



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

Retriever Hunt Test Regulations

Revised 3/2019

GENERAL:

ATCA Retriever Hunt Tests are open to purebred Airedale Terriers. Participation by mixed-breed dogs or breeds other than Airedale Terriers may be granted by the Hunt Test Committee putting on the event. If approved, these breeds may enter For Exhibition Only by paying the full price of the entry. Junior Senior and Master level titles, however, may only be earned by Airedale Terriers.

Bitches in season shall not be eligible for entry in any hunt test and shall not be allowed on the grounds of the tests.

Entry fees paid for a bitch withdrawn because of coming in season, or for a dog withdrawn because of an injury or illness, or for a dog that dies, shall be refunded in full. Prior to paying such a refund, the club may require an appropriate veterinary certificate. In the event a dog is withdrawn for other reasons, the test-giving group is free to formulate its own policy with reference to refunds.

Any dog, that in the opinion of the Event Committee of the ongoing ATCA event, attacks a person or a dog on the ATCA event grounds at any time during the event, resulting in injury, and is believed by that Event Committee to present a hazard to persons or other dogs, shall be disqualified.

Two judges shall judge all tests levels (Junior Senior or Master) or division of a test level. When both judges grant qualifying scores to a dog that has not previously passed a particular test level, the dog will earn the title granted for that test.

Judges shall not enter the Test level or a division of the Test level which they are judging, but may enter different Test level(s), divisions(s) provided there is no interference with the judging assignment. A judge shall not handle a dog in another test level / division until the test level / division that he/she is judging has been completed.

The Hunt Test Committee, in consultation with event judges, shall determine the tests to be given and shall design those tests in order to approximate as nearly as possible the conditions met in true hunting situations. In keeping with this aim, the judges shall design and enhance the tests by utilizing, as naturally as possible, equipment that would be found in a true hunting situation. Judges will have the ultimate responsibility for approving tests they judge.

Hunt Tests shall simulate as nearly as possible the conditions met in hunting situations found in the region of the country that the Test is held.



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

In keeping with the aim of simulated hunting conditions, handlers, judges, workers, and other participants shall be attired as they would be in a hunting environment. Camo or dark clothing shall be worn during Retriever Tests.

Judges shall have the authority to disqualify a dog that is not present within 15 minutes after it is called to run by the judges.

With the exception of dogs participating in workshops, the Test Committee and the judges shall not permit training or disciplining of dogs on any part of the Test grounds during the Test. Further, with the exception of dogs participating in workshops, there shall be no training of dogs on the grounds of the Test within 24 hours of the commencement of the event, or at any time during the event.

With the exception of dogs participating in workshops, dogs on the test grounds shall not wear electronic collars, either dummy or live, during the event. Electronic bark collars are permissible while a dog is contained in a vehicle, kennel or enclosure.

The premium list / entry information for each Test shall specify the type of birds being used for the Tests.

Only break-open 20 to 12-gauge double-barreled shotguns shall be used in Retrieving Tests by gunners. Bird throwers shall use either 22-caliber or 209 primer blank pistols.

Score sheets from all tests may be reviewed by the handlers after the test. Score sheets are the property of the ATCA and shall be turned over to the Event Secretary after the tests.

ENTRIES and MOVE-UPS:

A dog may not be entered in more than one level of a test.

Late entries or “walk ups” may be allowed at the discretion of the Hunt Test Committee, pending availability of resources and time. Such entries will be allowed only if the test scenario has been set up for other entrants at the same level.

Each entry form shall be completed in full.

Running order shall be decided by a drawing and the running order will be posted prior to the test. Dogs handled by the same person shall be separated when possible. Dogs may be run in a different order than drawn if, in the opinion of the judges or test committee, the change will result in a reasonable and desirable savings of time in the conduct of the event.

A dog is not required to earn any title as a prerequisite for earning a higher title. Dogs that are qualifying after the land series will be called back for the water series. Dogs not



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

qualifying in the land series may run the water series after all qualifiers have run, at the discretion of the judges.

After a dog has qualified five times at a single level in the Retriever Test, he may no longer compete at that level.

