



Guidelines for Tracking Test Secretaries

ONE YEAR PRIOR TO TEST

Decide what type of test is to be held (Tracking Dog, Tracking Dog Excellent, Variable Surface Tracking, or a combination), the test date, entry fee(s), number of tracks to be offered, and closing date.

Determine budget for the test including judges, type of awards, hospitality, site, postage and printing of premiums, judging programs and catalogs.

Judges should be selected and invitations extended. As soon as judges reply, the panel should be finalized and confirmation sent to judges. The judging panel may be selected by the club's judges selection committee or by the test secretary, depending the preferences of the individual clubs. Written contracts setting forth terms: date, location, fees, and test secretary/contact information should be mailed out with a signed copy for the judge and a copy to be signed and returned to the club.

If necessary, specialty clubs should obtain written permission from their parent club to hold the event. National, Regional, and Local Specialty clubs have the "option" of opening their tracking tests to all breeds. Specialty clubs may chose either (1) only their own breed, or (2) through the use of a lottery draw, they may allow other breeds to enter their specialty. (See *Tracking Regulations*: Chapter 1, Section 12 for details.) The premium list should indicate which option the specialty club chooses.

TEN MONTHS PRIOR TO TEST

Obtain AKC 1) Application for Show/Trial, 2) Tracking Event Judges' Panel, and 3) Disaster and Emergency Plan forms and envelope addressed to AKC Event Plans in which to submit them, from club secretary. The computer generated corresponding date applications are sent to the club secretary after test records for the previous event have been closed out.

The Application for Show/Trial should be submitted to the AKC for approval at a minimum of 24 weeks prior to *closing date*. The Disaster and Emergency Plan on AKC's form must be completed and submitted with the test date application. Applications submitted prior to 11 months before event will not be accepted. Review and complete all the information listed/asked for on the application including test date, closing date, site, numerical limit, entry fee(s), names of chairman and test secretary. If chairman and test secretary are the same person, complete only the information for test secretary. The test

application must be authorized and signed by a club officer. At this time, no fee is charged by the AKC for the holding of a tracking event.

Copies should be made of all correspondence sent to AKC.

The Judges' Panel should be submitted to the AKC for approval as soon as finalized, no later than 18 weeks prior to the closing date. It may be submitted with the test application. Signed judges' contracts must be received *before* the judging panel is submitted to the AKC.

Check AKC's web site at www@akc.org for instructions on submitting test application, etc. electronically, if desired.

A final contract should be signed with the management of the grounds where the test is to be held, and binder and/or fees paid. Permits should be secured, if applicable.

Liability insurance for the date of the event should be secured/confirmed. The documentation for use of the site and liability insurance should be present during track plotting and test judging.

AKC requires that the club appoint a Tracking Test Chairperson, a Tracking Test Secretary (who may also act as chairperson) and a Tracking Test Committee. The Tracking Test Committee shall be comprised of at least five members of the club, which may include the chairperson and test secretary. Members of the Test Committee should be named in the premium list and may include Head Tracklayer, Hospitality, Equipment, etc. At least five members of the Test Committee must be present throughout the test.

FIVE MONTHS PRIOR TO TEST DATE

The name of the document, i.e. Premium List, Judging Program, Catalog, etc. should be listed at the top and center of the cover and title pages of all documents.

A club's Event Number must be printed in the upper right corner of the cover and title pages of all documents; premium lists, judging programs, entry forms, catalogs, etc.; and should be referenced on all correspondence concerning the event.

Event numbers are found on the Show/Trial Application and computerized approval notices from AKC. The number is comprised as:

- the first four digits are the year of the event
- the next four digits refer to the club number
- the last two numbers refer to the number of events for that club in the current year.

Each event number will correspond to the same event held in the following year.

Compose the Premium List

If the host club is not a member of the AKC, the words "Licensed by the American Kennel Club" must be plainly printed on the title page of the premium.

Print the opening and closing times of the test.

Decide on time and location of draw for entrants, this information must appear on the *first page* of the premium list. The draw must be held within 48 hours of the closing of entries in a public place and open to all interested persons. Directions to the site must be published in the premium list.

List the limit on the number of entries, whether they will be exchanged to accommodate entries in a combination test, and whether other breeds will be accepted for a specialty test in the premium list.

