

Classes: **Puppy** = Less than or equal to 15 months of age, **Derby** = 15 months and 1 day to 30 months of age, **Gun Dog** (formerly known as Open Class) = 30 months and 1 day or older, **All Age**, **Senior** = 9 years+ (age on the day of the trial)

ALL CHANGES IN RED

1. Registration closes at 9:00 P.M. the Thursday prior to the trial. Do not expect to be able to sign up the day of the trial nor ask a trial chairman for exceptions. **Once reservations are made, the handler is responsible to the club for payment of all reserved runs unless cancelled before birds have been ordered.** Anyone with outstanding "tabs" for unpaid runs due to "no shows" will not be able to compete in any trials until their "tab" has been settled – this included the Winners' Trial. Clubs will not hold or store birds for "no shows". Extenuating circumstances for "no shows" will be reviewed on a case by case basis.
2. All handlers MUST be on the grounds one hour before their assigned starting time and confirm that time with the trial Secretary or the Secretary's appointee one hour prior to their assigned starting time. Handlers with starting times reserved have preference, regardless of the order of their arrival, if checked in with the field marshal one hour before that time. The handler MUST also be the owner or immediate family member of the dog(s) being run and, if requested, proof of ownership must be presented.
3. All dogs MUST be properly vaccinated, kept on lead, and under control, or in a vehicle or crate so as not to distract working dogs in the field. Any dog that should disrupt another dog's hunt may be disqualified if deemed appropriate by the judge.
4. When your number comes up, go into the blind with your dog on a lead. Your gun shall be empty, chamber open and on safe with the barrel in a safe direction at all times. If a gunner is used, the gunner must go into the blind with the handler. You will be instructed when to approach the judge. The judge will tell you when and where you may load your gun, define field boundaries and no shooting zones, and answer any questions you may have prior to beginning your hunt.
5. Each handler shall be entitled to 10 minutes (12 mins for 3 birds) to locate, flush, shoot and pick up his birds. Handlers should carefully consider the location of the gallery, gunners and judge with regard to safety throughout the hunt. If time is called and a dog is NOT actively on point or flushing game, the handler must discontinue the hunt and pick up his dog.
6. No training devices may be used on dogs; including but not limited to check cords, pinch collars, weighted collars, electric or dummy collars, flushing whips and bells.
7. A maximum of 2 shells may be in your gun at any one time, shell size limited to nothing larger than #5 shot. You are allowed only 2 shots per bird.
8. Any handler who so desires may use a gunner. A handler who uses a gunner will have 10% deducted from their final score. Exception: there will be no deduction for children under the age of 18, **or for a non-hunting family member (i.e. a spouse who wants to run a dog but does not shoot or hunt)** Each club's field marshal or person in charge will have the option of review for all other requests for the use of a gunner without being subject to the 10% deduction (i.e. an injury that inhibits shooting safely). The handler must stay at least ten (10) feet behind the dog once a pointer goes on point or when a flushing dog becomes birdie. The gunner must stay with the handler so as to be in a position to make a safe and clear shot. **The Gunner and Handler cannot communicate or work together in any way to control the dog during the run.** The judge shall maintain a safe position between the gallery and the handler.
9. The gunner shall not shoot at birds on the ground, either crippled or running, before flushing. There will be no running in the field with a loaded gun! If you are attempting to flush a running bird, you will not run and will keep gun safety first and foremost in your mind.
10. Spectators will be required to stay in designated areas. All spectators as well as handlers, judges, bird setters, gunners and any other field help must wear hunters orange. We ask that you wear, at the very minimum, a hunter orange vest as required by Ohio law for regular upland hunting.
11. No drinking of alcoholic beverages will be allowed on the trial grounds during a trial.
12. Bitches in season will be allowed to run only after all other doges have completed their runs. **They must be isolated from other dogs until entering the field.**
13. Judges will decide the winners at the conclusion of the trial. Their decisions are final.
14. All member clubs have agreed that gallery gunners will be the option of the individual club, though, they will be required at the Winners' Trial. The handler will call "GALLERY" when the shot is not safe. The judge will then determine if the call was correct. The dog will then get 75-100% of the retrieve at the discretion of the judge. If no other retrieve was made, the judge can call for a (live or dead) bird to determine if the dog will retrieve. If the dog mishandled the first bird, no second bird for the retrieve is necessary.

15. Pointing puppies will not be required to retrieve and no additional credit should be given for those pointing puppies that do retrieve. The word "retrieve" shall be blanked out of the judging sheet, once the bird is flushed judgment is ended, the handler may opt to shoot the bird and have the puppy retrieve but no additional credit is given. Flushing puppies shall be given appropriate credit for retrieving.
16. To qualify for the Winners' Trial, a handler must place his dog at a trial during that season. A dog may qualify in more than one class. On the day of the Winners' Trial, any one dog may be entered in only one class. At a regular trial prior to the Winners' Trial, any one dog may enter 2 classes in one trial for placement, running the more difficult first.
17. Only dogs receiving a placement of 1st, 2nd, 3rd, or 4th in a Memorial Trial or the Winners' Trial may be eligible for "Dog of the Day".
18. At the Winners' Trial, under no circumstances shall any owner/handler be permitted to participate in the capacity of bird setter, gallery gunner or field marshal on the field that he/she is competing in.
19. All trials are subject to rules and regulations of the State of Ohio including laws regarding the possession of a current hunting license while participating in a trial – depending on the club. It is responsibility of the handler to ask if the club requires a current license. It is also the responsibility of the handler to have appropriate leg bands or paperwork, etc. when leaving a trial for legal transportation of any taken birds.

