



**WORKING GUNDOGS**

**SPANIEL FIELD TRIALS**

**OFFICIAL NATIONAL RULES**

**Revised 2012**

**No. 3**



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These Rules, for the conduct of National Championships, have been compiled by the Discipline Subcommittee, with amendments by the SSAA National Discipline Chairmans' Conference and approved and ratified for printing by the SSAA Inc National Board.

## **SSAA WORKING GUNDOGS**

### **SPANIEL FIELD TRIALS**

#### **NATIONAL RULES**

**Revised 2012  
No. 3**

#### **SECTION 1: AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

##### **1.1 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 1.1.1** To conduct Spaniel Field Trials according to the Official Rules for competition to make awards and issue certificates that recognise excellence in the field.
- 1.1.2** To conduct Spaniel field trials that are as near as possible to a normal day's shooting.

#### **SECTION 2: SSAA STANDARD RULES**

Note: In this SSAA Working Gundogs Spaniel Rule Book the term "Range Officer" shall refer to "Trial Manager" ; "firing range", "firing line" and "range" shall refer to "trial site" ; "Target scorer" shall refer to "Judge" ; and "shooting competitions" shall refer to "trials".

##### **2.1 COMPETITOR'S ELIGIBILITY**

A competitor who competes in a National Championship must be a financial member of the Sporting Shooters Association of Australia or an Association affiliated with the SSAA Inc or under special invitation from the SSAA Inc National Board.

A current SSAA membership card or official documentation from the SSAA National Membership Office or a SSAA State or Territory Association showing current membership details shall be accepted as proof of their financial membership, providing they are not under suspension from membership.

Members of Affiliated Associations must provide adequate documentation of their current membership of the Affiliate Association.

Any person who is unfinancial or is unable to provide proof of their financial status may pay their full membership fee for the applicable SSAA State or Territory Association, to the host Branch / Club, providing they are not under a suspension from membership.

## **2.2 JUNIOR COMPETITORS**

A SSAA junior member is any member under the age of 18 years at the commencement of the Championships.

A Junior competitor in a National Championship shall pay no more than one half of the standard adult entry fee.

If the Discipline's National Championship includes Graded and / or Junior categories, a Junior competitor is eligible to compete for Junior, Grade and Open medals and awards. The winning of a Junior medal or award does not preclude a Junior competitor from winning any other category of medal or award.

Junior competitors are divided into two classes

- Under 15 years
- Under 18 years and 15 years and over

## **2.3 STUCK LIVE ROUND: MANDATORY RULE**

In the event of a malfunction which results in a stuck live round which cannot be simply removed from the breach end of the barrel, the firearm is to be made safe and removed from the range to a competent person for repairs. Under no circumstance is an attempt to be made to remove the round by insertion of a cleaning rod or similar object from the muzzle end of the firearm.

## **2.4 COMPETITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY**

### **2.4.1 Competitors to be familiar with the Rules**

Competitors should be familiar with the Rules pertaining to National Championships.

#### **2.4.2 Sportsmanship**

Competitors shall behave in a sportsman like manner as befitting membership of the SSAA.

#### **2.4.3 Behaviour**

Competitors should refrain from boisterous conduct on the firing range during the conduct of an event. A competitor failing to observe this fact will be disciplined by the Range Officer. In the event of boisterous or unsportsmanlike behaviour by a competitor the Range Officer shall caution the offender once, and, if there is any repetition of the conduct, the competitor may be asked to immediately leave the firing line and may also be disqualified.

Any disqualification made under this Rule may be appealable under the procedure set down in Section 2.7 of these Rules.

#### **2.4.4 Range Safety Rules**

All competitors should familiarise themselves with the usual safety precautions observed on SSAA ranges as well as any Rules specific to the range on which a particular championship is being conducted. Unsafe practices by a competitor on a SSAA range can be grounds for disqualification.

#### **2.4.5 Safety Equipment**

It is strongly recommended that ear and eye protection be worn at all times by persons who are in the vicinity of the firing line whilst shooting is underway.

It is recommended that suitable clothing, including enclosed shoes or boots, be worn at all times by a competitor whilst engaged in the competition and in the vicinity of the firing line.

