



Executive Update – March 2019

Report from David Richardson, VP NZGTA

Gun Safety

The Executive has been grappling with the problems of health and safety and legal requirements with the use of firearms at trials. The Police and Department of Labour have made it very clear that they have issues with the NZGTA and how we run our trials. They are very clear with firearm use- to quote....

“ Any unlicensed person using a firearm must be under the direct supervision of a firearms licence holder otherwise they are unlawfully in possession of a firearm. Direct supervision would be similar to a learner driver under supervision and the supervisor should be able to take control of the firearm at any time.”

This means that a judge up a ladder or walking behind a competitor in a ranging event, or a penciller with their nose in a score card, do not qualify as being directly supervising.

The police are also not in favour of pinned guns as, in their opinion, it still qualifies as a firearm as the pins can be removed.

The Executive believes that under the current Health and Safety Regulations the identification of a hazard without acting to minimizing, isolating or eliminating that hazard, runs the risk of prosecution and serious fines.

Below are the types of penalties that could be imposed if we do not act now. These may be on top of police prosecution.

TRIGGERING EVENTS	INDIVIDUAL	OFFICER	COMPANY
Breach with reckless exposure to risk of serious injury/death	Up to \$300,000 and/or five years prison	Up to \$600,000 and/or five years prison	Up to \$3,000,000
Breach with exposure to risk of serious injury or death	Up to \$150,000	Up to \$300,000	Up to \$1,500,000
Breach of duty	Up to \$50,000	Up to \$100,000	Up to \$500,000

The Exec believes there are ways to overcome this problem as detailed below:

- The use of non-firearm devices to make a loud bang (starting pistols, Graeme’s prototype banger, winger zinger primers etc)
- Having an allocated licenced shooter on every peg or ranging event to do the firing of the gun (problems with getting enough helpers could occur in smaller clubs)
- Having the judge fire the shot (if a licence holder) from a starting pistol or similar beside/behind the competitor

The Exec would like to adopt all of these options and encourage clubs to use them while we work through a solution and regulation change. By clubs using these alternatives we will be able to assess which ones work best.

Please send all feedback on this subject to Graeme Palmer at nzgtapresident@gmail.com

In the meantime all clubs must comply with the law and have all firearms under direct supervision of a licenced firearms holder. If you cannot do this then you are in breach of the law and clubs should use one of the options above.

Standing Clear of the Dog

(This went out to triallists last year however the Executive are still seeking more feedback)

The Executive is considering revoking the series of Regulations pertaining to “Stepping Clear of Dog” as defined in the All Breeds - Reg AB 16, Retriever - Reg Ret 7 and Spaniels - Reg Span 16 Heel Retrieve sections of the Rule Book.

Over the last decade or so retrieving trials have evolved into reasonably complex tests with the introduction of multiple birds and long blinds. For these tests to have favourable outcomes the executive believe the need to “step clear” is no longer appropriate and adds nothing to the trial - rather it detracts from and hinders good teamwork between dog and handler.

The regulation is confusing to both handlers and judges, especially when more than one bird is thrown. For instance, can you step back to the dog on the second and subsequent birds and if you do are you going to get penalised by the judge?

When is this “steadiness test” over? Is it over when the birds are released, the shots fired and the birds fall to the ground? Or is it sooner or later?

It is believed this regulation was brought in to test the dog’s steadiness when it is not close to the handler. (There is also some suggestion that in earlier events some handlers used “fish gut” around the dog’s neck to ensure compliance at the pegs)

In a hunting situation stepping clear of your dog is an unnatural movement and quite the opposite of what you would normally do, that is you try and get as close as you can to the dog to allow them to follow the gun/gun foot and give them a line to the downed game.

If this regulation is revoked the Executive considers there are plenty of other areas that “test” rapport and steadiness such as ignoring commands, breaking, fouling, standing off when delivering a bird, clamping etc. All said and done, stepping a pace clear of your dog is not much different than being beside the dog.

