

## ***The latest from the JGHV Director of Testing***

(Taken from *Der Jagdgebrauchshund*, 7/2019, translation by Ken Bremer)

### **Not Judging if There is Conflict of Interest or Bias (*Befangenheit*)**

Is an Association Judge (*Verbandsrichter*) permitted to judge a dog at the Herbstzuchtprüfung (HZP), which they have handled themselves at the Association Youth Test (VJP) in the spring? Is an Association Judge permitted to judge a dog at the Herbstzuchtprüfung (HZP), which participated in the judge's handler training course? Is an Association Judge permitted to judge a dog at the Association Utility Test (VGP) if they have laid all the practice tracks (blood) in preparation for the test (VGP)? Is an Association Judge permitted to judge a dog that they have trained to retrieve? Yes, my dear hunting dog friends, these are the questions that I receive daily by email or WhatsApp.

**Not Judging if There is Conflict of Interest or Bias (*Befangenheit*):** *A VR (Association Judge) / RA (Apprentice Judge) / Emergency Judge may not judge a dog, which they have trained or bred. This also applies to the first generation offspring of these dogs. The same applies to the offspring of a stud dog (first generation). Special breed clubs have the right to consider their breed-specific concerns. The JGHV Business Office must be informed about these concerns. In addition, they may not judge dogs of handlers, breeders, stud dog owners, or owners, with whom they are related-- up to thrice removed, by marriage or blood (present or past) or with whom they live in a domestic partnership.*

This text will not answer the questions asked above and so any Association Judge could judge those dogs that they have might have handled or helped at training (retrieve, drags, obedience, blood tracks, etc.), if they (the dogs) were assigned to them. My dear Association Judge! Is everything permitted in life that is not forbidden or expressly prohibited by laws or regulations? Life is not just made up of commandments, prohibitions or ordinances. There are also some things in life that you simply do not do / do without this being written down in a law / regulation. This also means, an Association Judge does not judge a dog, with which they have a conflict of interest or feel like they're biased.

Nobody can or should deny that they cannot judge a dog impartially, that they themselves have already handled at a test or that they have worked with in training over several months, regardless in what form. Every handler or trainer or person involved in training knows the strengths and weaknesses of a dog. On test day, no one can push this knowledge about the dog aside and pretend that they have never seen or worked with the dog. Who can simply ignore this knowledge about the dog in assessing the dog throughout the entire test? Thus, I ask all Association Judges to comply exactly with the applicable regulation in §23 of the JGHV Bylaws or with the excerpt from the Bylaws (6) Transitional Provisions valid from 01.01.2011.

Furthermore, each Association Judge should be so reliable and honest, that they refuse to judge if they feel partial. Bias is **not only managed by laws or regulations**, but simply as a human. So, be impartial, not because of the prohibitions against it, but out of decency, towards the dog handler, the dog and the significance of test results. Just say **NO!** I have a conflict of interest!

Josef Westermann

**Director of Testing**  
**Jagdgebrauchshundverband e.V. (JGHV)**