A competitor may wear medical equipment which may be seen as giving support if a medical certificate confirming the competitor's need to wear such a device for health reasons is submitted to the National Discipline Chairman and or Discipline Subcommittee for approval prior to the commencement of the competition.

### **2.5 RULE INFRINGEMENTS**

A competitor found to be infringing these Rules will be given a warning by the Range Officer. If the infringement continues the competitor may be suspended may be suspended or disqualified from the competition being contested and their scores will not be recorded.

Safety infringements or breaches may result in immediate suspension or disqualification.

## **2.6 DISCIPLINE CHAIRMAN'S AUTHORITY**

The Discipline's Chairman shall have the power to direct the Host Branch / Club in the manner in which the Championships are to be conducted, and shall have the right to interpret the Rules and requirements to ensure the Championships are conducted in an acceptable and uniform manner.

## **2.7 PROTEST AND APPEALS COMMITTEE**

The rules for the Protest and Appeals Committee are common to all SSAA Disciplines and form part of each Discipline's rulebook. The rules are as follows:

**Note:** In the Protest and Appeals Committee of the Official Rules for Competition and Medal Awards of the Working Gundogs Association of Australia (SSAA) the term Trial Manager or Judge is interchangeable with or replaces the term Range Officer.

**2.7.1** At all registered tournaments there shall be a Protest and Appeals Committee (hereinafter called "Appeals Committee") which shall be formed by the National Discipline Chairman or their appointed nominee to hear and decide protests and appeals.

**2.7.2** The Appeals Committee shall consist of a minimum of three people, including the National Discipline Chairman, any one of whom may be a competitor. The National Discipline Chairman or their appointed nominee will chair the Appeals Committee. But in no case shall an appellant or protester be included as a member of the Appeals Committee (notwithstanding any Rule or Rules of law to the contrary).

In competitions where more than one State is represented a delegate from any of the States represented may be appointed to be a member of the said Committee and such appointments shall be at the discretion of the National Discipline Chairman or their appointed nominee.

**2.7.3** A protest may be lodged by any competitor who feels aggrieved by a decision of the Range Officer, the target scorers, or any other organisational matters or methods of conducting the competition. A competitor may protest the conduct of another competitor(s) or that another competitor(s) has not fulfilled his obligations according to these Rules, or has not properly obeyed the Rules.

**2.7.4** The protest must be lodged in writing and accompanied by a fee set by the National Discipline Chairman. If the protest or appeal is upheld, the applicant is to be refunded the amount of the fee. If the protest is disallowed, then the fee shall be forfeited to the organisers conducting the competition.



- 2.7.5** The protest is to be lodged with the Range Officer or other persons nominated by the National Discipline Chairman or their appointed nominee to receive appeals. A protest may be lodged during the conduct of a competition or after the competition has been completed but not later than 30 minutes after the scores for that competition have been announced or posted. When received, the protest or appeal must be given to the Chairman of the Appeals Committee as soon as possible.
- 2.7.6** The Chairman shall convene the Appeals Committee without undue delay and the Appeals Committee shall be empowered to hear evidence from the protester, the appellant and person(s) involved in the protest; to require the Range Officer, Scorers or organisers to produce targets, score sheets or other material relevant to the protest; to call evidence from any other person(s) who may be able to help the Appeals Committee and to do all such other things that the Appeals Committee believes will enable it to reach an unbiased and just decision.
- 2.7.7** Any accused person shall:
- 2.7.7.1 have a right to be heard before the Appeals Committee and to remain in attendance during each session of the Appeals Committee.
  - 2.7.7.2 be advised of the time and place the Appeals Committee shall hear evidence of the protest or appeal.
  - 2.7.7.3 be entitled to remain in attendance before the Appeals Committee until the Appeals Committee adjourns the proceedings to make its decision.
  - 2.7.7.4 be informed of the evidence or allegations made.
  - 2.7.7.5 be supplied the details of verbal or written statements made against that person or persons.
  - 2.7.7.6 be given an opportunity before the Appeals Committee to correct or contradict any accusations or allegations made.
- 2.7.8** Immediately the Appeals Committee has made a decision, the Chairman shall verbally announce it to a gathering of competitors summoned to hear the decision or post the decision on a notice board. The decision of the Appeals Committee shall be final and binding on the matter of the protest and on all persons concerned therein.

