

Solms / AZP Test

SOLMS / AZP Test I. PURPOSE OF THE TEST

(1) The Solms Test is a breeding test, an addition to and expansion of the spring Derby test. (2) The purpose of the test, similar to Derby, is to establish a level of the dog's natural abilities in regards to suitability and future use in versatile hunting and breeding, as well as determination of the parent's breeding values. Particular attention is paid to mental stability. (3) The young dog's training for practical use in hunting in field and water must be essentially completed by this time. The judges must be particularly careful to determine natural abilities that often are masked by the completed training. (4) Required for proper execution of the test are: large fields, containing a sufficient number of game birds and rabbits, and containing a sufficiently large water area with ample reed growth. (5) The recognition of the parent's breeding value and that of the contesting dog is facilitated by testing as many littermates as possible. The Individual Test Categories

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The Solms is divided into these categories: 1. FIELD WORK:

Nose Search Pointing Work on winged game bird, including retrieving, or searching and retrieving a freshly shot game bird that was not seen falling by the dog, or retrieving game bird on the drag. 2. WATERWORK:

Blind retrieve from dense cover. Search behind the duck from cover. 3. HARE OR RABBIT DRAG:

4. MANNER OF RETRIEVING: Hare or a rabbit, Duck, Wild game bird - Pheasant-Pigeon-Duck 5.

COOPERATION

6. OBEDIENCE

7. DESIRE OF WORK

8. MANNER OF HUNTING (Gives tongue on track, gives tongue on sight, silent, or questionable) FIELD WORK

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(1) The main emphasis is on the determination of nose quality, sure and fast finding of game, as well as a fluid, persistent and methodical search. In order to fairly judge Solms dog's inherited talents, the generally advanced maturity and greater experience (of a Derby dog) must be considered. NOSE:

(2) The judgment of the quality of the nose is the most important and at the same time the most difficult part of the field test. In general, the nose quality can only be indirectly determined by closely observing a multitude of signs. These dogs "lean" with their noses into the wind, briefly mark game and game bird scents, chew the scent during pointing, find quickly, stay in scent-contact with moving game and point confidently. A sign of a good nose is the more horizontal than vertical head position and could serve as an indication of nose quality. SEARCH:

(3) The search should be brisk, roomy, methodical, fluid and persistent but never hectic, erratic, unconcentrated and vision dominated. POINTING:

(4) The dog should point unmoving wild game birds until the handler approaches and flushes the game bird, or until the bird flushes or breaks out of the cover by itself. The pointing should be expressive.

WATER WORK 7 GENERAL RULES FOR WATERWORK

The purpose of waterwork is to prepare the dog for its future practical hunting, i.e., especially the retrieving of crippled or dead waterfowl that fell into water, to prove the effectiveness of this preparation in the test, and to document it for the breeding program. In order to fulfill these purposes of the waterwork and simultaneously to comply with ethical and conservation practices while conducting the test, the following rules must be followed strictly when using live ducks for this test: 1. Waterwork only during non-breeding season of waterfowl and other wildlife. 2. The test pond or lake must be sufficiently large and deep that the dog must swim while searching the cover and that the duck has all opportunities to use its superior ability to evade the swimming dog. 3. Only fully grown mallards, temporarily incapable of flight by removal of three primaries of one wing may be used for this work. The ducks must have been raised under conditions that familiarized them with water and cover, and they must have had opportunity to grease their feathers immediately before the test, so that they are able to evade the dog any time.

RETRIEVING FROM COVER (during search behind the duck) (1) A duck is released into cover in such a manner that the dog cannot see these preparations. The dog is released from a distance (usually shotgun range) and ordered to retrieve. (2) The dog shall search for and find the duck independently. The handler may guide and support his/her dog in its work, but constant influencing shall lessen the score. (3) As soon as the dog pushes the duck from cover and pursues it on sight, the duck must be shot if this is possible without danger. (4) The shot duck must be independently retrieved by the dog. (5) A dog will be given a second duck only under circumstances when the judges are not able to definitely rate the dog's work. (6) The judges may end a dog's work at any time if they have formed a conclusive decision, also if the dog has not been able to produce the duck from cover after fifteen minutes.

