

## **RETRIEVING TRIALS**

**A Retrieving Trial** is an event at which competition for the working of registered Gundogs are conducted, both on land and in or through water, to determine their relative merits in the field under conditions which emulate as closely as possible those which would be found whilst shooting, but at the same time bring the work of each dog within the ambit of equality where assessment may be fairly made.

Sanctioned competitions are open to all breeds of Gundogs. Labrador Retrievers both dominate and excel at Retrieving Trials. These events are usually only advertised by way of a schedule in newsletters of Clubs conducting these trials. Dates are published monthly in "VICDOG" magazine, sent to all Victorian Canine Association Inc. members.

It is necessary, with few exceptions, for a competitor at a Retrieving Trial to hold a current Shooter's Licence to be eligible to handle a dog at these competitions. A firearm is used and blank cartridges are fired. The gun must be carried by the handler at all times whilst the dog is doing a run. Some leniency may be given to handlers in Beginners' Tests by having a Gun Steward fire the gun for them. However, eventually if progress is to be made in the sport a Shooter's Licence will be essential.

Note:- Membership of the Victorian Canine Association Inc. is recognised as a legitimate reason for the purpose of obtaining a Shooter's Licence if in the course of training or trialing registered Gundogs.

The Firearms Regulations Act in part states:-

Section 20 (1) Prescribed purpose for applying for a longarm and general category handgun licence:-

(1) For the purpose of Section 10 (1) (e) of the Act, a category A longarm licence may be issued:-

(a) For the purpose of training and trialing, with a shotgun, of gundogs registered with a club or association which undertakes the training and trialing of gundogs and which has been incorporated under the Associations Incorporation Act 1981 etc.

The game to be retrieved at Retrieving Trials is in most instances, pigeons and occasionally rabbits are used. This game is humanely killed before the Trial commences and is dead when retrieved by the dog.

Retrieving Trial Stakes and Tests consists of a number of runs that in turn may require one, two or three items of game to be retrieved in that run. Fifty five points are allotted for each run and places are awarded by highest scores. No qualifying score is required in order to be placed in these Stakes or Tests. However a no score run (disqualifying penalty etc.) would prevent a dog gaining a place or award.

Bitches in oestrus (in season) are not permitted on a Trial site.

Spectators are welcome and you only have to conduct the Trial Manager or a Committee Member of the Club concerned to obtain directions

to the Trial site and other relevant information. On arrival at the Trial site you should inquire about areas where you can exercise your dog if you have brought it with you. Remember your dog must be on a lead at all other times. Use this opportunity to socialise your young dogs with other dogs and people and the activity that goes on at Retrieving Trials in general. You must however view the competition from the designated spectator area as directed by the officiating Judge at the particular run that is in progress.

Note: Rules for the Conduct of Retrieving Trails for Gundogs are available from the Victorian Canine Association Inc. office at K.C.C. Park, 655 Westernport Highway, SKYE 3977. (or Locked Bag K9, CRANBOURNE 3977) Phone (03)9788 2500

### **RETRIEVING TRIALS STAKES AND TESTS**

**BEGINNERS' TESTS-** Beginners' Tests are provided for dogs that have not been place 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in any Stake or have never won any other Beginners' Test. These Tests consist of two single mark retrieves. One retrieve to include water, and one retrieve to be on land.

**NOVICE STAKE-** is for dogs that have not won any stake other than two Novice Stakes. This stake consists of three or four single mark retrieves and to include land and water. The length of the retrieve is not to exceed 100 metres.

**RESTRICTED STAKE:** is for dogs that have not won three Restricted Stakes or an All Age Stake or have placed 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> in a Championship Stake. There is no qualification required to compete in a Restricted Stake. This Stake consists of not less than three runs which in turn may require one, two, or three items of game to be retrieved in each run. Runs are to consist of land and water retrieves, and must include one blind retrieve (A blind retrieve is one where the dog cannot see the game placed or cast. It is a test of control in order to retrieve that game.) Retrieves can be up to a maximum of 150 metres in length.

**ALL AGE STAKE-** is for dogs that have qualified by having won a Novice Stake or having been placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in a Restricted Stake. This Stake consists of not less than three runs which in turn may require one, two or three items of game to be retrieved in each run. Runs are to consist of land and water retrieves and must include a blind retrieve and the dog is to be tested for steadiness from behind a hide. Retrieves can be up to a maximum of 150 metres in length.

**CHAMPIONSHIP STAKE-** is for dogs that have qualified by having won a Restricted Stake or having been placed 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> in an All Age Stake. This Stake consists of not less than four runs and requires a minimum of 9 items of game to be retrieved. All other relevant conditions that apply to All Age Stakes also apply to a Championship Stake.

**NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP STAKE-** is the ultimate competition for retrieving. Qualifications to compete in this Stake are the same for the State Championship Stake. One National Championship Stake is conducted annually. This even is rotated annually around all Australian States since 1969 with the exception of the Northern Territory. In this Stake eight runs are required and a minimum of seventeen items of game are to be retrieved. In recent times this Stake has been conducted over three days with two to three Judges officiating.