Note: Desirably the Appeals Committee proceedings and deliberations should be conducted out of the public gaze and free from distractions of the ongoing competition.

## **2.8 SUPPLEMENTARY EVENTS**

State and Territory Associations or Bodies may devise their own type of shooting competitions and formulate their own Rules for the conduct of supplementary competitions, but in National Championships they will be obliged to abide by the Rules laid down from time to time by the SSAA Inc for the conduct of National Championships.

The conduct of supplementary events shall not in any way infringe on the conduct and completion of the core National events.

## **SECTION 3: SPANIEL TRIALS: A GUIDE FOR JUDGES AND COMPETITORS**

### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

- 3.1.1** A field trial should be run as nearly as possible to an ordinary day's shooting. The purpose of a Field Trial is to assess each dog on that day, previous performances should be disregarded. Two judges will officiate, and two dogs should run simultaneously, one dog under each judge. Dogs should hunt separately, but ideally not too far apart, and only hunt the same ground (or right next to each other) during a run off. In the first round, odd numbers will run under the right-hand judge and, unless eliminated, will run in the second round under the left-hand judge, and vice versa.
- 3.1.2** Before starting a trial, judges should ask the trial manager what the game situation is likely to be, and conduct the trial accordingly.
- 3.1.3** The handlers are expected to shoot over their own dogs, and must conduct themselves in a safe manner. The Judges' decision regarding safety is final, and handlers may be disqualified from the trial if, in the opinion of the judges, they are not conducting themselves in a safe manner.
- 3.1.4** If supporting guns are deemed necessary, it is the responsibility of the trial manager to ensure the safe conduct of said guns. It should be noted that supporting guns might have to comply with judges' requirements, which would override the trial manager's instructions.
- 3.1.5** If a handler is unable to shoot, the judges may approve a nominated gun to shoot for that handler. The handler must go through the motions of aiming and firing a gun if his dog finds and flushes game. If a handler is unable to carry a gun, this must be taken into consideration when judging the dog.

## **3.2 HUNTING**

- 3.2.1** A spaniel should at all times hunt within range of the handler (approx. 20 metres) with good ground treatment. A spaniel's first job is to find and flush game within range of the handler. The direction of the wind has a considerable influence on the way a dog will work ground. With a head-on wind, the dog should quarter the ground systematically left to right and vice versa, making good all likely game-holding cover, but keeping within gunshot of the handler. With a following wind the dog will usually wish to punch well out then work back into the wind towards the handler. Judges should regulate the pace of the line to allow the dog time to do this and make good his ground.
- 3.2.2** A spaniel should have drive and thrust and face cover well, and, at the same time, should be a pleasure to watch. It should show good treatment of ground with the minimum of help from its handler. Noisy handling should be penalised. All things being equal, the stylish dog should be given the credit. Judges should, however, be satisfied that the fast stylish dog is also the best game finder. A good game-finder should be given full credit.
- 3.2.3** Game moved by the presence of the competing dog may be shot and utilised by the Judge in assessing the dog's performance.
- 3.2.4** A dog which catches unshot game may be discarded, unless in the opinion of the Judges there are extenuating circumstances (i.e. kittens, milky does or wounded game).
- 3.2.5** A dog should not be run for an excessive length of time whilst under a Judge. If game is scarce, the Judge may, at his/her discretion, recall the dog at any time to look at any aspect of its work before moving on to the next round or stage of the competition. A dog may be called back as often as required by the Judge.
- 3.2.6** If a Judge wishes to change over his dog the trial manager should discretely inform the co-judge so his competing dog can be halted whilst the change over takes place.
- 3.2.7** A dog must have completed a minimum of one find and retrieve during any round before it can be considered for the awards.

## **3.3 RETRIEVING**

- 3.3.1** A spaniel should stop to game and shot, but if a dog moves a little in order to mark the fall, if this is obscured, the dog should not necessarily be penalised. The dog should remain steady to flush until the Judge instructs the handler to send his dog.
- 3.3.2** Good marking should always be looked for and given credit.

