



**MEETING OF THE FIELD TRIALS LIAISON COUNCIL TO BE HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 27 JUNE 2018 AT 10.30 AM IN THE BOARDROOM, THE  
KENNEL CLUB, CLARGES STREET**

**A G E N D A**

**ITEM 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

**ITEM 2. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27  
JUNE 2017**

The Council is requested to approve the minutes of the meeting.  
(Annex A refers)

**ITEM 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING AND  
RESULTS OF RECOMMENDATIONS PASSED TO THE FIELD TRIALS  
COMMITTEE**

The Council is invited to note the results of recommendations from the meeting held on 27 June 2017.  
(Annex B refers)

**ITEM 4. PROPOSALS FROM SOCIETIES**

- a. Guildford Working Gundog Club Mrs D Harrison  
Proposed amendments to Regulations J4.a, J7.i.(1), J(B).2.(b) and K2.(c).(2)

The Club wishes the Council to consider a proposal to amend the above Regulations, as follows:

Regulation J4.a(2):

**TO:**

(2) One-day Open Stakes - maximum ~~42~~ **16**, minimum 10.  
(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

Regulation J7.i.(1):

**TO:**

(1) Retrievers

A First, Second, Third or Fourth in a 24-Dog Open Stake. First, Second or Third in a ~~42-Dog~~ **One-day** Open Stake.

(Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

Regulation J(B).2.(b):

**TO:**

(b) One-day Open Stakes: maximum ~~42~~ **16**, minimum 10.

Regulation K2.(c).(2):

**TO:**

(2) Retrievers

(a) A dog placed first in the Retriever Championship.

(b) A dog which gains two first awards in 24-dog Open Stakes under three different Panel A Judges.

(c) A dog which gains a first award in one 24-dog and one ~~42-dog~~ **One-day** Open Stake under three different Panel A Judges.



(d) A dog which gains a first award in three ~~12-dog~~ **One-day** Open Stakes under three different Panel A Judges.

In a 24-dog Stake there must be no fewer than 20 runners and in a ~~12-dog~~ **One-day** Stake no fewer than 10 runners. For a dog to be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion one of its wins must be in a Stake open to all breeds of Retriever. (Deletion struck through. Insertion in bold.)

Any other necessary consequential amendments to other Regulations not included here should also be made accordingly.

#### Rationale

In light of the challenges of getting runs in Open Retriever Stakes discussed at the Council's meeting in June 2017, it is proposed that the maximum number of permitted competitors in a One-day Open Retriever stake be increased to 16. It should be noted this would be an optional maximum; not a requirement. The onus would still be on the Society hosting the Stake to determine the numbers of competitors based on the likely game situation, as it is in relation to Novice and All Aged stakes, particularly ensuring there will be sufficient game to give the number and type of retrieves suitable for concluding an Open Stake.

- b. The Labrador Retriever Club Mrs H Bradley  
Proposed amendment to Regulation K2. (2) d.  
The Labrador Retriever Club wishes to propose an amendment to Regulation K2.(2) Championship Qualifications as follows:

(d) A dog which gains a first award in three 12-dog Open Stakes under three different Panel A judges.  
In a 24-dog Stake there must be no fewer than 20 runners and in a 12-dog Stake no fewer than 10 runners. For a dog to be entitled to the title of Field Trial Champion one of its wins must be in a Stake open to all breeds of Retriever, **this regulation does not apply to Retriever (Labrador)**  
(Insertion in bold)

#### Rationale

The biggest breed in field trials is the Labrador Retriever and Labrador breed stakes are highly supported by members. Last season a Labrador won its second 2-day Open Labrador Breed stake but under the current Regulations it cannot have the title of FTCh.

Last season draw numbers for some Labrador Retriever club breed stake 2-day Open trials were:

Labrador Retriever Club	169 entries
Yellow Labrador Club	74 entries
West of England Labrador Retriever Club	93 entries
Midland Counties Labrador Retriever Club	137 entries

As it is highly competitive to get a run in a Labrador Retriever breed stake with the number of dogs being entered, let alone the opportunity to win two 2-day Open stakes, the Club would like to see the amendment approved.

- c. Dukeries (Notts) Gundog Club Mrs M Asbury  
Proposed amendment to Regulation J7.f.  
The Club wishes to propose additional wording to the above Regulation whereby any person who enters a Draw/Nomination for a field trial, and is drawn as a Reserve, will be liable for the loss of the full entry fee if they decline the offer of a run within seven days of the trial.

Regulation J7.f.