Decide on time and location of draw for tracks, this information must also appear on the *first page* of the premium list. Local time zones should be noted for out-of-town entrants as well as for tests that fall within daylight savings time changes. The draw is customarily held 15 minutes before the first track is scheduled to run. Consult the judges and an almanac if you don't know the time of sunrise and/or visibility for track laying. Directions to the site of the draw for tracks must also be included in the premium list, as well as directions (and map, if available) to the test site.

If bitches in season will be allowed to participate in the tracking test, this information must appear in the premium list as "BITCHES IN SEASON MAY PARTICIPATE" and you may add "in accordance with AKC Tracking Regulations, Chapter 2, Section 8."

American Kennel Club logo and certification statement must appear on the *first, second, or third page* of the premium list. Obtain copy of logo etc directly from the AKC, Companion Events Department. Certification statement:

Certification

*(Logo) Permission has been granted by the American Kennel Club for the holding of this event under The American Kennel Club rules and regulations.
(Name of Current AKC Secretary), Secretary*

In the premium list, include a list of Officers and Board, the Test Committee, contact information for the Test Secretary (address, telephone, email) and telephone number of another club official in the event that the Test Secretary is unavailable.

List the judges, their AKC judging number and addresses.

List the awards offered and who offered them.

List entry fees, with statement that "50 cent AKC Recording Fee and \$1.50 AKC Event Service Fee is included" and the closing date, time and location. State to whom the entries are to be sent; to whom checks should be made payable; if US funds are required; and if there is a charge for returned checks. Recommended is a statement warning entrants not to send the entries by any method that requires a signature for acceptance, if applicable.

Give exact directions to the site of draw for entries and time, "to determine which dogs will participate. The public is invited." A statement indicating that the test secretary will "give priority to entries for dogs that do not hold a" Tracking Dog/Tracking Dog Excellent/Variable Surface Tracker title shall appear in the premium list. Also state when non-participating alternates' fees will be returned. And say that *cancellation* of entries must be made in writing and received prior to the stated date and time of closing of entries.

If the test is a Tracking Dog test, it is recommended that you include “A written statement (certification) must accompany each entry for a licensed or member tracking test for any which has not previously passed an American Kennel Club TD test.”

And include a warning that “dogs must be on lead at all times on any area of the tracking site.”

Arrangements should be made with a veterinarian and/or a veterinary emergency clinic, should the need arise on the day of the test or in case an out-of-town entrant needs emergency services. The presence of a veterinarian is not required at a tracking test, but a statement indicating whether the veterinarian is “on call” or in attendance should be included. Obtain addresses and telephone numbers of veterinarians, and directions from test site to veterinary clinic, for inclusion in the *Premium List, Judging Program* and *Catalog*.

Required is the following wording: “Exhibitors should follow their veterinarians’ recommendation to assure their dogs are free of internal and external parasites, any communicable diseases, and have appropriate vaccinations.” Additionally, clubs should include any specific local or state health requirements; for example, proof of rabies vaccination.

Check which local motels will accept dogs and print the information in the Premium List and Judging Program, including addresses and telephone numbers.

Entry Form

Layout the header (name of club, event #, day & date, location, entry fee, entry closing, “make check etc payable to”, “Mail entries with fees to: etc”) for the entry form. Contact AKC for most recent version of the Official American Kennel Club Entry Form. You may have to cut and paste to attach the header, and then scan or copy it.

Decide how many premium lists and entry forms are to be printed and make arrangements. You may also send the premium lists and entry forms via email. A computerized format that prevents changes is suggested.

Ensure that arrangements for all equipment necessary for the test have been made. Make sure there are adequate flags of sufficient height so as to be visible to tracklayers in the existing ground cover and for the number of tracks (8-9 per track for TD, 12-15 per track for TDX, plus flags for a spare TD track, and a wire flag for each VST). There should be different colored flags for the successive numbered tracks and cross-tracks so as to eliminate any possibility of error. More than one mallet should be available for TD and TDX tests.

Place orders for trophies and/or ribbons, to be awarded by the club for passing tracks. See Chap. 1, Sec. 11 of the *Tracking Regulations* for ribbon requirements

Notify judges of AKC approval of the test date and judging panel, and if you haven’t already done so, introduce yourself to the judges as Test Secretary and give them the contact information for yourself and the test chairman.

