

HZP HANDLING AND TRAINING TIPS

Hare track: Not a requirement like in the VJP and normally not done in conjunction with HZP's here in NA. If an HZP does have a hare track then it will be conducted in the same manner as the VJP.

Hare track has a score multiplier of 3.

Use of Nose: Evaluated at the HZP during both the field and water work. With use of nose being such a genetic trait of the dog there are not a ton of handling and training tips for it. However, there are a few very important ones that will help your dog display its use of nose.

Handling tips:

- In the search field keep your dog productive by handling it, if and when needed. Don't let it potter in the same area or at old scent for a long time.
- Same goes for the search behind the duck in dense cover. If needed give your dog a search command or direct it to another area to keep it productive.

Training tips:

- Hunt, expose and spend time with your dog in the field!
- Teach your dog to search in a windshield type pattern by zig zagging as you walk in fields.
- Teach your dog to turn and hunt with different wind directions(head wind, tail wind, cross wind)
- Do multiple duck searches with the dog.

Nose has a score multiplier of 3!

Field Search: An HZP field search will normally last about 10-15 minutes and you'll want to walk as if out hunting. In essence it is the same as the VJP but a little more is expected of your dog. You can vary your speed, don't have to walk in a straight line and will be given instructions by the judges as to the area they want you and your dog to search or hunt. Pointing work will generally conclude your field search.

- Gunfire sureness will be tested during the field search. Handler will normally fire the required two shots

Handling tips:

- Pay attention to your dog as you walk and handle, work with your dog as needed.
- Biggest mistakes handlers make are:
 - Not handling their dog at all and not bringing or teaching whistle commands.
 - Not bringing enough water along for the dog and the dog getting too hot.
 - Good idea to completely wet dog down before going out if it's warm.
 - Wetting of ears helps a dog cool down.

- Dog is out of shape or hasn't been hunted much.

Training tips for field search:

- Practice field searches by zig zagging as you walk and teach your dog a turn/check-in whistle or voice command. Also can teach the dog to turn on an e-collar tap for silent handling while hunting.
- Hunt the dog and expose it to as many different places, terrain and types of field cover as possible. Make sure your dog is in good shape!
- Work on general obedience of the "here" or "come" command while practicing searches as well.

Field search has a score multiplier of 2.

Pointing: At most NA HZP's game birds are liberated for the evaluation of pointing. The type of bird used at a test will be quail, chukar or pheasants. Test programs must list what type of game will be utilized.

Style not of importance, but what is, is that the dog stops and points in a nice natural ability fashion, meaning the dogs' body doesn't go soft; it isn't turning its head back and forth and doesn't keep wagging its tail the whole time.

The amount of time a dog is expected to point isn't long, but it needs to be long enough for the judges to see and evaluate the dog's ability. This could be anywhere from 15 to 30 seconds. It is best if the handler and judges can calmly approach the dog.

If a bird is moving then the dog can and really should relocate and point bird again when it stops. The picking-up or leashing of the dog is not part of the pointing evaluation.

Handling tips:

- Pay close attention to your dog and work it in the direction you're told the birds are in.
- Keep close tabs on wind direction and strength and be sure to work your dog from a downwind or most preferable crosswind direction.
- Keep your dog well watered and if it's hot or thirsty call it to you before you get to the bird area and give it water.
- Don't say anything to your dog as it is working the bird scent and don't say anything to your dog after it goes on point until the judges tell you to get your dog.
- Don't let your dog catch the bird if it flushes it. Call it, grab it, do whatever is necessary. Obedience in presence of game not being evaluated at the HZP so keep calling it, use your whistle.

Training tips for pointing:

- Use launchers for bird work and don't let your dog see the bird it's supposed to be pointing and don't let your dog chase or catch a bird it pointed or flushed. Chasing after a bird is a reward/motivation for a dog not to point or hold a point.
- Pigeons are a great bird to do most of your pointing work with.
- If your dog is pointing well don't keep doing pointing work instead of retrieving drills, water work and obedience work.
- Learn and use the Halt command in conjunction with pointing and steadiness work.

Pointing has score multiplier of 1.

Cooperation: A dog's cooperation is something that is offered to you by the dog and the manner in which the dog hunts and works with, and for you. A dog that won't point isn't as cooperative as a dog that does point. At the HZP cooperation is evaluated over the entire course of the test.

Handling tips:

- Not a lot of handling tips for cooperation since it is something the dog offers to you. However, in field search pay attention to your dog and where it is and what it is doing. Walk at an appropriate speed in the field search and don't work in opposite direction of your dog.

Training tips:

- Develop a strong bond and working/hunting relationship with your dog.
- Teach the dog not to go on long sight chases after game and to check-in with you at times during the field search.
- Teach the dog to come when called for be leashed up.