**TO:**

**Any person drawn as a reserve in a field trial, shall be liable for the loss of the full entry fee if they do not inform the relevant club secretary that they cannot take up a run if offered, within seven days of the trial.**

(Insertion in bold)

Rationale:

It is intended that this provision would encourage competitors to notify Field Trial Secretaries if they are not able to accept a run within seven days of the trial. Secretaries often have to make a great many last minute phone calls to fill a stake. The Club wishes to oblige those competitors who are on the reserve list, and who as yet have not been offered a run, to contact the relevant secretary to advise that will not be available at short notice. Those that fail to do this and are offered a run which they do not accept will lose their entry fee. It is anticipated that this will greatly assist secretaries in filling the stake, often within a very tight time frame, and will minimise the amount of time and effort required for them to do so.

## **ITEM 5. DISCUSSION ITEMS**

- a. Mrs H Bradley and Mr S Cullis  
Declining quality of dogs running in Retriever Field Trials

Mrs Bradley and Mr Cullis request that the Council discuss possible steps to address the declining quality of dogs running in Retriever Field Trials.

The popularity of Retriever field trials has been growing rapidly over recent years. Whilst in general this is welcome it has highlighted some issues that need to be addressed. The main concern is an apparent decline in the quality of dogs running in trials, particularly at Novice level. These concerns are widely shared by clubs, societies and competitors alike, as the situation is having a detrimental impact on the discipline. The main reason for the apparent decline appears to be that many newcomers into field trialling are entering trials without having gained the necessary experience and knowledge to be able to compete effectively in the stakes in which they are entering, and are running dogs which are not fully prepared both in terms of their training and their experience of retrieving game.

Mrs Bradley and Mr Cullis wish the Council to consider a suggestion that a new qualification or 'licence to trial' be introduced for new handlers and dogs which should be gained before entering any Retriever Field Trial. The formulation and implementation of such a qualification would require careful consideration and consultation with clubs and societies. It is therefore suggested that a small working party be appointed to undertake a consultation exercise with those clubs and societies which run Retriever trials, and to submit recommendations for further consideration by the Council at its next meeting, with a view to developing and implementing a workable solution.

- b. The Labrador Retriever Club Mrs H Bradley  
Limit on competing in Novice Stakes

The Labrador Retriever Club wishes the Council to consider placing a limit on the number of retriever Novice stakes in which a dog may run without gaining an award. The objective of such a measure would be to improve the quality of dogs entering novice stakes and to reduce the number of entries.

The Club suggests that regulation amendments be implemented under the terms of which the maximum number of retriever stakes a dog can run in, in its lifetime without gaining a place (second, third or fourth), would be limited to ten.



Record keeping would be self-administered, although records may be checked via the Kennel Club in the event of a complaint being made.

- c. Yorkshire Retriever Field Trial Society Mr A Lord  
Style of handling  
The Society seeks clarification as to whether a judge has the right to enforce his or her style of handling onto a handler, and how the issue may be addressed by the Kennel Club.

Some judges have informed competitors that they may not use a white handkerchief, hat, or white card, or that they cannot use certain commands like "Get Over" or "Leave That" which the Society does not consider to be acceptable, and there are concerns that handlers are being unfairly penalised by judges.

- d. Golden Retriever Club of Northumbria Mrs J Hay  
Judges Assessment Forms  
The Club seeks the views of the Council on the possibility of non-Panel and B Panel judges completing assessment forms on their co-judges if they are not happy with their decision. Over the last few seasons a few non-Panel and B Panel judges have felt intimidated by their senior judges and are concerned that this could lead to their non-progression onto either the B or A Panel.

- e. Midland English Springer Spaniel Society Mr R Proctor  
Spaniel Judges  
The Society would like the Council to discuss the following in relation to Regulation J6.b(2) in relation to the experience of judges and the stakes they should be permitted to judge. It appears some judges are seeking/invited to judge Field Trials of a standard they personally have not achieved.

The Society suggests that:

- a) Non Panel Judges who have not handled a dog to win at least a Novice Stake, may only be permitted to judge Novice stakes in a four Judge system. Having handled a dog to win a Field trial they may Judge on a two judge system.
- b) B Panel judges who have not handled a dog to win an Open stake should be confined to judging Novice stakes and not judge Open stakes.

The Society's suggestion is supported by the English Springer Spaniel Club.

- f. United Retriever Club Mr F Wright  
J Regulation booklet  
The Club wishes to suggest that a copy of the current J regulation booklet should be sent automatically to every field trial panel judge, free of charge.