TWO MONTHS PRIOR TO TEST DATE

Send premium lists, no later than four (4) weeks prior to *closing date* if mailed first class, five weeks if mailed other than first class. Mail four (4) copies to the AKC. Also send copies to the judges (2-4), and to other areas judges who certify dogs, and to area clubs who have tracking classes or tests. Anything mailed with a premium list must be previously approved by AKC.

Ground maps, roughly to scale, of the tracking area showing the major features of terrain and boundaries must be provided by the club and sent to the judges about sixty (60) days prior to the tracking test.

Receipt of Entries. Mark each envelope with date of receipt as it arrives. In the event, the entries do not exceed the limit, the entries may listed in the order received, with no draw necessary. As each entry is received, check to be sure that all required information is provided and legible, the entry is signed, the correct entry fee is enclosed, and that the certification (for TD tests) is valid. Begin organizing your catalog by listing all entries & information as it is received. Address envelopes for the judging programs.

Prepare format for the judging program and the catalog.

Some clubs give the judges small gifts of appreciation in addition to their fees.

THREE WEEKS PRIOR TO TEST DATE

An *event material packet* from the AKC should arrive at least three weeks prior to the event date. If it does not, contact Show Operations at AKC. This contains the forms necessary for recording the test information with the AKC.

Close entries, no less than ten (10) days prior to test.

Draw for Entries

Hold draw for entries to determine which dogs will participate in the test, within *48 hours* of the closing of entries. If the advertised limit is not reached, a drawing is optional. The drawing shall be held in a public place, at the date and hour as specified in the premium list, and open to all interested persons. After the advertised limit of entries has been drawn, the remaining entries shall be drawn for a position on the alternates list. The results of the draw shall be made available to the people present at the draw. Do not include entries that have withdrawn in writing (by email is acceptable) *prior to closing* in the draw, judging program, catalog or test report.

Following the draw, the test secretary shall *promptly* contact all entrants, including alternates, and advise them of the outcome. As a courtesy, also notify each judge, of the total number of entries; remind them of the time scheduled for track plotting and where club officials will meet them. The complete list of alternates, whether they accepted or declined, is to be included with the Test Report that is sent to the AKC following the test. This information should be included in the catalog, which shall list all entrants and alternates. Indicate alternates who withdraw prior to the test.

Prepare the Judging Program

Remember to note local time zones for out-of-town entrants as well as for tests that fall within daylight savings time changes. Include club name, type and date of event, name and address of the site, names of the judges and addresses, total number of entries, and individual number of entrant/alternate in the order in which they were drawn (or in the order received when the total entry falls short of the advertised limits), contact information for the test secretary, and another club official (in the event that the test secretary is unavailable), a list of area motels, and a map with directions to the test site. Give names, addresses, telephone numbers and directions to emergency veterinarians. Include statement that a request to withdraw must be received in writing by the test secretary prior to the time of the draw for tracks. As a courtesy, include a reminders regarding dogs being on lead at all times on any area of the tracking site and to please pick up after your dog.

Whether or not the judging program may contain the entrant/alternate information as published in the catalog is open to interpretation. Because the information may be made public at the draw, it is reasonable to assume it may be included in the judging program.

Mail Judging Programs as soon as possible after the draw for entries. A copy of the program shall be mailed to the owner of each entered dog, to each judge and the American Kennel Club no less than seven (7) days prior to the test. Send two copies to the AKC's Event Plans Department at the time it is mailed to exhibitors.

Standard wording should announce change of judge in the judging program or at the tracking test.

*OFFICIAL NOTICE
CHANGE OF JUDGE*

In accordance with Chapter 7, Section 13 of the Rules Applying to Dog Shows, and with American Kennel Club approval the following changes apply.

Class
TDX

Original Judge
Mrs. Ima Judge

New Judge
Mr. Forrest Track

Prepare the Catalog

See Chapter 12 THE CATALOG of the *Rules Applying to Dog Shows* for exact items that must be included. The judging program must be included in the catalog. List breed of dog after catalog number. For Tracking Dog tests, include the name of the certifying judge, judge's number and date of certification, after each entrant. Include only AKC titles (see current list of AKC titles included with your event material packet from AKC). Conventional listing of catalog numbers assigns numerals to each entrant i.e. 1, 2, etc., and lists the alternates as follows: A1, A2, etc. The optional inclusion of OFA and CERF numbers is permissible. Sample wording in the Premium List is: "OFA and CERF information acceptable on entry form". Again as a courtesy, include a statement that dogs shall be on lead at all times. Format may be either the 5 ½"x 98 ½" or 8 ½" x 11" size.