Disqualifications & Gun Safety

20. Abuse of a dog in any manner while participating in a trial or on trial grounds will be cause for immediate disqualification. Judges, trial chairmen or their appointed representatives may impose such a disqualification. You will be advised of the disqualification and asked to leave the trial grounds. Any such disqualification shall remain in effect for one (1) calendar year and shall apply at any trial held by any of the participating clubs during such time frame.
21. Disqualifications for poor and improper sportsmanship: any handler, gunner, spectator, field help, etc. may be disqualified and removed from club grounds for what is deemed as extremely poor and improper conduct and sportsmanship. Such disqualification shall remain in effect for one (1) calendar year and shall apply at any trial held by any of the participating clubs during such time frame. Judges, trial chairmen or their appointed representatives may impose such disqualification. All trial chairmen decisions are final.
22. Handlers and/or gunners who shoot dangerously close to the gallery, handler, judge or any other person or towards/within areas designated as no shooting zones will be disqualified immediately, however, if they were not on their last bird, a gunner may be requested by the handler at the discretion of the judge for a 10% deduction in order to complete the remainder of the run. The disqualification will remain in effect for one (1) calendar year and shall apply to all trials in that time frame hosted by any of the participating clubs. Any person disqualified for a dangerous shot will not be eligible to gun in any capacity for (1) calendar year. Judges, trial chairmen or their appointed representatives may impose such disqualification. ALL TRIAL CHAIRMEN DECISIONS ARE FINAL.
23. Any handler or gunner can be disqualified for lack of gun safety. Disqualification for gun safety shall remain in effect for one (1) calendar year and shall apply to all trials in that time frame hosted by any of the participating clubs. Any person disqualified for gun safety will not be eligible to gun in any capacity for one (1) calendar year. Judges, trial chairmen or their representatives may impose such a disqualification.
24. Any handler who is disqualified three (3) times for improper gun safety shall be disqualified for life from shooting at a hunters' trial or winners' trial event. During their lifetime, a handler who receives 3 disqualifications, one of which is for poor and improper sportsmanship, may be disqualified from participating in hunters' trials and winners' trials for life.
25. Any handler receiving a one (1) year probation for a disqualifying act shall be notified to the best of the club's ability within 72 hours. The one year probation period shall apply at all trials held by any of the participating clubs during such time frame.
26. *The Hunters' Trials are about the camaraderie between sportsman, their love of great dogs and the sport of upland hunting; as well as enjoying the opportunity to participate in such events. GUN SAFETY is of the utmost significance! It is an important part of protecting our right to continue to enjoy these events. Poor gun safety in and/or out of the field at a Hunters' Trial will not be tolerated. Let's make it a safe year!*

JUDGING GUIDELINES for the Hunters' & Winners' Trials

Imagine yourself accompanying someone who is out on a day's hunt with his or her dog. A more desirable dog might be one that requires little or no commands, stays in range nicely, and puts birds in the game bag. A less desirable dog might not obey, runs off and hunts on his own, loses (won't retrieve) or drops birds. A well trained dog will retrieve to hand while others may only retrieve to the handler's feet. A dog needing help remembering a fallen bird is less desirable than one that marks unquestionably well. Remember this is a hunters' trial. Most hunters make one pass through an area and wouldn't consider covering the same area twice. A bird missed on a first pass should score considerably less than one found on a second or third pass. You are at a hunters' trial to show case your dog and the great hunting companion he is. You have 10-12 minutes on a given course with 2-3 birds depending on the trial.

Your dog will be judged based upon the following guidelines:

1. **Desire to hunt:** the dog must seek game with boldness, enthusiasm, and desire. It must look like it's trying to find birds and wants to hunt.
2. **Hunts the Field Correctly:** the dog should cover the field in a thorough and efficient manner, depending on conditions (wind, weather, scenting conditions, etc.). It should hunt at a reasonable distance from the handler, with regard to the breed.
3. **Locates Birds Correctly:** Pointer – the dog should locate, lock on point, and show intensity while on point. It should remain on point and not creep as the handler flushes the bird. Flusher – the dog should boldly locate and flush the bird.
4. **Steady to Wing & Shot (All-Age Class only):** Pointer – the dog should not move forward as the bird flushes. The dog may pivot to mark the bird. It should remain this way during shooting and as the bird falls. It will then be released by command of the handler. Flusher – After a bold flush, the dog should not move forward and must stop motion. The dog may pivot to mark the bird. It should remain this way during shooting and as the bird falls. It will then be released by command of the handler.
5. **Retrieve (not judged for pointing puppies):** the dog must mark the fallen bird well. It should persevere on wounded birds, retrieve, and deliver promptly to hand. The handler should not assist the dog by walking towards or away from the dog. The dog should not chew the bird, and should release the bird to the handler's hand.
6. **Handler Control:** the dog must obey commands from the handler. If commands are used to direct the dog, then the dog should respond with minimal repetition of the commands.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask a chairman or the judge. We look forward to you attending the trials, having a safe and fun hunt – pleased with our dog's performances at the end of the day. With this in mind, please remember that the judges are volunteers and that all of the field help are at the trials volunteering their time – regardless of the weather or length of the day. Please respect them and make sure that they know you appreciate their efforts.

For more information and updates on all of the hunts – go to hunterstrial.com