- 3.3.3** If a dog shows ability by acknowledging the fall, or line, and makes a workman-like job of the line, it should not automatically be disqualified from the awards by failing to produce the quarry, provided the Judges have satisfied themselves that the quarry is no longer in the area.
- 3.3.4** A dog should pick up cleanly, return quickly and deliver well up to hand, but if the dog has had a long gruelling hunt up to the time of flushing, this must be taken into consideration. A good game finding dog should not have to rely on the handler to find the game. It should, however, be obedient and should respond to its handler's signals where necessary. Dogs showing ability and initiative in retrieving the quarry should be placed above those that have to be handled to their quarry. If a dog fails on a retrieve it should not necessarily be downgraded. Circumstances such as game going to ground or being lightly pricked need to be taken into consideration when making an assessment of the dog.
- 3.3.5** Once one dog has had game shot over it, the other should wait and remain steady until the first dog has completed its work. If it is the case that game is found and shot simultaneously, then the Judges will instruct which dog will complete the retrieve first; wounded game should be tried for first. No game should be shot whilst dogs are out on a retrieve.
- 3.3.6** If game is shot too close to a dog the retrieve would be of no value to that dog and may be offered to a dog under the other Judge. During the first round of a stake dogs should, whenever possible, have the opportunity to retrieve game shot by their own handler.
- 3.3.7** It is unwise to try more than two dogs on any one retrieve. If both dogs are tried and fail to complete the retrieve, and the Judges are satisfied that the quarry is no longer in the area, the line should continue to move forward. Should any subsequent dog find dead or wounded game, this cannot be considered to be an 'eye-wipe', thus the two dogs should not necessarily be eliminated, but Judges should make a note of their failure.
- 3.3.8** In the case of a blind retrieve, the dog should be taken to within a reasonable distance of the fall, conditions being borne in mind.
- 3.3.9** All game should be examined for 'hard mouth'. There is seldom visible evidence of hardness. One side, or both sides, of the ribs will be crushed. Blowing up the feathers on a bird will not disclose the damage. Place the game on the palm of the hand, breast upwards, head forward, and feel the ribs with finger and thumb, they should be round and firm. If they are caved in or flat this is evidence of 'hard mouth'. Judges must always satisfy themselves that the damage done has been caused by the dog, not by the shot or fall. If there is a suspicion of 'hard mouth' the co-judge must be consulted before a

decision is taken, and in cases of doubt, the benefit should be given to the dog. At times the rump of a strong runner may be gashed and care should be taken here, as it may be the result of a difficult capture.

### **3.4 SCORING**

- 3.4.1** When a dog has been under two Judges and they both agree, and feel certain that this is their best dog, they are quite in order in putting it on one side and running off for the remaining places.
- 3.4.2** Judges are advised to place each dog in a category such as a points system, or A, B & C according to the work done at the end of each run, and usually they will have little difficulty in getting down to the placings. It is advisable to take short notes and not rely on memory.
- 3.4.3** In the case of a run-off, dogs can be divided by running them as a pair. The main consideration should now be style, pace, ground treatment and the dog's response to its handler. The Judges should walk side by side and confer.
- 3.4.4** A Judge should refrain from talking to anyone while the dog is actively competing under him, other than to instruct the handler. From the moment the dog commences its run the Judge should make every effort to keep that dog in view and so place himself when the dog is sent out for a retrieve to enable him to observe every move of the dog until the game is delivered to hand.

### **3.5 SUMMARY OF POINTS**

- 3.5.1 Credit Points:** Natural game-finding ability – Nose – Drive – Marking ability – Style – Control – Quickness in gathering game – Quietness – Retrieving & delivery.

**Major Faults:** Missing game – Blinking – Stealing – Not quartering and making ground good – Not stopping to shot and game – Disturbing ground – Noisy handling – Poor control – Failing to retrieve.

**Eliminating Faults:** Hard mouth – Whining or barking – Running in and chasing – Out of control – Failing to enter water – Deliberately catching.

## **SECTION 4: CONDUCT OF TRIALS**

### **4.1 GENERAL**

- 4.1.1** A field trial is a meeting for the purpose of holding competitions to assess the work of spaniels in the field, working on live game that may

be shot. Trials shall comply with the shooting and game laws of the relevant State or Territory of Australia.

## **4.2 ELIGIBILITY**

**4.2.1** Trials shall be open to any variety of sporting spaniel, of either sex, other than Irish Water Spaniel and L'épagneul Breton (Brittany Spaniel) registered with the (SSAA) Working Gundog Association of Australia.

