake if an Apprentice Judge of that stake, or any member of his/her family has owned, sold, held under lease, boarded, trained, or handled the dog within one year prior to the date of the field trial. (AKC rules Chapter 14, Section 3) Field Trial Committees should not consider a person for Apprenticeship until he/she has carefully and thoroughly read the AKC “FIELD TRIAL RULES and Standard Procedure for SPANIELS”, “The Conduct and Judging of Spaniel Field Trials” (Blue Book), the AKC “Dealing with Misconduct” book, attended the required Parent Club approved Judging Seminar, and successfully completed a parent club prepared written test.

Recommended qualifications for an Apprentice Judge are as follows:

- has trained several dogs,
- competes in Open All-Age as well as Amateur All-Age stakes if eligible,
- has earned numerous placements,
- has championed a dog or two,
- plays an active role in a field trial club,
- participates in putting on field trials,
- enters National field events,
- trains regularly with people experienced in the sport,
- is well respected in his/her local area,
- has judged several puppy stakes,
- and has consistently displayed good sportsmanship throughout his/her field trial career.

The ESSFTA knows that it is not always possible for a person to meet all of the above considerations, but certainly the person who the Field Trial Committee invites as an Apprentice will eventually Judge All-Age trials and should meet a majority of these criteria. The Field Trial Judge Eligibility Requirements should provide a good first step for a Field Trial Committee’s selection, but these committees should never forget the value and importance of experience.

WHERE: The Field Trial Committee who is extending the invitation governs this, but it is suggested that the Apprentice Judge accept an assignment outside of his/her own area, whenever possible, as this would avoid local diversions.

DUTIES: The general thought is to give the Apprentice Judge an opportunity to see a Field Trial up close, and to listen to the dialogue between the two

Judges, observing how they work together to arrive at their decisions. The Apprentice Judge is to be a SILENT listener so as not to distract the Judges at any time from their job of concentrating on the dogs, taking notes, etc. The Apprentice Judge **must** sit in on all discussions regarding callbacks and the final discussion where placements are decided.

BEFORE THE TRIAL: The Field Trial Secretary will send copies of the Apprenticeship Rules and Evaluation Form to both Teaching Judges and the Apprentice. The Apprentice will contact each Teaching Judge to acquire copies of her/his judging form (if applicable) and discuss how the form is used.

AT THE TRIAL: The Apprentice Judge should walk close enough to the teaching Judge to allow for quiet discussion when requested by the Judge--quiet enough that the handler cannot hear comments. Without conversation from the teaching Judge, the Apprentice Judge could just as well be in the gallery. **The Apprentice must stay with the teaching Judge throughout each stake.* It is quite possible for the teaching Judge to pay 100% attention to each dog's performance while explaining his/her views to the Apprentice Judge. Under no circumstances should the trial be delayed. Questions from the Apprentice Judge should be written if necessary, and presented to the Judge at an opportune time; making a turn, waiting for the dog on the other course, etc. Above all, the Apprentice Judge **must** be advised that complete confidentiality is essential, during and after the trial. The Apprentice Judge should use the judging form or format of the Teaching Judge during the trial. This gives the Apprentice Judge an opportunity to experience a variety of methods for scoring and rating a dog's performance.

The Apprentice Judge must complete a total of two (2) All Age Trials, (each trial consisting of one Open and one Amateur Stake) under four (4) different Judges with one judge at each stake being designated as the Teaching Judge. **An AKC License Judge must have judged eight (8) All Age Stakes (4 trials) before he/she can qualify as a teaching judge for this program.* The Interclub Chair and the Judges, prior to the trial, must approve all Apprentice Judges. The Apprentice Judge must be shown on the AKC Premium list to give an entrant ample time to determine a dog's eligibility for the stake in which the person is apprenticing. Upon completing each stake, the teaching judge must complete and return the ESSFTA approved Apprentice Evaluation Form to the club/field trial secretary who in turn will send the form to the Apprentice Program Administrator as soon as possible. Leadership and all bookkeeping necessary for the New Field Trial Judge Eligibility Requirements will be the responsibility of the Apprentice Program Administrator.

AFTER COMPLETION Once two apprentice judging assignments have been successfully completed the Apprentice Program Administrator will notify AKC that the Apprentice is approved by ESSFTA as a judge and qualified to judge all-age trials.

The following is a further explanation of the Apprentice Requirements:

A new apprentice must complete 2 All-Age trials, (a trial by definition includes an Amateur and an Open stake). Each trial must have two totally different judges. At each trial, the apprentice must be under one teaching judge for the Open Stake, and the Amateur Stake with the other judge. This allows all four judges the opportunity to be with the apprentice during the complete stake, and each judge must fill out and sign the evaluation form. A judge must have judged 8 All Age Stakes (4 trials) before he/she is qualified as a teaching judge. This will give new judges time to refine their own skills before taking on the task as a teaching judge.

Before the apprentice is invited by the Field Trial Committee, he/she must be approved by the Interclub Chair, and by each Judge. Only one apprentice per trial may be invited. Having one apprentice per trial allows the judges to dedicate quality time to the apprentice without any undue interruptions or distractions.

Given that both Judges are required to be a Teaching Judge, and must pass or fail the apprentice, they must meet the teaching judge qualification and be comfortable with this situation. They have the initial option to refuse or accept the apprentice. The Field Trial Committee and the Interclub Chair should use the recommended criteria to invite and approve the apprentice. These recommendations are included in the rules.

So that there is no misunderstanding, Kathy Nestor will need to receive 4 completed ESSFTA Evaluation Forms from the judges, passing the apprentice, before AKC is notified that the Apprentice is approved to by the ESSFTA to be a judge; 2 Opens and 2 Amateurs from the 4 judges, completed in 2 trials. This gives the apprentice the full value of judging a whole trial, walking with each judge, and having the opportunity to observe dogs handled by both Amateur and Professional handlers.

These recent changes have been made due to the concerns voiced to the ESSFTA Field Governors by our field trial community. If there are any problems concerning this issue, please contact Barb Boettcher, Apprentice Program Administrator, at essfta.apprentice.program@gmail.com.