

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS FOR ENTERING ALL APLA TESTS

- Costs, date, and time of the tests will be announced in the premium.
- Owners entering each Certified Pointing Retriever hunt test must provide proof that the dogs are UKC registered when mailing in the premium. A photocopy of the dog's registration papers must be included unless otherwise specified on the entry premium.
- Proof of registration with United Kennel Club (UKC) as a purebred Labrador Retriever is required to compete in APLA events. The American Pointing Labrador Association (APLA) recognizes only Black, Yellow and Chocolate Labrador coat colors, as recognized by the UKC and defined by the Labrador Retriever Club, Inc. The APLA has approved that Hunt Test Chairs and Judges may report suspected deviations in color to the UKC. Proven dilute factored dogs are not eligible for APLA titles.
- Walk-up entries are allowed at the discretion of the Hunt Test Chair as long as upland birds are available. Walk-up entry forms are available on the APLA web page and through the Hunt Test Secretary. It is the Owner/Handler's responsibility to have all the information completely filled out on the walk-up entry form. Incomplete forms may result in the dog's scores being invalidated or no title awarded.
- All owners and Handlers must be APLA members in good standing when the entry premium is received.

GENERAL RULES FOR ALL APLA TESTS:

- A test dog shall be run prior to each retrieving series at all levels.
- All dogs at all levels in the APLA are being judged in the upland field for the traits of naturally occurring, intense points.
- The dog must clearly establish a natural point on its own prior to any type of command, signal, or cue given by the Handler. This includes not commanding, signaling, or otherwise cueing a dog once the dog has entered the scent cone and has started working its way to the bird.
- Nowhere in any of the APLA rules does the word Average appear.
- In keeping with the aim of simulated hunting conditions and situations, Handlers, Judges, workers and other test participants shall be attired in dark or customary hunting attire that is appropriate for the hunting scenario.
- In the upland field, for safety reasons, blaze orange must be worn by Handlers, Judges, Gunners, and anyone else accompanying the party in the field.
- Judges are responsible for how bird planting is to be done. The Judges will give the bird planters specific planting instructions as required by the cover, wind, time of days, moisture, etc. to evaluate the dog's search, nose, and natural pointing traits. Birds are to be planted in the available natural cover without the use of any type of restraint. This includes not putting a bird to sleep or tucking their heads under the wing.
- When beginning a stake at any level, the first handler/dog at that stake shall have one extra bird planted. CPR will have a FOUR bird plant. All other levels will have a FIVE bird plant.
- All ducks used for the test must be freshly killed and never have been used for any other reason prior to the test. No artificial fillers or flotant may be applied to the

ducks. In the event that live ducks cannot be freshly killed immediately before the test, the HT Chair may ask the APLA HT Committee for special permission to kill and freeze the ducks in advance.

- All tests will be conducted in series with call backs. Dogs that are not successful in one series will not be allowed to continue to the next series.
- The judges shall inform the handler when the dog is to be taken off lead coming to the line and when the dog is to be placed on lead leaving the line. These instructions shall be given during the explanation of the test scenario at the beginning of the Test Dog run. The handler is responsible to know when to and when not to use the lead.
- No collar or leads are allowed while dogs are performing in any series. A lead may be used around the dog's neck in CPR to steady for a mark when doing a retrieve. The lead must be out of sight when the CPR dog returns from the retrieve to deliver the bird. A lead may also be use at the CPR level in the upland field to get the young dog under control for a simulated retrieve, not while producing the bird while dog is on point.
- No training aids (e.g., treats, e-collars, leads, leashes, heeling sticks, etc.) are permitted while dogs are performing in any series, unless explicitly stated in the rules.
- You may not touch your dog during the test (except to water them or check for injury; Judges should be notified ahead of time.) A light tap or touch on top of the head may be used to release your dog in the upland field.
- The test's series may be run in any order unless otherwise specified in the Rules.
- For all marked retrieves, Gunners and bird throwers will be concealed behind a duck blind or other suitable cover. No dog will be required to do a blind retrieve before picking up all marks that have been thrown.
- No "remote sends" are allowed. Although on a marked retrieve, Judges may require the dog to sit a short distance from the Handler's side while the marks are thrown, the Handler may come to the dog's side to send the dog. The "remote sits" are allowed only at the master level. A dog can fail the remote sit if it breaks before being released by Judges. A dog that fails to remain at the remote sit, but doesn't break is not automatically failed, but is marked down in cooperation.
- No "walk-ups" are allowed at the Certification or Advanced level. (For marked or blind retrieves at these levels, the Handler must be permitted to bring the dog to the line and sit it before any duck call or shot is heard or a bird is thrown.) At the discretion of the Judges, "walk-ups" may be required at the Master level.
- Decisions of the Judges are final.
- Judges will be available after the test to discuss individual dog's scoring and to answer any questions or concerns about the tests. During the test any questions or concerns should be addressed to the designated Marshal, not directly to the Judges. After the test has concluded and passing dogs have been announced, Handlers can ask the Judges questions about their specific dog's performance. This must be done in a respectful and sportsmanlike manner.
- **Definition of a Second Attempt:** A second attempt to send the dog is allowed for all retrieves at the CPR level and once per series at the APR level. The only time a second attempt is allowed at the Master level is instances of confusion (as deemed by the judges) at the line or in the field. Examples of confusion can be found in the general rules.