## **4.3 TYPES OF TRIALS**

**4.3.1** The WGAA may conduct the following events for Spaniel Field trials.

4.3.1.1 National Stake: (to be held not more than once a year)  
A stake in which competing dogs may gain the title of National Field Champion. Dogs may also gain qualifications towards the title of Field Champion.

4.3.1.2 Open Stake: A Stake in which dogs have the opportunity of gaining qualification towards the title of Field Champion.

4.3.1.3 Non-Qualifier: A stake open to all spaniels but which does not give qualification towards Field Champion.

## **4.4 SCHEDULES**

**4.4.1** A branch holding a field trial must issue a schedule which must contain the following, and be sent to interested members.

**4.4.2** The definition of the stake to be held.

**4.4.3** The date and venue of the field trial and details of the time and place of meeting.

**4.4.4** The names of the judges.

**4.4.5** The details of entry fees and of awards offered.

**4.4.6** The latest date for receiving applications for entry.

**4.4.7** The date, time and place of the draw.

**4.4.8** Veterinary support, i.e. the name and telephone number of the nearest veterinary surgeon to the trial venue.

## **4.5 CARDS**

**4.5.1** A branch holding a field trial must publish a card that must include the following:

- The name of the branch.
- The type of stake.
- The date of the trial.
- The names of the judges.
- The name of the trial manager.
- The venue of the trial.
- The awards offered.
- Entries numbered according to the draw and listed as follows:
  - Registered name of dog.
  - Sex of dog.
  - Date of birth of dog.
  - Registered name of sire and dam.
  - Name and address of owner (s).
  - Name of breeder.
- A statement that the field trial is held under the SSAA and WGAA regulations.
- A statement that no person shall revisit the trial venue without express permission from the property owner and the Trial Manager.

## **4.6 AWARDS AND TITLES**

**4.6.1** Championship points awarded for a placing at WGAA national field trials shall be 10 points for first place, 5 points for second place and 3 points for third place. Points awarded for a placing at WGAA open field trials shall be 5 points for first place, 3 points for second place and 1 point for third place. Points are only awarded at the Judge's discretion.

**4.6.2** A dog that obtains a total of 10 points including one first place award with points in WGAA open field trials, or one first place award with points in a WGAA open field trial in conjunction with one second place award in a WGAA national field trial, or wins a national field trial, shall be awarded the title "WGAA Field Champion". F.Ch. shall be added as a prefix to the dog's registered name.

**4.6.3** A dog that wins a national trial shall be entitled to have the initials NFTW (National Field Trial Winner) added as a suffix to its registered name.

**4.6.4** A dog competing in its first two seasons shall be known as a novice dog. An award for Best Novice Dog shall be made at each trial to a novice dog that fills its card to the judges' satisfaction. If a novice dog wins a trial it shall cease to be a novice dog for future trials.

**4.6.5** Before a dog can be awarded its field trial title it must have successfully completed a water test. The object of the test is to prove that the dog will swim and retrieve from water. The retrieve must be a simple marked retrieve of approximately 20 metres, and cold game may be utilised. A qualified judge will oversee a water test, which will be at a chosen venue during the year. Dogs that have successfully completed the exercise shall receive a certificate. If a dog retrieves from water during a trial it can be credited with its water test at the judges' discretion.

## **4.7 JUDGES**

**4.7.1** The Branch Committee holding the trial shall appoint two judges. The committee must be satisfied that those persons being invited to judge have a good practical knowledge of spaniel work.

**4.7.2** Judges may not enter their own dogs in a trial that they are judging.

**4.7.3** Judges shall sign the award placings on the card at the end of the trial.

**4.7.4** Judges are empowered to withhold any awards if, in their opinion, the dogs competing do not show sufficient merit.

**4.7.5** The Judges' decision is final.

## **4.8 DRAW**

**4.8.1** The draw shall take place at a selected venue a week prior to the trial.

**4.8.2** A WGAA representative must be present and any paid up member has the right to be present.

**4.8.3** A competition card will then be printed, and the numbers will stand throughout the trial.

**4.8.4** If a person is handling more than one dog, and that handler's dogs are drawn consecutively, the second dog drawn will automatically go to the next number, thus eliminating a handler from being put in the position of handling two dogs simultaneously.

