

Retriever Instinct Test

This test is designed to evaluate the natural hunting and retrieving abilities of mixed breeds. The dogs are not expected to have been trained to hunt. The tests are designed to demonstrate these natural abilities of retrievers: marking and memory of falls, intelligence, attention, style, nose, perseverance, desire, retrieving and trainability.

There shall be one Judge experienced in retriever field tests. It is the Judge's responsibility to determine that a dog has satisfactorily completed the tests in order for the dog to receive a Retriever Instinct Certificate (MB-RIC).

The test shall consist of a land portion and a water portion as follows:

Land: The retrieving of two bird-scented canvas, plastic, or rubber bumpers (called a "double") in moderate cover with the bumpers approximately 30-40 yards from the line and at least 90 degrees apart.

Water: The retrieving of two canvas, plastic, or rubber bumpers (also called "ducks") in swimming water as back-to-back singles, with the bumpers or ducks approximately 20-25 yards from the line.

Note: The dog need not retrieve the bumpers to hand, but must deliver them to the area of the line.

No live birds are used for the RIC. No gunshots are required for the RIC.

The line will be clearly marked with a rope or markers of some kind forming a circle. The handler must come to the line quietly with his dog under control at heel. The dog may be kept on leash until sent for the first retrieve.

Land Retrieve

With handler and dog at the line for the land retrieve, the bumpers are thrown one after the other. The Judge may throw the bumpers, or he/she may elect to have another person(s) throw the bumpers to the designated areas.

The handler must stand quietly once the judge has given instructions and the dog has been sent. No voice commands or signals are permitted while the dog is working in the field.

When the dog returns with the first bumper to the line, the handler may pat his leg or speak to the dog by name, telling him to heel, sit, stay etc., as he wishes, with the aim of getting the dog lined up and ready for the second retrieve. The handler may not take the dog by the collar or scruff to pull the dog into position. The handler may touch the dog to focus attention toward

the bumper, but that is all.

Once the dog has returned with the second bumper, the handler may refasten the leash to lead the dog off the line.

Water Retrieve

For each of the water retrieves, the handler may hold the dog until his number is called by the judge.

With the dog and handler at the line for the water retrieves, the first bumper is thrown when the handler indicates to the Judge that he/she is ready. The Judge may throw the bumper, or he/she may elect to have another person throw the bumper into the water.

The dog is to return to the handler and release the bumper as in the Land Retrieve portion of the test.

After the first bumper is retrieved and the handler is ready, the second bumper is thrown. The second bumper should land in the general area of the first one, but it does not have to be in the same spot.

Automatic eliminations occur when:

1. The handler sends his dog before the judge calls the handler's number.
2. Switching, defined as when the dog gives up the hunt after a search, leaves the area and goes for another bumper, or when he drops the bumper he is retrieving and goes for another. (It should not be considered switching if, while on the way to a fall, the dog sees or finds another bumper before he reaches the area of the fall that he started to go to first.)
3. The dog reaches the area of the fall and begins to hunt but stops before finding the bumper and returns to the handler, is called in, or starts for another fall.
4. Recasting, defined as when a dog may become confused as to whether he was actually sent. The dog may run out a few feet, stop, and return to the handler. If the Judge determines that the dog was confused, the Judge may allow the handler to send the dog again without penalty. However, definite refusal to go out indicates a lack of memory, perseverance, and attention and should result elimination. There is a difference between confusion and refusal for lack of memory;
5. Handling, defined as voice commands or signals while the dog is in the field.
6. Manhandling the dog between the bumpers on the land double.

A dog given a passing mark by the Judge in both the land and water portions of the test shall be awarded the title.