With the current gun issue and possible removal of the gun from the handler it will be more important for dog and handler to work as a team.

If you have an opinion or wish to add feedback on this issue please contact Bill Johnsen at johnsen.family@xtra.co.nz

Pre-Novice Junior Training Programme

The scheme is based on the UK Gundog club (see <http://www.thegundogclub.co.uk/?p=1034>) introduced in 2006 and still going strong. We believe it will enable new (and current) members to the NZGTA achieve more success with their dogs both in natural game trialling and pigeon trials

It is a non-competitive (achievement based) and the assessments done by a different person to the trainer

The scheme will reward dogs that achieve the various levels to be awarded a certificate and a title beside the dog’s name on their pedigree. (Field trial beginner bronze FTBB, Field Trial Beginner silver FTBS, and Field trial Beginner gold,

Assessors will be trained in the correct level of achievement

An outline of the activities is now posted on the NZGTA website. Marking criteria and details of training will be sent to interested parties

Dogs who pass this pre-novice programme will earn the title behind the dogs pedigree

FTBB (Field trial beginner bronze) suffix (grade 1)

FTBS (Field trial beginner silver) suffix (grade 2)

FTBG (Field trial beginner gold) suffix (grade 3)

Each suffix will replace the previous suffix when achieved.

For more details see

http://www.nzgta.co.nz/junior_gun_dog_training_scheme.html

Pre Novice Assessors

The executive are looking for expressions of interest from experienced triallists, judges, (current and retired), and obedience judges to become assessors for our new pre-novice level training system. If you are interested in taking a role in assessing these pre-novice dogs and handlers please email davidhallrichardson@gmail.com

New Prefixes and Suffixes

At present, dogs that have won their way through novice, limit and won challenge points have no acknowledgement of their successes achieved unless they win the final challenge required to become a field or field trial champion. The executive has decided to increase the number of suffixes and prefixes to show the dogs successes.

FTN (Field Trial Novice) and FN (Field Novice) suffix

This will be awarded to dogs that have won out of novice class and will replace the FTB gold, silver and bronze awards.

FTN Adv. (Field Trial Novice Advanced) suffix

This will be awarded to dogs that have won out of limit class and will replace the FTN and FN awards.

FTW and FW (Field Trial Winner and Field Winner) prefix

This will be awarded to dogs that have won a challenge point and will replace the FTN Adv award.

FTW and FW will be replaced by the current Prefix FTCH and FCH which is replaced by Prefix GFTCH and GFCH as per existing regulations.

There will be a small cost to cover awards, certificates, and administration. These costs are yet to be determined.

Triallists wanting these awards will have to provide evidence (Xeroxed copies of their winning certificate to the field trial secretary)

For enquiries please email davidhallrichardson@gmail.com

NZVHDA Awards

One of our affiliated clubs, New Zealand Versatile Hunting Dog Association (NZVHDA) runs natural ability tests and Intermediate Hunting Tests with their Hunt Point Retrieve (HPR) breeds (similar to the tests run by NAVHDA in the US) We now have their awards recognized by DOGNZ

NAP1 (Natural Ability Prize 1) suffix top award for dogs under 16 months of age

NAP2 (Natural Ability Prize 2) suffix

NAP3 (Natural Ability Prize 3) suffix

As well as NAP award dogs may also have the following award

IHD1 (Intermediate Hunting Dog Prize 1) suffix top award for dogs 16 months and over

IHD2 (Intermediate Hunting Dog Prize 2) suffix

IHD3 (Intermediate Hunting Dog Prize 3) suffix

Changes to Regulations

Please be aware that there have been changes to the regulations (these are outlined in red print in the latest digital copy of the Regulations (found on the NZGTA website).

All clubs and members should be using these regulations and they are dated Feb 2019.

Do not use the old black book as these are now grossly out of date.

The current rules remain dated Feb 2019.

Note- rather than scrolling through the whole manual just click on the section you want in the contents page.