**4.8.5** Odd numbers shall run under the right-hand judge in the first round of the trial, and, unless eliminated, shall run under the left-hand judge in the second round, and vice versa.



## **4.9 CONTROL OF DOGS, HANDLERS AND GALLERY**

- 4.9.1** A trial manager shall be appointed who shall be responsible for the organisation of the trial on the day. The manager must have with them on the day of the trial a copy of the WGAA Spaniel Field Trials Rules & Regulations.
- 4.9.2** The trial manager shall be responsible for the administration and safety of supporting guns. It must be noted that supporting guns shall comply with the judges' requirements, which may override the trial manager's instructions.
- 4.9.3** The trial manager shall inspect any dog for sexual or other causes that may interfere with the safety of performance of its opponents.
- 4.9.4** Dogs may be assessed at different rates by each of the judges during a trial. The trial manager should be positioned so he can inform the co-judge to halt his competing dog during the change over.
- 4.9.5** No bitches in season may be on the trial ground.
- 4.9.6** Vicious dogs will be asked to leave the trial ground.
- 4.9.7** If any dog is unfit by reason of contagious disease or physical condition, such a dog will be required to be removed immediately from the ground, and from the trial.
- 4.9.8** No competitor may withdraw his dog without permission of the judges or the trial manager.
- 4.9.9** No person shall carry out punitive or harsh handling whilst within the boundaries of the trial.
- 4.9.10** Competitors and spectators attend a field trial at their own risk. The Association takes no responsibility for damage to persons or their property.
- 4.9.11** Current Firearms Licences and Hunting Permits must be shown to the trial manager by all those handling firearms.
- 4.9.12** An opponent's dog must not be interfered with in any way. If, after being cautioned, a handler persists in any such behaviour, the judge may eliminate the offending handler and that handler's dog.

## **SECTION 5: JUDGING TRIALS**

### **5.1 SUMMARY**

- 5.1.1** A Judge must at all times and in all circumstances be capable of

making decisions without reference to any other person, other than his co-judge. The Judge should be capable of assessing the overall work of the dog and handler, arriving at a mark that reflects a balanced overview, and which takes into account both good and bad aspects of the work. The Judge should not mark a dog down harshly for some small infringement, nor mark it well up on one aspect of the run.

- 5.1.2** All aspects must be weighed and balanced and a considered view expressed. The view should be recorded in reasonable notes in the Judge's book.
- 5.1.3** Judges should be honest and unbiased, acting at all times with equality and integrity. Judges should clear their minds of all previous knowledge of the dogs or the handlers, making decisions purely on the work performed on the day. Judges should be courteous to host, handlers and spectators at all times. They should assist the handlers to show their dogs to the best advantage, and they should be positive in their decisions and instructions to the handler. If eliminating a handler, Judges should be capable of stating the reason to the handler without giving offence. Each Judge should, as far as possible, try to keep aware of everything that is happening with their co-judge on the other side of the line.
- 5.1.4** The Judge should be aware of the quantity of game produced by the dog, and, in particular, should mark the fall of game in order to ensure a speedy recovery. Judges should be knowledgeable enough to know if game is dead, and, if not dead, should make every effort to assist in the speedy retrieval of such game. Once the Judges take control of the day, they are in total charge of events; the trial manager's responsibilities lie elsewhere.

**SECTION 6: SCORE SHEET**

Dog No

	Round one	Round two	Round three
Ground Treatment			
Locating Game			
Flushing Game			
Steadiness			
Style & Action			
Location of Shot Game			
Portage & Delivery			
Handling			
Overall performance			

Comments

--

<b>Credit Points</b>	<b>Major Faults</b>	<b>Elimination</b>
<b>Faults</b>		
Natural game finding ability	Missing game	Whining or barking
Nose	Not quartering and not	Running in and chasing
Drive	making ground good	Out of control
Marking ability	Noisy handling	Failing to enter water
Style	Poor control	Deliberately catching game
Control	Not stopping to shot and	Hard mouth
Quickness of gathering	game	
game	Blinking game	
Quietness	Stealing	
Retrieving and delivery	Failing to retrieve	

A score sheet or notes on each dog's performance shall be maintained by the Judge, and an overall score recorded at the end of each round. A Judge must be consistent with whichever scoring method is selected.

