

2003 IPO & 2004 VDH TRIAL HELPER REGULATIONS

Helper Regulations:

A) Requirements for the employment as helper in phase “C”

1. The guidelines and regulations of the trial rules regarding helper work must be followed.
2. The helper in phase “C” is the assistant to the judge on the day of the trial.
3. For his personal safety, as well as for insurance liability reasons, the helper must wear protective clothing (protection pants, jacket and sleeve) when doing helper work during training, trials and competitions.
4. The helper's shoes must be suitable for different weather/ground conditions and must provide the helper secure footing and good traction.
5. Before phase “C” starts, the helper will receive instructions from the judge. The helper must perform the helper work in accordance with the judge's instructions.
6. The helper must follow the handler's instructions during the disarming/search of the helper phase in accordance to the trial regulations. The helper must give the handler the opportunity to put the dog in a basic position before beginning the side and back transports.
7. Club trials can be worked with a single helper. **If there are more than 7 dogs entered** in a trial, two helpers should be used. In competitions, qualifications and championship trials above the regional level, generally a minimum of two helpers are to be assigned. In all these events, it is permitted to use a helper who lives in the same household as one of the handlers.

B) Regulations concerning the conduct of trial helpers:

1. In general:

Within the structure of the trial, the training level and the quality of the trialing dogs (for example, drive [natural instinct], ability to withstand stress, self assurance, responsiveness to the handler) should be evaluated by the judge. **In the process, the judge can objectively evaluate only that which he hears and sees in the course of the trial.**

This aspect above all, but also in order to preserve the sporting character of the trial (i.e., possibility for equal conditions for all participants), demands that the helper work must provide the judge with a picture as clear-cut as possible.

The option of how protection work will be structured must not be left up to the helper, but rather the helper has to observe a series of rules.

During the trial, the judge has to check the most important evaluation criteria concerning the individual elements of the exercises during phase “C”. These elements are, for example, the ability to cope with stress, self-confidence, instinctive behavior [drive] and responsiveness to the handler. Furthermore, he must evaluate the quality of the bite of the dogs being shown. Therefore, in order for the judge to evaluate the quality of the bite, the helper must give the dog a chance to get a "good grip" on the sleeve. Or, in order to evaluate the dog's ability to cope with stress, it is necessary that the helper put pressure on the dog through corresponding action. It is therefore desirable that helpers perform the helper work in the most uniform manner possible, so that these elements can be evaluated.

2. “Hold and bark” (Title levels 1-3)

The helper stands motionless in the assigned blind in a non-threatening body posture, out of sight of the dog and handler, with a slightly angled sleeve. The sleeve serves as body protection. The helper is to watch the dog during the hold and bark. Additional stimulation (agitation), as well as help of any kind is not permitted. The helper is to hold the soft stick on his/her side, pointing down.

3. “Prevention of an attempted escape of the helper” (Title levels 1-3)

After the exercise “Hold and Bark”, at the direction of the handler, the helper comes out of the blind at a normal pace and takes a position at a place designated by the judge. The position of the helper must make it possible for the handler to down his dog about 5 steps away to the side of the helper on the side of the protection sleeve. The direction of the escape must be apparent to the handler.

At the judge's direction, the helper attempts to escape straight ahead with quick, energetic running steps, without extremely or uncontrollably racing. Additionally, the protection sleeve is not to be moving, [so] the dog has the optimum opportunity to bite. On no account may the helper turn to the dog during the Escape, although he can have the dog in [his] angle of sight. Pulling away the protection sleeve must not occur. As soon as the dog has bitten, the protection arm is to be pulled tight [close] to the body by the helper while running straight ahead.

The judge determines the length of the maximum Escape distance to be covered by the helper. On the judge's command, the helper stops the escape. If the helper carries out the escape attempt with the appropriate dynamics, the judge has the optimum opportunity for evaluation. Any type of help offered by the helper is prohibited. For example exaggerated "feeding" of the sleeve before the bite, verbal agitation or hitting the soft stick against the pant leg before or during the escape, holding the sleeve without the necessary tension after the bite, slowing down as well as stopping the escape independently, etc.

Stopping the exercise, see No. 8 (applies to all exercises)

4. “Defense of an Attack out of the Guarding Phase” [Reattack] (Title levels 1-3)

The Reattack is undertaken at the judge's instruction, during which the padded stick is employed with threatening gestures above the protection sleeve without hitting the dog. At the same time, without moving the sleeve, the dog is attacked head on by going forward [at the dog] with the appropriate opposition. During this, the protection sleeve is held close to the body. If the dog bites, the helper positions it to the side and begins a drive (pressure phase) in a straight line. The helper must drive all dogs in the same direction. Consequently, the judge must be in a position so it is possible to evaluate the dog's behavior during the attack, during the drive, the bite, the out and the guarding. Driving the dog towards the handler is not permitted.

The hits with the soft stick are to be placed on the dog's shoulders and in the area of the withers. The intensity of the stick hits has to be the same for all dogs. The first hit is applied after 4-5 paces, the second hit after 4-5 more paces during the drive [pressure phase]. After the second stick hit, an additional drive without stick hits is to be shown.