A statement certifying the correctness of the catalog must be included in the first three pages:

I hereby certify to the correctness of the within marked awards and absentees as taken from the judge's books.

Name, Test Secretary

Finalize judge's travel and/or hotel reservations, if applicable.

ONE WEEK PRIOR TO TEST DATE

Check with hospitality chairman to ensure all last minute details are covered and inform the chair of judges' preferences for beverages, etc..

Check with equipment chairman to ensure that equipment will be on site the day of plotting. Have extra roll of surveyor's tape or pins on hand for marking landmarks, track entry and exit routes, etc. Remember to have extra mallet on hand for pounding in flagpoles.

Arrange to have a First Aid kit on hand for small emergencies. Have copies of directions to nearest medical facilities and emergency veterinarian hospital available, in addition to copies of club's Emergency Plan.

Reconfirm with management of grounds where test is to be held to be sure club will have access when needed.

Check with head tracklayer to confirm that all tracklayers are able to lay tracks and what time they should arrive at test site on day of plotting.

If club is providing the last article, make sure there is one for each track. For VST tests, obtain temporary numeral "4"s for use on the last article.

Head tracklayer should instruct tracklayers to bring clipboards, pencil and paper for plotting tracks. Have extra on hand for tracklayers' use. Have Mylar© or waterproof paper on hand in the event of wet weather. And head tracklayer should instruct TDX and VST tracklayers to bring a variety of suitable articles for judges' approval on day of plotting.

Have sufficient copies of the catalog printed: four for AKC, club records, judges, head tracklayer, test secretary, entrants and alternates, tracklayers, and public.

Have on hand, copies of the latest editions of *Rules Applying to Dog Shows*, *Obedience Regulations*, *Tracking Regulations*, and *Guide for Bench Show and Obedience Trial Committees in Dealing with Misconduct* (at least 2 copies: 1 for test committee and 1 for accused)) booklets. These must be available at the site on the day of the test, as must the various forms included in the event material packet mailed to each test secretary.

Obtain Judges' Books with covers and sufficient number of judges' charts plus one extra for number of tracks, per judge. Judges' charts must be 8 ½" x 11", and 4-part. At a combination test there should be separate judges' covers for each event number.

Have Treasurer prepare judges' checks, and check to AKC for the Recording Fees and Event Services Fees based, on number of entries (tracks run).

Have all entries and certifications on site.

Remind the Awards Chairman to bring awards on day of test.

Decide on a means of a communication, i.e. 2-way radios, to be sure tracklayers, poles and entrants are ready when needed on plotting and test days. Have extra batteries on hand, if needed.

Day of Plotting

If needed, arrange for judges' transportation to and from test site.

Check in workers and tracklayers. Head Tracklayer should assign tracks to tracklayers and if club is providing the last article, give them to the tracklayers. Also give VST tracklayers a temporary numeral "4" to use on the last article.

Reconfirm the time each track is to be laid with the judges. (Head Tracklayer.)

Give judges the Judges' Books and charts, and a sheet on which to list the tracklayers and time. You may also give the judges a list of the entries/alternates (in order drawn), with breed, sex, and AKC number, omitting the name of the dog, date of birth, breeders, and owners, etc.

Day of Test

Bring to site: the entries (and certifications), all AKC forms, booklets, and correspondence, and the catalogs, first aid box, etc..

Put up directional and informational signs to the test.

Arrange transportation for judges to and from test site, and if applicable, return to airport, etc upon completion of test.

Check in tracklayers and assign responsibility to have dog/handler teams in vicinity of test when track is ready. (Head tracklayer.)

Arrange for the tracklayers to be dropped off and picked up after laying track. (Head tracklayer.)

Check in exhibitors and alternates. Give them copies of the catalog. Inform them of any changes i.e. change of judge, start time, etc.

Draw for Tracks

Welcome the exhibitors, introduce yourself, the judges, head tracklayer and any other important people. Explain where dogs may be walked, where bitches in season (if permitted) should be walked, location of restrooms, and any site regulations such as no parking along the roads, etc. Indicate where hospitality is located, water for dogs etc.

