

## News from the JGHV Director of Testing

Dear friends of the hunting dog,

An almost normal testing year 2022 lies behind us. Beside numerous tests of the individual testing and breed clubs, for the first time again all international breed selection tests were held. *Hegewald*, *Kleemann*, *Schorlemer* etc. were carried out in nearly the usual way and concluded with some excellent test results. Before I now discuss a few small details, on behalf of the *Jagdgebrauchshundverband* (JGHV) I would like to thank all the testing and breed clubs, all the organizers, Test Directors, landowners/field marshals and especially all the Association Judges for the work that was done at these tests. If the President of the JGHV, Mr. Karl Walch clearly states in his opening speech that the *Hegewald* is not a sporting event and bazaar, but a hunting dog test, then this also applies to all of the tests of our hunting dogs, regardless of who is organizing them, regardless of the Test Regulations and regardless of how many dogs participated. We need every test, every performance certificate (*Leistungsnachweis*) by our hunting dogs both for hunting and breeding. Only with these tests and performance certificates judged by the Association Judges of the *Jagdgebrauchshundverband* (JGHV) can we maintain successful hunting and breeding. Many thanks to all of you!

Thanks also to the entire team of the JGHV *Stammbuchamt*. Countless test documents reach the *Stammbuchamt* by postal mail and have to be looked through, checked, and entered into the database of the JGHV. Undoubtedly, the input of these data is tedious work, however, we are well on the way to compiling this information digitally in the near future and we all hope that great progress will be made on this still somewhat bumpy and difficult path.

Unfortunately, in addition to countless wonderful and harmoniously conducted tests, there are always small stumbling blocks, small problems in the interpretation of the Test Regulations and the resulting scoring at our tests. Unfortunately, many Association Judges in every test situation, regardless of whether it is positive or negative, are looking for an exact definition, a precise description / guidance in the Test Regulations to evaluate the individual work. Testing hunting dogs is the exercise of hunting, and hunting has its own laws and rules of the game. All of us who actively hunt, which should be a matter of course for every Association Judge of the JGHV, know exactly that no hunting day and no hunting situation is like the next one, and so it is in the area of testing too. No search in the field, regardless of the dog, is identical, no drag can be prepared in the same way as the previous ones and no work at the water can be compared with any other. Especially at the water, countless factors play a role that cannot be calculated and can never be carried over to another test situation or are even comparable.

The size of the water, cover, wind conditions, duck, dog, handler, and Association Judge, these are all factors that vary from test to test and can never be compared to

another test situation with another dog. Therefore, it is the task of the Association Judge to evaluate each test situation individually. In doing so, the respective Test Regulations must be strictly adhered to and evaluated according to the Test Regulations along with an understanding of hunting. A meaningful and correct evaluation is only possible if the hunting aspect, the hunting task, and the demands on the dog are considered in all of its actions. Whoever judges rigidly in accordance with the Test Regulations and puts all hunting-related factors aside, will have a difficult time in judging the dog in some cases and will possibly make the wrong decisions. We have to think and act like hunters and judge accordingly.

Consequently, I would like to briefly describe two test situations in which the hunting idea was simply missing from the evaluation.

- At a *Verbandjugendprüfung* (VJP) a dog is handled under the best wind conditions along a hedge in order to test pointing. After a few meters, the dog suddenly jumps in without any point and visibly pursues a *Marder* (marten) sightlout. Not pointing the Marder has a negative effect on the evaluation and justification of the overall pointing score.
- During a Fall Breed Test (HZP), a dog comes across a winged pheasant during the search. The pheasant runs several meters in sight of the dog on a patch of fallow land, so that the dog has the opportunity to grab the pheasant again and again. After a while the dog breaks off and returns to the handler. Evaluation by the Association Judges. § 15, 1) Work on winged bird (pheasant). Reason for disqualification: Dog fails to retrieve the winged pheasant.

Dear Association Judge. Both cases are wrongly evaluated and in both cases the hunting aspect is simply missing in the scoring. Such test situations are always different and can never be fixed in Test Regulations, this is simply everyday hunting life. If a hunting dog has the opportunity to capture a predator, then it must do so as quickly as possible and not waste minutes showing off its pointing and re-locating skills in the finest pointing style.

In the second case, the dog had the opportunity or should have grabbed the pheasant. A dog that fails in this must receive the entry "Shy on live game". The decision "Reason for failure: dog does not retrieve winged pheasant" is wrong. No doubt, with this, the dog did not pass the test, but it did not grab the pheasant and therefore "Shyness on live game" must be entered. And with that, the dog did not pass the test, but this record is an important statement for breeding.

However, such final decisions can only be made / judged by the Association Judge who is constantly in the field and then also hunts in the area concerned. Those who want to judge natural ability tests in the field (VJP / Derby / HZP / Solms or also the natural ability tests of the Special Breed Clubs) should, if possible, also hunt with their own dog in the field on small game. Only those who experience impressive pointing situations while hunting and who perform difficult searches for wounded

feathered game, will be able to judge a dog correctly in the field. On the other hand, this also applies to the area of hunting hoofed game (driven hunt). Anyone who does not experience this personally and handles their own dog in this type of hunting should not be active as an Association Judge at an Association Search Test (VStP/*Verbandsstöberprüfung*).

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As already said, numerous tests every year, which for the most part run harmoniously and to the satisfaction of all participants, if it were not for the few small problems. My dear friends, these have always existed and will continue to exist in the future, no matter how thoroughly and extensively we define/write our test regulations. In many cases, my personal plea is to make these regulations much shorter and to adjust the flow of the test to the respective hunting situation. Particularly in the last weeks and months I have received many suggestions for changes to the individual Test Regulations, often in connection with the request to change the currently authorized Test Regulations as quickly as possible or to supplement them in some points or to define them more precisely. Ladies and Gentlemen. All test regulations of the JGHV were decided democratically at the Annual Meeting of the JGHV and can also only be changed by a motion at the Annual Meeting. But one thing is certain, every change will bring new problems. Let's first tackle our old problems, learn from our mistakes, think, and act in a more hunting-oriented way, and many a small problem will be solved overnight. So, I would like to list the small problems once briefly and if everyone is then aware of these problems in the future, everything will surely run more harmoniously and in the interest of both hunting and the hunting dog movement.

- We are all in the same boat - Association Judges and handlers and should behave the same way on the day of the test, but sometimes I have the feeling that the ships are heading to different destinations.
- Inadequate and/or poor content of the pre-test meetings with the Test Director.
- Inadequate and/or poor content of the meetings with the judging group in the forest, field or water.
- Inadequate and/or weak content in justifying the predicates / points by the judging group.
- Sometimes little hunting knowledge and behavior in the execution and evaluation of the individual work by the dogs.

Many a problem could be clarified in advance by clear statements and professionally argued reasons for the individual work of the dog. If you know the Test Regulations, stick to them when judging and then use your hunting experience and knowledge when judging and explaining the reasons for your scores, and then you will have satisfied handlers and be well clear of protests and complaints. We need meaningful

test results for hunting and for breeding. We would like to thank all those who have given their time to the hunting dog movement in their spare time and in a voluntary capacity. The headwind for our actions is getting stronger, but if we pursue the same goal together, it will not become a storm.

I wish you all a Merry Christmas, good health and Waidmannsheil.

Josef Westermann

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(translation by Ken Bremer)