BLIND RETRIEVE FROM DEEP COVER

(1) The blind retrieve from dense cover shall be tested immediately after the search behind the duck. (2) For testing of the blind retrieve, a freshly shot duck is thrown far into cover without the dog being able to see either the throw or the duck in the water from the bank. (3) The dog must be sent to retrieve across the open water into the cover. The handler is given the approximate direction of the duck's location. (4) The dog shall search for the duck independently, it must find the duck and retrieve it to the handler. The handler may support and guide his/her dog, but constant influencing lessens the predicate. (5) A dog that fails to retrieve the duck immediately after finding it for the first time cannot pass the test. FURRED GAME DRAG (1) The furred game drag is tested with a preferably fresh shot rabbit or hare. The drag

is laid by a judge in open terrain downwind for 500 paces, and should include two blunt angled turns. The distance between individual drags must be not less than 100m. The dragged animal or a fresh one of the same species is placed on the ground at the end of the drag (not covered or in a depression). The judge must walk in extension of the drag and then hide, so that he/she cannot be seen by the dog. In the hiding place, the judge removes the string from the dragged animal and places it in front of him/her. He/she may not prevent the dog from taking this animal. The dog may not watch the laying of the drag. The handler may request that the dragged animal be placed at the end of the drag for the dog to retrieve. If the handler chooses this option, he/she must inform the judges prior to the drag work. (2) The handler may work the first fifty(50) meters of the drag on leash, (3) The dog is required to find the game willingly, quickly and independently, and to quickly take hold of the game and to retrieve it cheerfully without needing further influences from the handler.

RETRIEVING 9 (1) The manner of retrieving is judged by the execution of the retrieve, that is, the acquired skill to get hold of, to carry, and deliver the game to hand. (2) The dog exhibits the correct grasping and carrying by adjusting the grip to the center of gravity, weight and kind of game. Inappropriately strong or weak grip, hold or carrying is faulty. Hardmouth must be noted and must be entered on the score sheet. (3) The correct delivery to hand is demonstrated if the dog arrives with the game at the handler, sits without a command or after a simple - never loud! - command by the handler and holds the game until the handler has taken hold of it in a calm, never hasty manner and commands the dog to release with the appropriate command.

COOPERATION

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Handling is an innate predisposition producing cooperative teamwork with the handler in all phases of hunting. Cooperation is evident in the manner the dog shows desire to stay in contact with the handler and be directed at all times and how it is willing to be of service to the handler. **OBEDIENCE**

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(1) Obedience differs from cooperation in that it requires a form of direct submission, (2) Obedience without game contact is exhibited by the handling of the working dog and by the willingness and enthusiasm with which the dog follows the handlers command (whistle, calls, or gestures) once it has noticed and understood the command. It also shows in the dog's restraint during other dogs work, thereby showing that he will not disturb his handler or other fellow hunters during a hunt. (3) Obedience in the presence of game is only required to the degree that the dog does not chase flushed birds. Repeated, long lasting rabbit chasing is judged as faulty, because it withdraws the dog from testing in the main field subjects on feathered game. If this happens repeatedly, the dog may be eliminated from the test. (4) Obedience is the expression of efficient and thorough training. It is a prerequisite for the versatility of the hunting dog in the field.

DESIRE TO WORK

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Desire to work is exhibited by the enthusiasm and untiring eagerness with which the dog performs the various tasks.

WORK ON HARE OR RABBIT

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(1) If a dog intentionally, or by chance, shows excellent work in tracking an unseen hare or rabbit, this will be marked by the customary Andreas Star (*). This performance, however, does not influence the general evaluation. (2) The handler cannot request work on a rabbit/hare track. (3) The only criterion is the natural ability and confidence to track game. Loud (Giving Tongue) tracking or sight-loud is to be noted.