Cooperation has score multiplier of 1.

Desire: A dog's desire to work is something that is part of its genetic make-up and natural ability. It is evaluated over the entire course of the test, and in both the field and water work.

Handling tips:

- Not a lot of handling tips for desire either since it is something the dog gives on its own. However, if you have a high drive dog work on shaping/tunneling its desire into a manageable form so that it can perform the given tasks in an appropriate manner.

Training tips:

- If you have a high desire dog (and most DD's are) very good obedience training is a must!
- If you have a low desire dog expose to more live game.
- If your dog is not a high water drive dog you can help increase water drive by multiple duck chases in small ponds and on land if needed, and repetitive positive water work.

Desire has score multiplier of 1.

Obedience: A dog's obedience is evaluated over the course of the HZP and unlike at the VJP it is given a score at the HZP. Obedience is something you demand of the dog, and the dog is expected to respond and work with you throughout the test.

Training aids are not allowed to be used while testing. This means no e-collars, no pinch collars or choke collars.

Handling tips:

- Call or whistle when you know/think they'll listen and obey. Don't keep calling and calling or whistling if they are not responding. If this is the case it's not a huge deal at the VJP unless your dog interrupts the test for a long enough period of time by not allowing you to pick him or her up.
- If your dog isn't listening to you and isn't returning the judges will simply tell you to go after your dog and get him or her gathered up.

Training tips:

- Make sure your young dog is well past obedience 101.
- A strong "here" or "come" command is imperative and one that the dog will obey without a e-collar and while under high distraction and in new places.
- Use and train with a whistle and teach the dog a whistle recall command!
- Make sure your dog will come and obey you in all different situations and locations (ie around the house, yard, out in fields, etc).

MANNER of RETRIEVE:

Manner of retrieve is the execution of the retrieve by the dog and how it picks up the game, properly carries the game and delivers it to the handler. Delivering of the game to the handler can be done by either sitting in front or at the side of the handler, and the handler can give the dog one quiet command to the dog if needed.

The required manner of retrieve is the same for all retrieves done during the HZP. This includes the feathered and furred game drags, or the retrieve of the freshly shot bird and furred game drag, and then the three retrieves done within the water work.

The JGHV testing system requires that upon finding a piece of game the dog independently picks up the game (this means you can't give the dog a command to fetch once it's found game either by scent or sight), and the dog is not allowed to play with, leave or mistreat game. Therefore it is imperative that you force fetch your dog in order to be successful at the HZP and down the road at the VGP. You want to get the force fetch done by late spring or early summer at the latest. This will allow you to have all summer to work on retrieving drills, water work and drags. A dog can be force fetched any time after its permanent teeth are in.

If a dog leaves game it has found, buries or eats game or severely plucks or crunches game it will fail the test. If a dog drops, or plays with the game, but completes the retrieve in an otherwise appropriate manner the dog can still pass the given retrieve.

Handling tips:

- Make sure you have a good place next to you for your dog to come and sit and deliver.
- If the judges are only a few feet away from you either ask if you can move a few more feet away from them or ask them to move back a touch.
- Take a step to the side, front or back as your dog gets within a few feet of you. This will help to bring the dog in to you.
- Teach the dog a voice and hand signal command for sit and or heel and use both a hand signal and soft voice command if needed to get your dog to sit.
- Don't say your release command until after your hand is under the dog's mouth and or you are holding onto the game.

Training tips:

- Force fetch!
- A lot of repetition of retrieving drills and always require a proper manner of retrieve. A dog should normally have done hundreds of retrieves prior to testing.
- Make sure your dog learns and knows it must come straight back to you. In order to do this you must have established a strong here/come command.
- Use both game and bumpers/doken deadfowl dummies as part of your drills. Don't mix them together though for retrieving at the same time. It's either one or the other for an exercise.
- Practice retrieving of freshly shot game, both on land and on water.
- Practice the retrieving of live birds.
- Practice, practice, practice!

WATER WORK:

Water work at the HZP will always be done in the order of gun sensitivity, blind retrieve and independent search behind the duck with each dog doing the blind retrieve immediately after gun sensitivity. You will likely then have a break before you do independent search behind the duck.

A prerequisite for all water work is the force fetch or trained retrieve!

Water Retrieves:

Your dog must complete the three duck retrieves in conjunction with the water work. One with the gun sensitivity, one with the blind retrieve and one with the search behind the live duck. These three individual scores are then average in a single manner of retrieve for the duck.