- **Definition of a Controlled Break:** A controlled break is defined as the dog showing intent to retrieve before being released by the Judges, and a loud whistle or loud voice command was given to steady the dog.
- **Definition of Intimidation:** Any act or action taken by a handler to make a dog timid or fearful, to compel or deter the dog as if by threats. Acts or actions of intimidation may include but are not limited to:
 - Leaning or hovering over a dog so that the handler is just inches from the dog
 - Loud or strong whistles close to the dog's ear
 - Loud or strong voice commands (yelling) at the dog or in the dog's ear
 - Standing to the front of the dog to impede the dog's progress
 - Strong hand gestures toward a dog designed to impede the dog's progress
 - Any other act or action by the handler designed to make the dog timid or threatened

Should intimidation be witnessed by the judges, one warning will be issued. Repeated actions by the handler after a warning will result in zero in Cooperation.

A warning of Intimidation shall be carried with a handler for all other dogs in all stakes. Warnings of Intimidation by a handler shall be communicated to the HT CHAIR to be communicated to all judges at all other stakes said handler is entered. Repeated acts of Intimidation shall be considered UNSPORTSMANLIKE CONDUCT and covered by the NO TOLERANCE POLICY.

- **Definition of Confusion:** Confusion occurs when the dog either stays by the handler, stops retrieving, or quickly returns to the handler. Examples of causes of confusion may include but are not limited to:
 - Handler speaking too softly or loudly
 - Gunshots from neighboring fields
 - Visual Distractions
 - Wild birds in the testing area
 - Dog does a 360-degree spin on or near the line and dog returns to the handler on its own
 - Noise or movement from the gallery
 - Other distractions identified by judges
- **Definition of No Go:** No Go occurs when a dog refuses to leave the handler's side after being sent by the handler for a retrieve (mark, blind, or in the upland). A No Go will result in a score of zero (0) in the Cooperation category.

BITCHES IN SEASON

Bitches in season will not be allowed to run in APLA Tests. All females will be required to complete a bitch check at the beginning of the test prior to being allowed to

participate. If a female contestant is found to be in an active heat cycle, an exception may be made by the Hunt Test Chair and the Head Judge(s) regarding her eligibility to compete if they decide that the bitch can run without adversely affecting the other dogs in that stake or other stakes. Any nonparticipating females who are in an active heat cycle who may have traveled with a contestant/owner or judge must not be allowed on all active testing areas.

QUALIFYING PASS AT ANY LEVEL

Once a dog has earned a qualifying pass in any level, except Youth division, a dog cannot go back to a lower level and earn a title. A dog must continue to run in the level at which they earned their highest-level pass. They may continue to participate in these lower levels if desired, but no passes earned will count toward a title in the lower level, a ribbon will be given if a qualifying pass is achieved. (Note: A dog at any level may be used in the youth division.)

NO TOLERANCE POLICY

The APLA will not tolerate ANY unsportsmanlike conduct at a hunt test, to include harassment of any individual or abuse of an animal. At any APLA test, any handler or handlers that are conducting themselves in an unsportsmanlike manner during a test will be given one warning from the Hunt Test Chair or Secretary. Unsportsmanlike conduct may include but is not limited to verbal harassment from the gallery toward a judge or another handler, or verbal harassment from handlers to any judges or gunners or other participants. Unsportsmanlike conduct also applies to abuse of any kind to any of the dogs. If after one warning is given, another offense occurs, the Judges or Hunt Chair may pull all of the handler's entries for the whole weekend. This will include not just the dog in question, but all the entries belonging to that handler. Also, if unsportsmanlike conduct happens on the 2nd or 3rd day of the test, all of the prior days' entries will be forfeit and any passes nullified. All of the offending handler's entries for the entire weekend will be pulled and no reimbursement for any entries will be awarded.

Once the entry has been pulled for the weekend, the handler committing the offense will be required to leave the grounds. The judges and/or Hunt chair will be required to file a report to the APLA Board of Directors within one week of the test in question. If another handler/person watching the test witnesses any abuse to any of the dogs, the incident must be reported to the Hunt Chair or Hunt Secretary immediately. They are to give a written statement to accompany the report filed by the Hunt Chair. The APLA BOD will review and determine if any further action is required for the situation reported.

In the case of extreme unsportsmanlike conduct, Judges, APLA Officials, and the Hunt Test Chair or Committee have authority to expel individuals immediately from APLA events and nullify all the passes of the offending handler's entries for the entire weekend with no reimbursement for any entry.

CONDUCT OF DOGS

Any dog that exhibits an unprovoked and/or obvious threat to other dogs or individuals, either through attacking or aggressive behavior, may be expelled from an APLA Hunt

Test. Expulsion of a dog may be the result of a witnessed event by an APLA Judge, an APLA Official, individuals representing the APLA, or the result of reports of such action by other individuals. If a report is made, the Hunt Test Chair and/or other Officials and/or their representatives will perform an investigation of the incident and may choose to eject a dog at that time. Any dog ejected for aggressive behavior will forfeit the privilege to run in any APLA events that day and shall not receive a qualifying score or pass for those events. Should APLA Officials deem the attack severe enough, the dog may be barred from competing in future APLA events. Handlers who knowingly expose other dogs or individuals to aggressive dogs by bringing them to APLA events will be reprimanded and may be subject to further APLA disciplinary action. It is recommended that Handlers bring copies of vaccination records of their dogs to APLA events. Should an unfortunate incident occur, owners/Handlers may be required to provide proof of vaccination or risk impoundment of their dog (as required by state law).

Approved by the Board, effective January 1, 2020. Amended by the Board March 17, 2021, August 17, 2022, January 19, 2023, March 15, 2023, August 19, 2023, February 19, 2025

Sections changed/added

Re-send changed to second attempt and updated – February 2025

“Confusion” – February 2025

Extra bird planted for first dog - 2023

Judges inform handlers on leash use - 2023

Test dog is required for retriever series - 2023

Qualifying pass in any level – July 2023

Bitches in Heat – Aug 2023

Intimidation definition to include the warning of intimidation is carried to all dogs – November 2023