- g. Guildford Working Gundog Club Mrs D Harrison  
Clarification of Regulation J.7.k  
The Council is requested to clarify the intent and application of the second sentence of Regulation J.7.k in relation to preference in the draw for All Aged stakes. The Regulation reads as follows:

J7.k. All Aged Stakes may be restricted by any conditions determined by the society (See J3.d(2)). In all cases members' dogs should take preference in the draw.

The Club is of the view that the use of 'in all cases' at the opening of the sentence gives rise to potential ambiguity. It is unclear whether this Regulation should be read as stating that members' dogs who do not meet any of the conditions of entry set by the Society will take preference in the draw over non-members' dogs who do meet the conditions of entry set by the Society.



Alternatively, should this Regulation be interpreted and applied as per Regulation J.7.j(1) (order of preference for Open Stakes), in practice the preference in the draw for All Aged stakes would be as follows:

- i. Members' first preference dogs which meet the conditions of entry set by the Society;
- ii. Members' second preference dogs which meet the conditions of entry set by the Society;
- iii. Non-members' first preference dogs which meet the conditions of entry set by the Society;
- iv. Non-members' second preference dogs which meet the conditions of entry set by the Society;
- v. Members' first preference other dogs;
- vi. Members' second preference other dogs;
- vii. Non-members first preference other dogs;
- viii. Non-members second preference other dogs.

h. The Cambridge Field Trial Society  
Errors in draws

Mr K Byron

The Society requests that the council discuss the solution to any error being made by a club in the draw of entries in a field trial, that require either a complete re-draw or an amendment. It suggests that the Kennel Club give definitive advice as to the correct procedure under such circumstances.

Rationale

Occasionally an error in the draw of entries for a trial is identified, for a number of reasons, such as:

- Competitors having been omitted from the draw
- Competitors having two entries in the draw
- Preferences having been mixed up in the draw

This leaves a club the following choices:-

1. To re-draw the entire list of entries.  
This is said to be unfair to competitors who have drawn a run in the first draw, and who may lose that run in the second draw.
2. To amend the draw to exclude the dog that should have been in the second preference draw, and re-draw the second preference dogs.  
This could be considered unfair to the second preference dogs, and calls could still be made for a complete re-draw on the grounds that the first draw was not conducted correctly.

Currently, both methods have been used by clubs identifying an error in a draw.

i. The Cambridge Field Trial Society  
Field Trial Diary

Mr K Byron

The Society requests that the Council discuss the solution to the Kennel Club online Field Trial Diary not being updated regularly enough.

The Society notes that three clubs have open stakes booked on 10, 11 and 12 December 2018. Licences for these trials were issued days before they appeared in the diary. This negates the purpose of the online diary, which is to help Field Trial Secretaries avoid arranging trials on the same dates, making it easier to book guns, judges, beaters and other helpers.

Although the Kennel Club Field Trial desk is available to give updated information on



trial dates, most of the arrangements for Field Trials are made outside working hours when assistance from the Kennel Club is not available.

The Society wishes to suggest that the online diary be updated on a daily basis.

- j. Lincolnshire Gundog Society Ms S Whyte  
Clashing dates

The Society wishes to request that the Kennel Club encourage Spaniel Field Trial secretaries in central England counties to ask keepers for two possible field trial dates for a Novice Stake.

Rationale

Where there is a clash of dates for Novice Stakes, this would allow the secretary who booked in their trial first but whose trial was not as geographically accessibility to competitors, the option to ask the Kennel Club to only offer the other secretary the second date option.

Two novice trials in different but neighbouring counties affects the secretary's ability to securely fill the card especially when one of the trials is better placed for the vast majority of competitors, i.e. near major transport routes.

- k. Northumberland & Durham Labrador Retriever Club Ms S Whyte  
Number of Council meetings

The Council is requested to discuss whether, in order for it to truly represent the trialling community, and to effective at a grassroots level, it should meet twice a year instead of once.

It is suggested that the Council could consider a reduction of size if necessary for cost reasons. Issues regarding finding time in the calendar should also be addressed, as the Club is of the view that more regular meetings will create a better informed and up to date Council, who would then have more opportunity to shape decision making.

- l. Northumberland & Durham Labrador Retriever Club Ms S Whyte  
Incident Book

The Club wishes to suggest that the Kennel Club rename the Incident Book for use by the field trialling community, and that it publish an article on its purpose, giving examples on how and when it can be used.