#### **AWARDS AND TITLES FOR RETRIEVING**

**QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE (O.C.)** A Qualifying Certificate is not a prize or title but may be awarded at the discretion of the Judge in any Stake consisting of at least three runs to dogs that have completed the Stake to the Judge's satisfaction., having shown that they are under reasonable control and not "Hard Mouthed" or "Gun Shy".

**CERTIFICATE OF MERIT (C.M.)** A Certificate of Merit may be awarded at the discretion of the Judge to dogs in All Age Stakes provided the dogs have completed the Stake and in the opinion of the Judge, have acquitted themselves with exceptional merit in all runs. The letters C.M. may be added after the registered name of the dog. There is no limit to the number of these Certificates a dog can gain. They are however very hard to achieve and very few are awarded.

**DIPLOMA OF MERIT (D.M.)** This Certificate can only be awarded at Championship Stakes and requires exceptional quality of work by the dog in all runs. The letters D.M. may be added after the registered name of the dog.

**NOVICE RETRIEVING DOG (N.R.D.)** A Novice Retrieving Dog title is gained by a dog winning three Novice Stakes or one Restricted Stake. The title N.R.D. may be added after the registered name of the dog. An N.R.D. titled dog is no longer eligible to compete in Novice Stakes.

**RESTRICTED RETRIEVING DOG (R.R.D.)** A Restricted Retrieving Dog title is gained by a dog winning three Restricted Stakes or one All Age Stake. The title R.R.D. may be added after the registered name of the dog. If the dog gaining this title (R.R.D.) has the title N.R.D. then the latter is deleted from the registered name of the dog. An R.R.D. titled dog is no longer eligible to compete in Restricted Stakes.

**ALL AGE RETRIEVING DOG (A.A.R.D.)** May be awarded to those dogs that have completed ten All Age Stakes judged by at least three different Judges. Once a dog has been granted the title of A.A.R.D. it can only compete in All Age or Championship Stakes.

**RETRIEVING TRIAL CHAMPION (R.T. CH.)** A Retrieving Trial Champion title is gained by a dog accumulating twelve Championship points. An All Age Stake win gains 6 points. A Championship Stake win gains 12 points and second place 6 points. No other championship points are allocated. If a dog gaining this title already has an N.R.D. or R.R.D. then these titles are deleted and the title Retrieving Trial Champion is added to the registered name of the dog.

**NATIONAL RETRIEVING TRIAL CHAMPION (NAT. R.T. CH.)** To gain this title a dog must win a National Retrieving Trial Championship Stake. If the dog winning this Stake already has the title of Retrieving Trial Champion then the word National is added to the registered name of the dog.

**GRAND RETRIEVING TRIAL CHAMPION (GR. R.T. CH.)** May be awarded to a dog that has accumulated 120 championship points, of which not less than 12 have been gained in Championship Stakes.

### **FIELD TRIALS FOR SPANIELS AND RETRIEVERS**

Field Trials are competitions for Gundogs that are conducted in the field under natural hunting and shooting conditions. If you do not hunt game and shoot over your dog, then in all fairness Field Trials are not for you.

Competing dogs must be registered Spaniels or Retrievers.

It is worthy to note that desexed dogs are permitted to compete in both Field Trials and Retrieving Trials. At Field Trials the dogs are run in pairs and two separate rounds. A draw is made for each round to determine pairs and their running order.

Handlers are required (where possible or permissible) to shoot game found by their competing dog in order to gain a retrieve in the field. It is essential that handlers have a current Shooters Licence because without it you will not be permitted to handle a dog at a Field Trial. A Game Licence would be an advantage, but not strictly essential for Spaniel and Retriever Field Trials, as the majority of game found at these trials are rabbits (vermin). However quail can be found and points are gained for finding this game in a Field Trial at any time of the year. At a Field Trial held within the open season for quail the handler of a dog finding quail could shoot this game to gain a retrieve provided they had a current Game Licence. It is important to note that State Shooting and Game Laws apply to all Field Trials. These Laws must be adhered to and be strictly enforced.

### **FIELD TRIAL STAKES**

**NOVICE STAKE** Is for dogs which have not gained more than four (4) championship points. Championship points may be awarded as follows:-  
First place – 2 points, Second place – 1 point

**OPEN STAKE** Is a Stake open to all Spaniel and Retriever breeds without restriction to age or previous performance or membership qualifications of the owner. Championship points may be awarded as follows:-  
First place – 5 points, Second place – 3 points

**CHAMPIONSHIP STAKE** Is a Stake confined to dogs which have gained at least one (1) championship point in other Stakes. Championship points may be awarded as follows:-  
First place – 10 points, Second place – 5 points

**NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP STAKE** Requires the same qualifications as a (State) Championship Stake. The championship points awarded are the same.

**OTHER STAKES** May be conducted that are limited to breed or breeds (Spaniels or Retrievers) eg. A Novice Stake for Retrievers only. No championship points are awarded at these Stakes.