TITLES:

Junior Hunting Retriever	JHR
Senior Hunting Retriever	SHR
Master Hunting Retriever	MHR

The Retriever Hunting Test:

Dogs are run singly, and the running order shall be decided by a drawing. Dogs handled by the same person shall be separated when possible.

Until called to be tested, a dog shall be kept where it cannot see the location of a fall for another dog, or see the planting or retrieve of a blind. Violation of this rule may cause the dog to be dismissed from the test.

Pheasants, Chukar, quail, or ducks are preferable for use in the test. However, if another bird shall be used, it shall be consistent with hunting in the local area. The Premium List will state the game that may be used. Ducks, if available, are to be used for the water portion of the tests.

In Senior and Master level tests, at least one live flyer should be used unless the use of live ammunition is deemed unsafe in given hunt test situations by the chairs of the Hunt Test Committee; or prohibited by law or policy of the land managing organization at the testing location; or due to other extenuating circumstances.

The judges shall use hidden and/or visible guns.

After birds have been shot, all guns shall remain still and quiet and move their positions only if so instructed by the judges. The judges shall request the Guns to disappear from sight after the bird is down, but they shall not move them to another position to deliberately mislead the dogs in their marking. The judges shall not specify the order in which the birds are to be retrieved.

Unusual Circumstances, "no birds": If unusual and unplanned circumstances occur during the course of a marking test, the judges can ask the handler to handle the dog, or otherwise compensate for the unanticipated occurrence.



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

Each judge should be at liberty to call a "no bird" independently when, in their opinion, a hazard or an element of danger exists, or the test conditions are altered to the point that the test becomes something else.

Handlers must carry bottled water for their dog. Judges will allow handlers to offer the dog water during the test, as long as the water break does not disturb the running of the test.

Marking and Retrieving:

No dog shall be sent to retrieve until ordered to do so by the judges.

On marked retrieves, the dog shall be able to see each bird in the air and as it falls, since marking can only be evaluated when the dog has seen the falls. Many factors contribute to a dog's ability to see and mark the falls; for instance, the background against which the bird is visualized in flight and the light conditions, as well as the height that the birds are thrown or that they fly.

When ordered to retrieve, a dog shall proceed quickly and eagerly to marked falls or in the direction given him by his handler for falls it has not seen. A dog shall not disturb too much cover and shall respond quickly and obediently to any further directions his handler might give to him. In water retrieves, bank running shall be considered a fault and penalized according to the judges' discretion.

In marking situations, a handler may give the dog a line in the direction of the fall, provided that such lining is accomplished briskly and precisely. Intensive lining suggests a weak marking ability and the dog shall be graded low in Marking.

Penalties and NOs:

In Junior, Senior and Master Tests, marking and memory of birds are of primary importance. While dogs may be handled in all three levels of testing, this is undesirable in marking tests and should be utilized only as a last recourse to get a bird out of the field. A dog that goes to the area of the fall, establishes a hunt and finds the bird unaided must be scored appreciably higher than a dog that has to be handled to the bird.

A dog who pays no attention to the many whistles and/or directions by his handler shall be considered weak in response, and unless mitigating circumstances exist in the opinion of the judges, the dog shall be graded low or receive a grade of "0" in Trainability.

In marked retrieves, after the dog has been sent to retrieve, if it: (a) returns to his handler before finding the bird, without having been called in; (b) stops his hunt; or (c) fails to pick the bird up, actually leaving it after finding it; that shall be sufficient cause to grade the dog "0" in Marking or Perseverance.

A dog that fails to find a bird which, in the opinion of the judges, should have been marked and found shall be graded "0" in Marking.



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

Nothing shall be thrown during any of the land or water retrieve elements (Junior, Senior, or Master) to encourage a dog or to direct a dog to a fall. Violation of this provision is to be considered sufficient cause for the dog not to receive a qualifying score.

