

TRACKING DOG - LEVEL 2 (FH 2)

1. General:

It is pointed out that Tracking Dog Level 2 (FH 2) represents a type of test that is essentially to be undertaken by sport (civilian) dogs. Special claims which might arise out of the realm of service dog achievements are not to be made.

It is mandatory that the tracklaying for this test be performed by responsible persons who have undergone special training in the field.

As a rule, if the trial judge for this type of test is unable to accompany the tracklayer, tracking-diagrams must be drawn by the tracklayer. The judge must also make sure that the cross-tracks are laid according to the rules one-half hour before the start-time.

2. Entry Requirements:

A prerequisite to taking this test is that the dog be at least 20 months old and has earned an FH 1 title.

Also eligible to enter the FH 2 are dogs which, prior to their earning the FH 1 title, did not have a SchH I title, but instead had passed a BH test. In this case, an FH 2 title earned will not constitute a "training title" that meets the requirements of any breeding, showing or Körung (breed-survey) regulations of a breed club.

3. Performance in the Tracking Work:

Maximum score: 100 points (Command: "Such"/"Seek or Track")

-- Working of the track = 80 pts

-- 7 articles (6 x 3, 1 x 2) = 20 pts

The dog must demonstrate his track sureness on a stranger's track that is at least three hours old and at least 2000 paces long, with seven corners that conform to the terrain. At least two of the corners must be acute and one must be an arc [segment of a circle]. The track will be crossed at least twice by a fresher stranger-laid track, at varying points separate from each other.

Along the track, at irregular distances, will be placed seven **articles** that have been well-scented by the tracklayer. The article measurements (maximum) will be: 10 cm. (4") long by 3 cm (1.2") wide by 1 cm. (0.4") thick. So-called "search-packets" are not permitted. The articles are to be found by the dog and either indicated or picked up.

Before the start of the track, the handler must report to the judge whether the dog picks up or indicates articles. Doing both together (picking up and indicating) is incorrect.

The handler may, at his/her option, track the dog free or on a tracking line. The tracking line may hang loose, so long as the handler does not let it go.

4. Laying of the Track:

The tracklayer, who is a stranger to the dog, must prepare a terrain-sketch for the judge. The course of the track is to be planned in advance with the judge or with the appointed tracking chairperson, utilizing natural landmarks such as lone-standing trees, power poles, sheds/cottages/outbuildings, etc.

Before laying the track, the tracklayer shows the required tracking articles to the judge/tracking chairperson. The tracklayer must have carried the articles on his person for at least 30 minutes, in order to scent them well. The articles may not exceed the above-stated dimensions, and they must not differ markedly in their color from the surrounding terrain.

The start of the track is located within a surface area of 20 x 20 meters, in which only the tracklayer has entered. Entry into this area by any third party is to be prevented. The tracklayer places two marking stakes in the ground, 20 paces apart, between which is the starting-line. From either the starting line or from one of the two stakes, the tracklayer goes out and lays down an identification article. This article marks the true start of the track. The identification article is of a similar size and composition as the other articles on the track, but it is not counted in the scoring.

Once the tracklayer has laid down the identification article, he must remain standing on that spot for a brief period of time. The track will then be laid at a normal pace.

The articles are to be laid on the track at irregular distances. The first article must be placed at a minimum of 250 paces from the starting-point. The seventh (last) article is laid at the end of the track. Articles must not be laid at corners or in the immediate vicinity thereof. They must not be laid next to the track, but actually on the track. The tracklayer will indicate on his track-diagram, by placing "X" marks, all of the places where he has laid the articles. Careful attention is to be given to ensure that the track is laid over changing terrain. It must be laid so as to simulate a real situation. Therefore any "pre-drawn map or pattern" is to be avoided.

Thirty minutes before the start-time, a second tracklayer (also a stranger to the dog), by arrangement with and under direction from the primary tracklayer, receives instruction to lay a cross-track that will intersect the primary track at least twice.

5. Working of the Track:

The starting line marked by the tracklayer is shown to the handler by the judge. But the starting line itself does not necessarily establish the direction of the first leg of the track. From the location of the identification article, the track may proceed straight ahead, right, left or even at an angle. Notice should be taken of the fact that the first leg of the track may not cross the starting line.