## **SECTION 7: RULEBOOK REVIEW**

- 7.1** A rulebook review shall be conducted in accordance with the requirements set by SSAA Inc. Participation in the rulebook review shall be open to spaniel owners who have been actively involved in WGAA spaniel trials.
- 7.2** "Actively involved" means the owner of a spaniel who has competed in or officiated at a WGAA National Discipline spaniel field trial in their home State in the 5 years prior to the review taking place.
- 7.3** An attendance register shall be kept at all WGAA National Discipline spaniel events. This register shall be the responsibility of the host State and shall record all details, including a copy of the catalogue.

## **SECTION 8: DEFINITIONS**

### **8.1. ACTION & STYLE**

These are seen in a fast moving and lively dog, which must also have courage when entering cover. It is an outward sign of keenness and game finding capacity. It should be exciting and a pleasure to watch at all times. Any lethargic movement is contrary to good action and style.

### **8.2. BLIND RETRIEVE**

See Retrieving (8.19).

### **8.3 BLINKING**

A dog that finds and then shows hesitancy or complete refusal to flush or retrieve game. A dog that ignores scents which should be acknowledged.

### **8.4. COVER**

White grass, tussock grass, sword grass, bracken and any thick vegetation likely to hold game.

### **8.5 DELIVERY**

Presentation of retrieved game to the hand.

### **8.6 DOG**

Dog refers to dogs and bitches.

**8.7 DRIVE & THRUST**

See Action & Style - 8.1

**8.8 EYE WIPE**

When a dog fails to retrieve the shot quarry and a second dog is tried on the same retrieve and is successful this is an 'eye wipe'.

**8.9. FIND**

The locating of game by a dog.

**8.10. FLUSH**

The pushing of game out of cover by a dog. Dogs should remain steady to the flush.

**8.11. GAME**

Rabbit, hares and any game bird complying with the shooting and game laws of the relevant State or Territory of Australia.

**8.12 GROUND TREATMENT**

Hunting by a dog with method and thoroughness on the ground selected by the Judge.

**8.13 HARD MOUTH**

Where there is unmistakable evidence of crushing or biting of retrieved game by a dog. See Section 3 – A Guide to Judges and Competitors – 3.3.9.

**8.14 LINE**

Scent left by wounded game. A dog should locate the fall when sent for a retrieve and track the blood-scent to the quarry, ignoring all other unshot game scents.

**8.15 MISSING GAME**

When game is present on the selected ground and a dog fails to find and flush it.

**8.16 NOSE**

Keeness of scenting power combined with the sense to apply it correctly.

### **8.17 QUARTERING**

A dog should cover the ground in front of the handler in a traditional spaniel quartering pattern. It should be noted that under actual field conditions dogs are not always able to quarter in copybook fashion due to the direction of the wind. See Section 3 – A Guide to Judges and Competitors – 3.2.1.

### **8.18 RANGE**

See Section 3 – A Guide to Judges and Competitors – 3.2.1.

### **8.19 RETRIEVING**

Retrieving covers the performance of a dog from when it is ordered to retrieve until it delivers the game to the handler. A dog should pick up cleanly, return quickly and deliver well up to hand. Dogs that come across dead or wounded game while working shall not be penalised for retrieving it. A marked retrieve is when a dog sees the fall of shot game and is ordered to retrieve. A blind retrieve is when the fall of shot game is obscured from the dog's view, and the dog may have to be handled onto the fall. The dog should then make a workmanlike job of the line. See Section 3 – A Guide to Judges and Competitors Retrieving – 3.3.1 to 3.3.8.

### **8.20 RUNNING IN & CHASING**

If a dog breaks to Flush or Shot but is brought under control within two metres, it shall be penalised for unsteadiness. If it continues and makes a deliberate attempt to catch game that is on the move, whether or not it has been shot at, this will be deemed to be chasing, and the dog should be eliminated.

### **8.21 STEALING**

When a dog deliberately takes game from another dog whilst hunting or retrieving, or deliberately moves across onto the other dog's beat when it sees the other dog making game (i.e. about to flush). This should be penalised.

### **8.22 VETTING**

See Section 4 – Conduct of Trials – 4.9. Control of Dogs, Handlers and Gallery – 4.9.3.