Every bird retrieved and delivered to the handler must be inspected by one of the judges. Failure to inspect retrieved birds is carelessness, and as an undesirable practice. It is unfair to the dog whose abilities are being evaluated - not only in respect to the question of "hard-mouth," but more particularly, since it may furnish the explanation for a slow pick-up or some other oddity in the dog's pick-up. Any unusual condition of a bird should be brought to the attention of the judges. If birds are being re-used, those that are damaged should not be used again. A dog that renders a bird unfit for human consumption cannot receive a qualifying score, but the judges shall agree that the dog alone was responsible for the damage.

In Senior and Master Hunt Tests, a dog that goes to the area of a fall, hunts, fails to find the bird, and then leaves the area to hunt for another fall, or that drops a bird it is retrieving and goes for another, shall be considered to have switched. A dog that switches shall be scored "0" in Perseverance in Senior and Master Hunt Tests.

A dog that returns to the area of a fall or a blind that it has previously retrieved and establishes another hunt shall be considered to have returned to an old fall. Unless, in the opinion of the judges, there are valid mitigating circumstances, a dog that returns to an old fall shall be scored low in Perseverance and/or Marking.

STANDARDS OF PERFORMANCE - LAND RETRIEVES:

Junior (Land):

Note: All retrieves shall normally be within 60 yards on land.

Dogs shall be tested with two marks.

On consecutive singles from the same retrieving line, the line to the falls should not be less than 90 degrees.

Judges shall instruct the bird throwers to shoot, throw a dead bird, and then shoot again. Judges will indicate that the handler may release the dog by calling the dog's number or other agreed-upon word. Dogs may wear a flat collar while being evaluated and may be brought to the line on a slip lead. Dogs need not be completely steady and may be restrained gently until sent to retrieve.

Dogs may be sent to retrieve more than once on a mark but shall not be sent more than twice.



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

The bird shall be delivered to within reach of the handler. It is not necessary for the Junior dog to deliver to hand.

Senior (Land):

There shall be 2 land marks that shall be a double of no more than 100 yards in length. The birds shall fall in moderate cover.

Dogs shall be steady, but controlled breaks will be permitted.

Birds shall be retrieved to hand.

Dogs shall come to the line off-leash and will remain off-leash until the dog has completed the test and has left the line unless instructed otherwise by the judges.

Senior dogs shall also perform a land blind of no more than 100 yards in length. A dry shot shall be fired in the direction of the hidden bird as the dog comes to the line. The handler shall give the dog a line.

Master (Land):

These shall be finished hunting dogs. This means that on all marks they shall be absolutely steady. No controlled breaks are permitted. Dogs shall be brought to the line off-leash and they shall remain off-leash until the test is completed and the dog is behind the judges.

All retrieves shall be to hand.

There shall be three land marks. This means that a double will be thrown, and when the dog is returning to the handler with its first bird, the third bird will be thrown and shot. Marks shall normally be within 100 yards.

No penalty on marking shall be assessed for handling on the diversion birds in the Master test. Master dogs shall also complete a Land Blind. This shall not exceed 100 yards in length. If this test is run in conjunction with land marks, the blind shall not be run between the two marks, and there shall be at least 45 degrees between either of the outside marks of the three land marks and the line to the bird. The dog shall take a line, stop on the whistle, and take casts. An occasional slipped whistle or cast refusal will not be grounds for disqualification, but if the dog is clearly ignoring its handler and merely stumbles across the bird by accident, it will not qualify.

WATER RETRIEVES:



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

Junior (Water):

All retrieves shall normally be within 50 yards in water.

Junior dogs shall be tested with two water marks.

Judges shall instruct the bird throwers to shoot, throw a dead bird, and then shoot again. The judges will release the handler by calling the dog's number or other agreed-upon word.

Dogs may wear a flat collar while being evaluated and may be brought to the line using a slip lead. Dogs need not be completely steady and may be gently restrained until sent to retrieve.

Dogs may be sent to retrieve more than once on a mark but shall not be sent more than twice.

The bird shall be delivered to the immediate area (within reach) of the handler. It is not necessary for the Junior dog to retrieve to hand.

Senior (Water):

Dogs shall come to the line off-leash and will remain off-leash until the dog has completed the test and has left the line, unless instructed otherwise by the judges.