For locating the identification article, the handler may handle the dog either off lead or on the tracking line. The time allotted for the dog to locate the identification article, determine the direction of the track, and begin working the track is limited to three minutes. The handler may choose the point on the starting line at which he will start the dog searching for the identification article.

The handler may not cross over the starting line until the 10-meter tracking line has run out (or the free-working dog has reached a distance of 10 meters away from the handler). The handler may encourage the dog during the search for the identification article, by means of voice and/or hand signals.

If the dog comes onto the track beyond the identification article and confidently take the track, the handler must follow the dog. In this case, the working of the track must continue on in the same way the dog began (free or on the tracking line). If the dog finds the identification article, the handler goes immediately to the dog and starts it working the track. The handler may first, if necessary, attach the tracking line to the collar or harness.

The dog should be allowed to take up the scent thoroughly at the starting-point. The dog should be so trained that with no influence from the handler it will calmly and extensively take the scent at the starting-point. Under no circumstances may the handler, with his hand, urge the dog to rush forward. No restart is permitted.

As soon as the dog begins to track, the handler must remain in place and let out the 10-meter tracking line. The tracking line, attached either to the collar or to a harness, may be placed over the dog's back, along the dog's side, or between the dog's front and/or hind legs.

The track should be worked calmly, so that the handler can follow at a normal pace. The handler follows at about a 10-meter distance, which must also be maintained if the dog is tracking off line. When the dog comes upon an article, it must immediately pick it up or indicate it convincingly. When picking it up the dog may stand still, sit or come to the handler. If the dog comes to the handler, the handler may not advance toward him. Proceeding forward [by the dog] with the picked up article is incorrect. Indicating the articles may be done by sitting, lying down, standing, or alternating among those positions.

The handler must immediately go to the dog and after taking the article, raise it in the air to show the judge. The handler praises the dog and immediately lets it continue tracking. If the dog, while on the track, comes upon an article that was not placed by the tracklayer, it may *neither* pick it up *nor* indicate it. If the dog changes over from the primary track onto the cross-track and follows it for more than one lead length, the track must be terminated.

The judge is permitted to give the handler support if the terrain imposes extreme difficulties that the dog cannot manage (for example large waterholes or deep gullies/trenches, etc.). No points are deducted for this.

After consulting with the judge, the handler is allowed to briefly interrupt tracking if he feels he or his dog needs a short pause because of physical condition or weather conditions (i.e. extreme heat). Here also there is no point deduction. Restarting of the dog on the track will not be scored as a "restart" under the meaning prescribed as incorrect in the Trial Rules. The time taken for such permitted pauses, however, is counted in the total time available to the handler and dog for working the track.

The handler is allowed, during a pause or at an article, to clean up the dog's head, eyes and nose. For this purpose, during tracking, the handler carry a wet cloth or sponge. These items are to be shown to the judge before the start of the tracking. Further aids are not permitted.

Any physical help (i.e. jerking on the line) or conspicuous verbal help (additional commands to track) are to be refrained from by the handler. If such help is given, it can lead to termination of tracking.

Scoring:

The maximum 100 points can only be given if a dog works the track from beginning to end, at a consistent pace throughout, and picks up or indicates all seven articles. All the corners must be worked out confidently. The dog may not be influenced by the crosstracks. Among the first six articles, each article not found will cost 3 points, and if the last article is not found, 2 points. Picking up and indicating (*in combination*) is faulty. One and a half points will be deducted for a falsely picked up or indicated article.

For picking up or indicating any objects not placed there by the tracklayer, 1.5 points will be deducted. If the handler prevents the dog from leaving the track, the judge will instruct the handler to follow the dog. Tracking is terminated if the dog leaves the track by more than one line length (or by more than 10 meters if tracking off lead), or if the handler ignores the judge's instruction to follow the dog.