General water handling tips:

- Find a good place to sit your dog at the edge of the water. If needed stomp down any grass or weeds so your dog has a good place to sit upon getting out of the water.
- After your dog has grabbed the duck and is swimming back to you give the dog some praise.
- If the dog doesn't grab the duck or swims off in the opposite direction you can't say anything to him.
- Don't hover at the water's edge as dog approaches the bank. Take a few steps back as the dog approaches the bank for this will help the dog want to get out of the water.
- If the bank is steep, or if there isn't a good place for your dog to sit ask the judges if you can move to a nearby place so the dog has a good place to deliver the duck.
- If the dog were to drop the duck at the edge of the water or on land within several feet of you just go and pick up the duck. Don't tell the dog fetch again.
- If the dog doesn't want to sit after your first command and you don't think the dog will sit with a second command simply reach down and have the dog give you the duck without it sitting.
- Leash your dog up right after you get the duck from the dog and praise him!

General water training tips:

- Make sure you have a good floating duck.
- Practicing making a good spot for your dog to sit and retrieve and practice taking a few steps back as the dog nears the bank.
- At first when the dog gets to the duck as soon as he grabs it give him your here or come command.
- Practice giving your dog a little praise as he's swimming back correctly.
- Correct the dog if he starts to veer one way or another.
- Always make your dog sit properly and hold the duck until you give your release command.
- Teach your dog to not shake until after you have taken the duck.
- Teach your dog not to drop the duck to shake upon getting out of the water.

Gun sensitivity: This is an easy test subject as long as your dog is force fetched, isn't gun shy and you've practiced it a few times. You don't need to do gun sensitivity in the water training a lot, but I like to do it 5 or 6 times leading up to a test. Your dog must enter the water and start swimming towards the duck within about 1 minute of being commanded to fetch.

Handling tips:

- Before the duck is thrown by the judges get a good grip on the dogs collar and undo your lead.
- Make sure your dog is aware of where the judge is that is throwing the duck and that your dog sees the duck being thrown.
- As soon as the duck hits the water give your dog a fetch command and release your dog.
- After your dog has grabbed the duck and is swimming back to you give the dog some praise.

Training tips:

- Use light loads and have your helper stand 30-40 yards away for the first time or two you practice. Shooter at the test will normally be about 20 yards away from handler.
- Always have shot fired at a safe angle and have the shot hit the water near the duck.
- The dog must be swimming when the shot is fired and the dog should be about half way to the duck.
- If you don't have two helpers throw the duck yourself and have your helper shoot.
- If you don't have any helpers make certain you train your dog to sit and not break when you throw the duck and it hits the water. Throw the duck at an angle and from a spot several feet or more away from the dog so that you have a safe shooting path. Don't shoot if the dog is close to the duck or you don't have a safe shooting path.
- Make sure your background is clear of people and objects as the shot will ricochet.

Gun sensitivity is a pass/fail with only the manner of retrieve being scored.

Blind Retrieve: The blind retrieve at the HZP will generally be about 30 meters in length. The duck is supposed to be out of sight at the edge of cover. Blinds can be done from shore to an island, from to a peninsula, from one bank to another, etc.. Your dog should enter the water upon being given a command and search and look for the duck that is placed across swimming depth water.

Handling tips:

- Make sure your dog is focused and looking across the water to the area where the duck is and that you have a good sending spot for your dog. You can ask to move a touch up or down the bank if you don't like the spot you were given.
- You can handle and direct your dog. If your dog is taking a line far away or upwind from where the duck is, or is continually searching in an area away from the duck handle your dog back towards the duck.
- You are allowed to throw a stone or shoot a shotgun blast in the direction of the duck to assist your dog. However, each shot/stone throw will lower your score a predicate.
- Always have a nice rock or two in your pocket just in case. If you have to throw a rock or shoot a shotgun blast make sure your dog is paying attention when you do!
- In order to pass the test your dog must complete the blind retrieve!
- Once the dog has the duck and is swimming back to you give the dog some praise.

Training tips:

- Make sure your dog is properly and thoroughly force fetched.
- Do retrieving drills on land and water with your dog for weeks/months prior to the test.
- Teach your dog to take a line across open water.
- Teach your dog basic handling drills. Left and right casting hand signals are most important but a back command can also be useful.

- Train for various length blinds in various cover situations and don't always train on the same water!
- Make sure your dog knows and learns to come straight back to you after picking up the duck.
- Don't allow your dog to run the back either before entering the water or after it has the duck.

Blind retrieve has score multiplier of 1.

Independent search behind the duck in dense cover: The search behind the live duck is a unique item to the JGHV testing system and allows for the evaluation of the dogs water desire and use of nose. The search for live duck can take anywhere from a few minutes to up to 10 or 15 minutes. At the end of the search the dog must retrieve a duck. This can either be a duck it catches, one that is produced by the dog and then shot, or a dead duck that is thrown by a judge for the dog if it hasn't found a duck. Same retrieving rules apply to all of the duck retrieves throughout the water work.