**Note:-** One set of Rules apply at Field Trials for Spaniels and Retrievers regardless of lowest to highest levels of Stakes conducted.

Unlike Retrieving Trials there is no inbuilt standard within the rules that can be set by Judges for the various Stakes. Only Judges can insist on a level **of** working quality that they may desire the competing dogs to produce.

### **AWARDS AND TITLES FOR FIELD TRIALS**

**QUALIFYING CERTIFICATE (Q.C.)** A Qualifying Certificate may be awarded at the discretion of the Judge to a dog if it has shown that it is not gun-shy, face covert, retrieve game tenderly, steadiness not being essential. The letters Q.C. cannot be used as part of a dog's registered name.

**CERTIFICATE OF MERIT (C.M.)** A Certificate of Merit may be awarded at the discretion of the Judge to dogs in an Open Stake for outstanding work during the Trial. The letters C.M. may be added after the registered name of the dog.

**DIPLOMA OF MERIT (D.M.)** A Diploma of Merit may be awarded at the discretion of the Judge to dogs for outstanding merit in a Championship Stake. The letters D.M. may be added after the registered name of the dog.

**NOVICE FIELD DOG (N.F.D.)** A Novice Field Dog title may be awarded to a dog which is no longer eligible to compete in Novice Stakes because of wins in Novice or wins or placings in higher Stakes. The title N.F.D. may be added after the registered name of the dog.

**FIELD TRIAL CHAMPION (F.T. CH.)** A Field Trial Champion title is gained by a dog accumulating ten (10) Championship Points. A full five points must be won in at least one Stake. If a dog gaining this title already has the title N.F.D. then this title is deleted and the title of Field Trial Champion is added to the registered name of the dog.

**NATIONAL FIELD TRIAL CHAMPION (NAT. F.T. CH.)** To gain this title a dog must win a National Field Trial Championship Stake. If the dog winning this Stake already has the title of Field Trial Champion then the word National is added to the registered name of the dog.

### **TITLES**

All titles gained by a dog no matter how minor they may be should be claimed by the owner of that dog and appear with the dog's name wherever it is used. A dog gaining a title or award has achieved something in that discipline regardless of the degree of importance or effort required to gain it. Titles are a part of the history of that dog and of the Labrador Retriever breed in general. Please aspire to gain them and then be proud to use them whenever your dog's name appears.

### **ANNUAL TROPHIES AND AWARDS**

The Club present a number of Annual Trophies and Awards that can be won by financial members of the Club. In addition Club Spoons are awarded to owners gaining titles throughout the year in Retrieving, Field, and Obedience Trials and Show Sashes are awarded to owners of dogs gaining titles of Dual Champion, Tri Champion, Grand Champion, Utility Dog and Obedience Champion. There is an annual trophy awarded to the owner of the highest scoring Labrador Retriever in the Obedience Trial conducted at the Melbourne Royal Show. Also in addition a number of sashes are donated to the Victorian Canine Association and various Clubs during the year that conduct Shows and Trials. These sashes can be won by non-members of the Club.

**ROBERTSHORE PANTHER TROPHY** For dog competing in both Field Trials and Retrieving Trials, and having gained points in both disciplines.

**ROSEMORR RAJAH TROPHY** For dogs gaining points in Field Trials or Retrieving Trials. Dogs to be no older than two years at the time of gaining points.

**BRAMDEN ELIZABETH TROPHY** For dogs gaining points in both specified Show and or Field Trial or Retrieving Trials.

**WOAMBRA TROPHY** For dogs gaining points in Obedience Trials.

**JANVALLI TROPHY** For dogs gaining points at Championship Shows.

**HILDA LASCELLES TROPHY** Presented to the owner of the Best Exhibit at the Championship Show conducted by the Labrador Retriever Club of Vic. Inc.

### **GUNDOG WORKING TEST**

These Tests are conducted to encourage further participation in Retrieving Trial competition. A starting pistol is fired during the retrieving exercise, however a shooter's licence is not required. All exercises are conducted with the dog off lead.

**NOVICE TEST** consists of four exercises. A walk at heel of about 20 metres, a recall of about 25 metres, a stop on recall of about 40 metres, and a single mark retrieve of about 50 metres, (Land or Water). In this retrieve the object to be retrieved is a dummy cast from concealed cover so as the dog and handler can see the flight and fall. The handler fires a shot with a starting pistol at the dummy as it is in the air and at the apex of the cast.

**OPEN TEST** is very similar to the Novice Test with the exceptions of a minute wait on the stop on recall exercise and the retrieve consisting of a double mark retrieve, (Land or Water). In this exercise two dummies are cast and shot separately and must be retrieved separately.

The four exercises in these tests are judged over 100 points. A pass consists of 75% overall with a minimum of 50% score in each of the four exercises. Two Novice Test wins or one Open Test win renders a dog ineligible for participation in Novice class. For Open Test eligibility a dog must have won a Novice Test or have gained three passes. Pass Certificates are issued to dogs that qualify.