Rationale

The Club is of the view that many triallers seem to think the only channel for issues, concerns or complaint is via the £35 Kennel Club objection route, and that the word 'incident' from a shooting perspective seems to imply physical harm. It considers that better marketing of the incident book's purpose and its full role at trials could help ensure accusations or concerns, were correctly recorded. It also anticipates that better use of the Incident Book may be helpful in reducing negative comments made via social media.

- m. United Retriever Club Mr F Wright  
Judges contracts

The Club wishes to suggest that a time limit should be imposed on the formal response from judges who have agreed to judge field trials. After agreeing verbally and a written contract being sent, a time limit should be required for returning the signed contract from the judge. The Council is also requested to consider whether a similar time limit should also be imposed in respect of Working Tests.

- n. United Retriever Club Mr F Wright  
Judges opting out of judging contracts



The Council is requested to discuss the situation in respect of judges who, having signed a contract to judge at a trial, subsequently opt out of their agreement in order to take up a run in a field trial. This causes unnecessary complications and issues for field trial secretaries who have to find a judge at very short notice. The Club considers this to be unethical and against the spirit of the contract.

- o. Dukeries (Notts) Gundog Club Mrs M Asbury  
Amendment to Regulation J6.a.(4) Confirmation of judging appointment  
The Club wishes the Council to discuss a suggested amendment to the above Regulation, as follows:

Regulation J6.a.(4)

**TO:**

When confirming an appointment the Society should include the following wording: 'In accepting this invitation you agree to be bound by Kennel Club Rules and Regulations and The Kennel Club Code of Best Practice for Judges. In doing so you also recognise that you are **in good health and have the physical ability to undertake this appointment**. You are obliged to notify us in writing of any change in personal circumstances which will affect your ability to fulfil the appointment. You should also note that we reserve the right to cancel the contract before the date of the appointment if there is a change in your circumstances, which in our reasonable opinion would adversely affect your ability to fulfil the appointment.'

(Insertion in bold)

- p. United Retriever Club Mr F Wright  
Prize Money at Retriever trials  
The Club notes that it appears that some clubs have not increased prize money for many years, whereas the entry fee has in some cases doubled over the last few years. It wishes to suggest that the prize money at retriever field trials should be at least the same value as the entry fee.

- q. The Labrador Retriever Club Mrs H Bradley  
Owners/handlers shooting at a trial  
The Council is requested to discuss the ethical issues involved in an owner/handler accepting a run in a trial, then choosing to shoot at the same trial without withdrawing and getting his wife/partner/friend to run the dog instead of himself.

The Labrador Retriever Club is of the view that this action deprives another person from running a dog and can be argued as giving the handler an unfair advantage. If it is not ethical to judge a partner or a dog previously boarded within 12 months, this surely should be included.

## **ITEM 6. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The Council is invited to note that the next meeting will take place in May 2019. The exact date will be confirmed in due course.

## **ITEM 7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

### **THIS WILL BE TAKEN AT THE CHAIRMAN'S DISCRETION**

Please give at least three weeks advance notice of matters to be raised under 'Any Other Business' as this assists the office if research is required.



## **NOTES:**

1. The Kennel Club will reimburse standard rail fares to all representatives attending the meeting, from their addresses as recorded at the Kennel Club. Claim forms will be available at the meeting.
2. Those resident in Northern Ireland or Scotland may apply in advance for authority to substitute shuttle air travel for standard rail fare, although it is requested that tickets are booked well in advance to take advantage of any reduction in fares.
3. Please give advance notice of matters to be raised under Any Other Business. This assists the Office if research is required. These items are discussed at the discretion of the Council Chairman.
4. Kennel Club Liaison Council Regulations state that the Kennel Club will bear the cost of all reasonable and externally incurred costs connected with a Council, if agreed in advance. Therefore, representatives should apply to the Kennel Club for approval of any costs they may wish to claim prior to the expense being incurred.

## **THE KENNEL CLUB'S MISSION STATEMENT AND STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES**

**'The Kennel Club is the national body which exists to promote the general improvement, health and well-being of all dogs through responsible breeding and ownership' *This is to be achieved through:-***

- **Promoting the Kennel Club as the leading national organisation for referral and advice regarding all canine related matters.**
- **Encouraging the responsible breeding of pedigree dogs.**
- **Encourage the responsible ownership of dogs.**
- **Facilitating the breeding of healthy dogs**
- **Promoting the positive benefits of dogs in society.**
- **Promoting and regulating canine activities and competitions.**
- **Providing opportunities for education and training through Kennel Club led initiatives.**
- **Investing in canine health and welfare.**
- **Engaging with the wider dog owning audience/fraternity.**