Handling tips:

- Make sure your dog is focused and looking across the water to the area where you were told the duck landed and then swam off. Be sure you are downwind or crosswind from this area if there is a wind.
- You want to have a good sending spot for your dog. You can ask to move a touch up or down the bank if you don't like the spot you were given.
- If you know the duck is in close proximity to where you are at send your dog in a direction away from the duck. You want the dog to have to search and not find the duck immediately.
- You can handle and direct your dog if needed, but judges don't want to see and won't allow a lot or constant handling.
- In order to pass the test your dog must complete the retrieve that's in conjunction with the search behind the live duck!
- Once the dog has the duck and is swimming back to you give the dog some praise.
- If the dog catches the duck a long ways from you, say opposite side of the pond ask the judges if you can move towards it some. Make sure the dog knows where you are in this case once it has the duck and is returning.
- If there is a gallery between you and where the duck is returning ask the judges if you can move to the other side of them or ask the judges to have the gallery move.

Training tips:

- Make sure your dog is properly force fetched.
- Start off with duck searches by allowing your dog to do at least a couple duck chases in a small pond and make sure he is always successful and catches the duck or that it is shot.
- If your dog lacks some water desire do two or three live duck chases on land.

- Make sure your dog will enter the water on a single command and take at least a short line.
- Use basic handling drills to help the dog be productive in its searches.
- Make sure your dog isn't always finding the duck within only a few minutes.
- Do duck searches at ponds of different sizes and cover types.
- Make sure your dog knows and learns to come straight back to you after picking up the duck.

Search behind live duck has score multiplier of 3!

Feather and furred drags:

Both drags are conducted in the same manner but are of different lengths. The feather drag is at least 200m in length and the furred at least 300m in length. Both drags will have two obtuse turns. They will be done in short cover and two pieces of the same game type will be used unless the handler requests only one piece of game to be used. Your dog must complete each drag in order to pass the test. You can restart your dog up to two times as long as it hasn't found and left a piece of the game.

Handling tips:

- I advise the use of two pieces of game, but if desired you can let the judges know you want to only use one.
- Be sure your game is in good condition! Don't try to use old, nasty or wet game.
- The dog can be worked down the drag track for up to 30m before it has to be released. Make sure your dog gets a good whiff of the start of the drag and is going in the direction the drag was laid prior to releasing your dog.
- Use a slip lead to help insure a smooth release of your dog!
- Make sure you have a good place next to you for your dog to come and sit and deliver.
- If the judges are only a few feet away from you either move several feet away from them or ask them to move back a touch.
- If by chance the gallery or vehicles are in close proximity to you ask if you can move a little ways away from them.
- After your dog has grabbed the animal and is about half way back wave your arms and make sure he knows where you are.
- When the dog is getting close you can give the dog some praise and don't be a statue.

Training tips:

- Do not do a ton of drags! They are easy for the dog and the dog can get bored with the drags if you do a lot.
- When starting to train for the drag do two or three short drags(75-125yds) for one or two weeks, generally on lead and with one turn.
- When starting out with the dog on lead heel your dog back to the starting point after it picks up the animal. Always praise the dog for good work.

- Once the dog is doing the short drags well increase to full length drags with two turns and start having the dog do them off lead. Always release your dog from a slip lead.
- As soon as the dog is doing the drags well only do about one a week, switching off from feather and furred game.
- Make sure you do as many drags as you can with someone at the end(the same person that pulled the drag). This will simulate the judge that will be at the end of the drag. Make sure your dog finds/sees the person at the end at least once or twice.
- Use/train with two pieces of game, must be the same type of game.
- If you have to do drags by yourself that the dog is running off lead make sure you terminate the drag at a spot to where the dog won't just keep tracking your path back to the vehicle or wherever.

The feathered and fur drags each have a score multiplier of 1.

Retrieve of the freshly shot bird:

While doing a feather drag is more common than a retrieve of the freshly shot bird it is an option that can be done in lieu of the feather drag. If this is the case the test announcement will state the test is being done with a shot bird.

Handling tips:

- Be sure to send the dog either from down wind or from a cross wind from where you were told the shot bird has fallen.
- Handle and direct your dog as needed to complete the retrieve but constant handling will result in a lowering of the score.

Training tips:

- Teach the dog a search command and to leave your side and hunt in front of you.
- Be sure to have the dog learn to search and hunt from you at least 40 meters away. You don't want the dog to only hunt or search for a dead bird 10 or 20 meters away from you.
- Practice this in various cover and with various game.

The retrieve of the freshly shot bird has a score multiplier of 1.