Changes to the regulations are:

- a. Complete addition of the New Zealand Versatile Hunting Dog Association (NZVHDA) regulations

Explanation: A stand alone association, the NZVHDA is now under the NZGTA governance.

- b. Reg Spaniel Natural Game - Balloting Procedure

Explanation: Decided at a meeting of the representatives of the Working Spaniel and the South Island Working spaniel 2019.

- c. Reg Judges Pointer and Setter – Panel Nomination Procedure

Explanation: Confusion on qualification of Natural Game Judges and Braced Trial Judges. Robyn Gaskin and other North Island Judges consulted on these changes.

- d. Reg Admin 14 - Removal of obstacle reference

Explanation: The original regulation stated “The nature of any obstacle included in a trial must be stated in the schedule” This was a very old regulation that was in the days when retrievers were expected to jump over artificial fences etc. Nowadays it is very difficult to envisage any obstacle on the course and put a list of these in the trial schedule. Dangerous and impractical obstacles are still covered in Retriever, spaniel and P and S regs.

- e. Reg Gen 7 (f) Competitor not presenting when called.

Explanation: Reg Gen 7 (f) was ambiguous in its wording. There has been a change to clarify protocols around a competitor not presenting themselves when called by the steward or judge.

Note:

Judges should not use time allocated for a trial as a way to decide disqualification. This will cause complications if a competitor turns up in the last minute of a 5 min allocation. Judges should call 3 times then disqualify the competitor.

- f. Reg admin 29 Spaniel Natural Game Qualifying Status

Explanation: Working Spaniel clubs consulted and change approved. [A Spaniel Natural Game dog that has reached qualifying status shall be deemed to have won three Spaniel Natural Game Novice trials.](#)

- g. New Judging Regs moved from rule 26 to regulations.

Explanation: Ratified at 2017 AGM.

Shot Show

Morrie Robinson (ex Exec member) organized a NZGTA presence at the 2019 SHOT Show. He had a gundog display set up. If you are unfamiliar with the SHOT show, please see the link to the event website and social media pages:

www.shotexpo.co.nz

<https://www.facebook.com/SHOTExpoNZ/>

The Executive would like to thank Morrie for organising this and all the members, Lindsay and Eugene Clapham, Helen Sansome, Rob Cox, Keith Barber, Helen Macauley-Grant who gave up their valuable dog training time to supervise the exhibit.

This followed on from Morrie organising attendance at the Sika Show last year. It is an excellent way to showcase our sport and get new members.

New Executive Member 2018-2019 Rob Cox

Rob was elected to replace Morrie Robinson who stood down last year. For the benefit of South Islanders and anyone who doesn't know Rob, here is a small c.v. he has submitted.

My first introduction to gundog trialling came about in the early 90's at the Wairoa Gundog Club watching my best friend's father, Rob Gregory compete with his very successful black lab Ollie. While at that stage of my life I was quickly developing an obsession with duck shooting, I hadn't really developed a passion for dogs although I remember thinking that at some point in my life I'd like to give this 'dog trialling thing' a go. Fast forward 15 years and on returning from my 'OE' I saw an ad in a local supermarket for some pups, and for \$150 I purchased Bailey, a lab x spaniel x beagle x fox terrier. I shot a lot of birds over her but she had some massive issues - she was noisy, she wouldn't pick up wounded birds, she was unsteady but I soon realized her biggest issue was the fact she had a rubbish handler and trainer - me. By the time she was six I'd had enough of her antics and I decided to get another pup but this time I would do it

properly. A friend put me in touch with Eugenie and Lindsay Clapham who not only sold me the little black Labrador Oscar but she also gave me a little push by way of a South Auckland Gundog Club (SAGDC) membership form. I suppose the rest is pretty much history. As 'fresh meat' to the SAGDC I was quickly drafted onto the committee and am currently in the privileged position of club president. During the last few years I've put in loads of time training and trialling Oscar and we have certainly had some good moments as a result. My attitude toward hunting has changed as now it's all about the dog work, I don't care about the number of birds anymore, give me one 200m blind retrieve on a wounded bird than a limit bag on an irrigation pond any day of the week.