Ask the exhibitors to verify their dog's names and AKC numbers and notify you of any corrections.

Assemble the participants and, at the specified time, conduct the draw for the order of running (tracks). At least one judge must be present at the draw. The participants shall draw in order according to their catalog numbers. Mark catalog accordingly. Indicate any entries that have withdrawn. Entries not present for the draw should be marked absent if there are alternates present. If there are *no alternates present*, the judges may designate the test secretary to draw for the absent dog(s).

Assign drivers, if needed, to help teams arrive at the start of the tracks on time.

The judges are responsible for seeing that spectators and unauthorized persons remain farther than 50 yards from the starting flag until after the team and judges have moved out of the area of the start. The judges may authorize a member of the test committee to direct the placement of spectators. During VST tests, a "guide" may be appointed to control the gallery.

In the event that one of the judges is injured or otherwise unable to continue judging of a tracking test, the Test Secretary shall select a knowledgeable person to assume that judge's duties.

After test is completed, announce passing teams and hand out awards. Take photos, for club records, of the passing teams as a group with judges, and individually if desired.

Make sure judges have food and beverages available during and after the test. After the test, give them time and privacy to complete their charts. Give each judge a marked copy of the catalog after the last track is run.

When the judges' charts are completed, the judges each keep one copy, the club keeps one copy, one copy goes to the owner/handler, and the original is mailed to AKC. Carbon copies of the Judges' Books shall be made available for examination by the owners and handlers immediately after the tracking test. Before the judges leave, look the books over and be sure they are filled out properly and signed.

Return checks (and certifications), but not entry forms, to any non-participating entrants and alternates, if present.

Give checks from the participants to the Treasurer for deposit.

If others would like to use the fields and or tracks, they must wait until the test is completed (last track judged) before running any dogs.

Before leaving the grounds, be certain the area is clean, picked up, all informational signs are removed and all flagpoles are recovered.

After the Test

Complete the secretary's report and explain any deviations from Premium List and/or Judging Program or any situation that may have interfered with the running of the test. (Check inside cover of Judges' Books for any notations.) Explanations should be given where there have been excusals, disqualifications and where awards have been withheld. Telephone the AKC Tracking Field Representative (same day/evening) and the Assistant Vice President of Companion Events (next business day) to notify them of any unusual occurrences.

The catalog must be properly marked, including corrections, printing errors, absentees, disqualifications and excusals. Keep this catalog for the club's records.

The completed secretary's report, one unmarked and one marked and certified, catalogs (both corrected), judges' books (with marked charts) and full alternate list (whether accepted or declined) (usually included in the catalog) must be sent to the AKC's Show Records Department in time to reach that office within seven (7) days after the test. Make copies of all records, and mail by certified mail, return receipt requested.

The Recording and Event Services fees must be calculated and included with the Test Secretary's Report Form in the envelope provided by the AKC.

Return entry fees (and certifications) to all non-participating alternates and to entrants who withdrew prior to the test and whom an alternate replaced. And as a courtesy, send copies of judges' charts to any entrants who did not receive them after the test (pass or fail).

Send thank you notes to judges and if desired, a copy of the group photo of new titleholders.

Keep copies of entries (and certifications), premium list, judging program, blank catalog, marked catalog, judges' charts, alternate list, and secretary's report form for club records. Entries (and certifications) may be discarded after six months.

The club secretary will receive a processed and closed out report from the AKC Show Plans Department approximately 2-3 months after the event. Keep it with the test records. Included with the "closed out" report from AKC, will be a test application and judging panel for the corresponding date for the next year.

These guidelines were based on the Midwest Tracking Association's "Checklist for Test Secretaries," (March 1991 revision) by Jan Wall, AKC's "The Show/Trial Manual, A Guide for Planning AKC Dog Shows and Obedience Trials (June 1996)", *Rules applying to Dog Shows* (9/2002), *Obedience Regulations* (9/2001), and, of course, *Tracking Regulations* (3/2003). I have expanded and reformatted the information in an attempt to aid test secretaries in organizing a great test. I have included some suggestions which may make the process go smoothly, but which are not required by AKC. Certainly, the advent of the computer has made the whole process much easier.

Jan July, Secretary
Pecatonica Tracking Club, Inc.

©2/27/04 Jan July