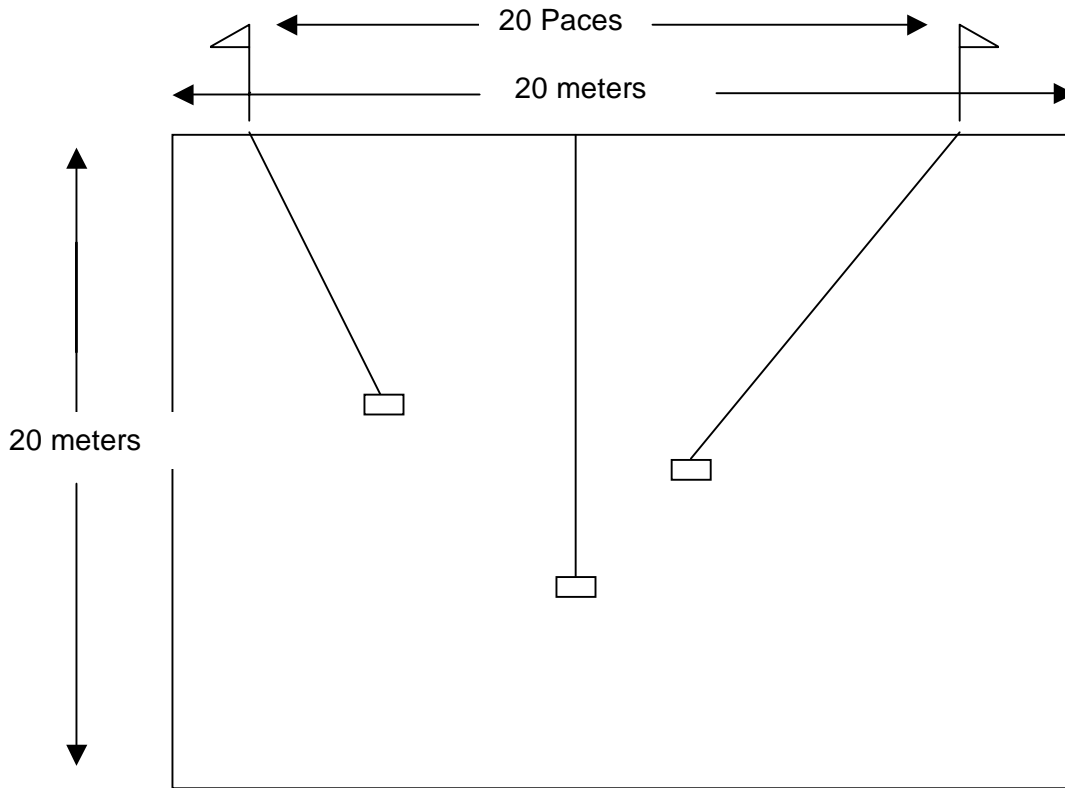
6. Awarding of the Title "Tracking Dog Level 2" (FH 2):

The training title (degree) FH 2 may only be awarded if the dog attains at least 70 points.

Ratings are as follows:

0	-	35	points	Insufficient	("U")
36	-	69	points	Faulty	("M")
70	-	79	points	Satisfactory	("B")
80	-	89	points	Good	("G")
90	-	95	points	Very Good	("SG")
96	-	100	points	Excellent	("V")

Schematic of Possible Starting Positions Created by Carole Patterson



(The squares indicate three possible ID article placements.)

SAMPLES OF POSSIBLE START POSITIONS FOR FH2

The tracklayer plants two flags on a straight line, roughly 20 paces apart. The start itself will be found within a 20 meter x 20 meter surface area. From a straight line between the 2 flags, the tracklayer may start from any position on that straight line or from one of the two stakes and walk into the start area at any angle or direction and then lay down an "identification article". This article marks the true start of the track. The dog may search for the article either on lead or off lead. The handler may not enter the 20 meter square start area until the 10 meter tracking line is all the way out. If the dog searches for the ID article off lead and finds and indicates it, the handler may then attach the tracking line. If the dog searches for the ID article off lead, finds the track past the ID article and continues on the line of the track, the handler must follow the dog off lead throughout the track.

[In training for the start of the FH 2, the dog needs to be trained to work within the 20 meter square area, much as field trial or hunting dogs are trained to work an area scenting for birds, or KNPV dogs are trained to work a field to find a lost article. They are taught to quarter the field, casting back within an imaginary distance until the handler directs the dog to work another area of the field. With a 20 x 20 meter area, the dog can be taught to work at the handler's signal within that area to search for the identification article, and once found, indicate it.]