Being involved in trialling has not only improved my dog and how I train, but it has also taught me some good life lessons and given me some lifelong friendships. I suppose it's fair to say I now have a true passion for dogs and dog trialling and that is why I put my name forward for the Exec. The sport faces numerous issues, with the greatest threat that I can see being dwindling numbers. We have a great product to market, yet numbers seem to be declining year after year and clubs continue to struggle. I'm hopeful that as member of this executive committee I can be part of the team that can not only put a stop to this slide in numbers but help to increase the sport's popularity to where it was in its heyday.

New Judges

The Executive is pleased to announce the following new judges:

Probationary Judges

- Amanda Stewart

Approved Judges

- Helen Sansome - P & S Braced and Natural Game
- Neil Stewart - P & S and Spaniel RFF
- David Wilson - Retriever and Spaniel Heel Retrieve
- Colin Wynn – Spaniel Natural Game
- Lyndsay Clapham – Retriever Walkup and Natural Game
- Graeme Palmer – Retriever Walkup and Natural Game

Star Judges

- Mike Weir –Retriever and Spaniel/All Breeds retrieve events
- Graeme Palmer- Retriever and Spaniel/All Breeds retrieve events
- Tony Conner – Braced Pointer and Setter
- Rob Meredith - Braced Pointer and Setter

Honorary Retired Judges Panel

- Colin Evans
- Erin O'Dea

- Maureen James
- John James

Game Preserves

A comment from Rob Cox

You may or may not be aware that game preserves nationwide are under threat due to a legal issues that have been brought to the attention of Fish and Game. As it stands preserves will have a maximum of three years left to operate, with a law change required if they are to continue. We may be asked to gather support of our membership in the coming months depending on the path this legal action takes, but I thought I'd get members in the loop anyway. Any form of support would likely be in the form of letters, petitions etc, not financial.

Note:

The Executive are currently assessing what form of support we will give to this problem. Any correspondence or comment are to be directed to Rob Cox at rob@in-depth.co.nz or 0272389006.

Please refrain from comment on facebook or sending out mass emails as this can spread disinformation which is unhelpful.

Unregistered Dogs

We have had some constructive feedback on the changes allowing unregistered dogs to compete in field trials. We are still wanting more comments so that we can further develop the direction to take. If you have not had your say please send you comments to Neville Alexander at nevillealexander@rocketmail.com

Proposed changes to Regulation Admin 18

- (b) A (new triallist/new competitor) with their first and only unregistered trialling dog may enter any club championship event. Any subsequent dog handled and owned by that competitor must be registered with the NZKC.
- (c) Any unregistered dog must be clearly recognized as a gundog breed and crossbreeds will not be eligible to compete.
- (d) No unregistered dog is eligible to be awarded a challenge point.
- (e) No unregistered dog will be eligible to compete in a NZ or Island championship event, with the exception of Limit, Novice and Puppy events.

- (f) Unregistered dogs will not be eligible for the following trophies:
Bruce Brady Memorial Trophy for Retriever of the Year
John Gaskin Memorial Trophy for Game Trial Dog of the Year.
Gordon Clarke Trophy for All Breeds Dog of the Year.
- (g) In any event where a ballot is required, registered dogs will have preference over unregistered dogs entered for that event.
- (h) In a club championship event an unregistered dog is eligible to be awarded a place.

NZGTA Calendar

The Executive would like to express a huge thank you to Helen Brittan for the fabulous 2019 calendar. Helen showed her talent, skills and use of her own time travelling to trials to take photos -all at her own expense. Sales have earned the NZGTA over \$500 –a fantastic generous effort.

We are all looking forward to the 2020 edition.

Thank you Helen!

Life Members

At the 2018 AGM the Executive awarded life memberships to Terry and Maree Wilson and Paul O'Connor. These folk have given the sport a life time of support to the sport of gundog trialling, both in competing and judging. Terry, Marie and Paul, we thank you for your contribution