There shall be two water marks that shall be a double, normally within 100 yards. One of the marks shall be a live flyer.

Dogs shall be steady, but controlled breaks will be permitted. Birds shall be retrieved to hand.

Master (Water):

These shall be finished hunting dogs. This means that on all marks they shall be absolutely steady. No controlled breaks are permitted.

Dogs shall be brought to the line off-leash and they shall remain off-leash until the test is completed and the dog is behind the judges.

All retrieves shall be to hand.

One of the marks shall be a live flyer.

There shall be three water marks. These shall normally be within 100 yards. When delivering the second bird to the handler, a diversion bird will be shot and then retrieved. All birds must be retrieved



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

by the working dog.

Decoys may be used.

STANDARDS FOR GRADING DOGS:

The four abilities of a dog shall be graded on a scale of "0" to "10".

In order to receive a qualifying score, a dog shall acquire a minimum score of 5 on each of the abilities listed on the Evaluation Form / Score Card.

A dog cannot receive a qualifying score unless it has qualified in both the land and water series in its test level.

A dog that switches shall not receive a qualifying score.

The judges shall score the dogs on their natural abilities and their trainability, including:

- Marking (memory)
- Style
- Perseverance / Courage / Hunting
- Trainability (steadiness, control, response, delivery).

Marking: Memory is of paramount importance. The ability to mark does not necessarily imply pinpointing the fall. A dog that misses the fall on the first cast, but recognizes the depth of the area of the fall, stays within it, then quickly and systematically hunts it out, has done both a creditable and intelligent job of marking.

Style: This includes:

1. An alert and obedient attitude.
2. A fast, determined departure.
3. An aggressive search for the fall.
4. A prompt pick-up.
5. A reasonably fast return.

Perseverance / Courage / Hunting: This represents the dog's determination to stick to the job and complete the task at hand — systematically, aggressively and without faltering, to search for and find the bird it has been sent to retrieve. It is also displayed by a willingness to face without hesitation - and repeatedly - rough cover, mud, or other similar conditions which make for tough going.



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

Trainability: This factor is defined as steadiness, control, response, and delivery.



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR JUDGES

The most important element of judging is to have a thorough understanding of the Regulations and to apply them fairly and consistently. Consider the purposes of the three test elements and the levels of Junior, Senior and Master:

- Master tests maintain the quality of the program.
- Senior tests encourage owners to train for advanced work.
- Junior tests encourage people to continue in the program.

When feasible, arrange to be at the grounds at least a day before the event. Work with the Hunt Test Committee to use set-up dogs to design your tests, and always inspect the routes to your falls and blinds for hazards.

Coordinate with the Marshal or Event Chairperson the day before to be sure that the approved and necessary equipment is on hand.

Be at the grounds at least one hour before starting time. Workers and officials should do the same.

Be sure instructions to bird throwers and gunners are clear.

Inform your co-judge if you score a dog zero on any ability. If both judges give the dog a zero in the same ability, the handler must be informed that the dog can no longer qualify.

If a handler is doing something unusual (for example: giving a line to a dog before a bird is thrown, which might indicate weak marking ability) do not hesitate to advise him or her that the actions can adversely affect the dog's scores.

On marked retrieves, the dog should be able to see the birds in the air and as they fall. Marking can only be evaluated when a dog has seen the falls.

Keep in mind that you cannot evaluate the dogs if you cannot see them.

Make sure the gallery is safely positioned with respect to the guns, and their position does not interfere with dogs or handlers. If possible, position the gallery where they can see the dogs work.

Be sure that game is not left lying around the line or grounds. Marshals and judges should keep game out of sight in bags or other containers.

Always use a test dog before the start of every retrieving series. A good test dog:

- Is not entered in your test.
- Can reasonably be expected to complete the test but is not overqualified.



Airedale Terrier Club of America
Hunting and Field Committee

- Accomplishes the test.

Always be aware that on the day of a hunting test, you as a judge do not merely represent yourself as an individual. You represent the entire sport.

Judges decisions are final.