The judge determines the duration of the drive (pressure phase). At the judge's signal, the helper stops the drive. If the helper performs the attack with the appropriate intensity, judge has the optimum opportunity for evaluation. Any type of help offered by the helper is prohibited, for example "feeding" the sleeve before the dog bites, verbal agitation or hitting the soft stick against the pant leg before the attack starts, holding the sleeve without the required tension after the dog bites, during the drive, inconsistent intensity during the drive and of the stick hits, stopping the attack independently if the dog shows an inability to cope with pressure, etc.

Stopping the exercise see No. 8 (applies to all exercises)

5. “Back Transport” (Trial levels 2 & 3)

At the direction of the handler and at a normal pace, the helper carries out a back transport over a distance of about 30 paces. The judge determines the course of the transport. During the transport, the helper may not make any abrupt movements. The stick and protection sleeve are to be carried in such a way that they create no added stimulation for the dog. In particular, the stick is to be hidden. The helper is to walk at the same pace for all dogs.

6. “Attack on the Dog out of the Back-Transport” (Trial levels 2 & 3)

At the judge's command, the attack out of the back transport is performed out of motion. The helper performs the attack by making a dynamic left or right turn and running energetically towards the dog. The soft stick is used to threatening motions above the sleeve. The sleeve is to be carried in front of the helper, close to the body. Any additional movement of the sleeve is to be avoided. Once the dog has bitten, while moving, the helper positions the dog to the side and begins the drive in a straight line. The helper must drive all dogs in the same direction. Consequently, the judge must be in a position so it is possible to evaluate the dog's behavior during the attack, during the drive, the bite, the out and the guarding. Driving the dog towards the handler is not permitted.

The judge determines the duration of the drive. On a signal from the judge, the helper stops the drive. An adequately energetic performance by the helper during the attack offers the judge an ideal opportunity for an evaluation. Any type of help offered by the helper is prohibited, such as the helper swerving extremely to one side before the dog bites, "feeding" the sleeve before the dog bites, verbal agitation or hitting the stick against the pant leg before the attack starts, holding the sleeve without the required tension after the dog bites or during the drive, inconsistent intensity during the drive, stopping the attack independently if the dog shows an inability to cope with pressure, etc.

Stopping of the exercise see No. 8 (applies to all exercises)

7. “Attack on the Dog out of Motion” (Trial levels 1 - 3)

On a signal from the judge, the helper leaves the designated blind at a normal pace (VPG 1) or at a running pace (VPG 2 and 3) and moves to the centerline [of the field] and

- * from a walking pace goes directly into a running pace and attacks the handler and dog head on while yelling and making threatening gestures with the soft stick (VPG 1).
- * without interrupting the running pace, the helper attacks the handler and dog head on while yelling and making threatening gestures with the soft stick (VPG 2 & 3).

The helper must catch the dog with a flexible sleeve position without coming to a halt. A rotation by the helper when catching the dog must be carried out as far as it is necessary in order to absorb the momentum of the dog. Under no circumstances may the helper run around the dog. Once the dog has bitten, while moving, the helper positions the dog sideways and begins the drive in a straight line. At this point in every case, the helper must avoid overrunning the dog. The helper must drive all dogs in the same direction. Consequently, the judge must be in a position so it is possible to evaluate the dog's behavior during the attack, during the drive, the bite, the out and the guarding. Driving the dog towards the handler is not permitted.

The judge determines the duration of the drive. On a signal from the judge, the helper stops the drive. An adequately energetic performance by the helper during the attack offers the judge an ideal opportunity for an evaluation. Any type of help offered by the helper is prohibited, such as the helper slowing down on the attack, catching the dog while standing still, swerving extremely to one side before the dog bites, running around the dog, "feeding" the sleeve before the dog bites, holding the sleeve without the required tension after the dog bites; during the drive, inconsistent intensity during the drive, stopping the attack independently if the dog shows an inability to cope with pressure, etc.

Stopping of the exercise see No. 8 (applies to all exercises)

8. “Stopping the exercise” (applies to all exercises)

Stopping of all defense exercises must be conducted in such a manner that the judge can observe the bite, the out and the guarding phase of the dog. (In other words, the helper is not to stop the exercise with his/her back turned towards the judge [but] maintains eye contact with the judge). Upon stopping the defense exercise, the helper must reduce resistance against the dog and motion stimulation is discontinued without noticeably relaxing the arm with the sleeve. The sleeve is not to be carried high but remains in the same position it was in during the previous exercise. The soft stick is to be held on the side of the body pointing downward, invisible for the dog. The helper is not allowed to provide any help for the dog to release. After the dog releases, the helper maintains eye contact with the dog. Additional stimulation as well as help of any kind is not permitted. If the dog circles the helper during the holding phase, in order to keep an eye on the dog, the helper is allowed to turn with the dog, slowly and without any sudden movements.

9. “Insecurities and Failure of the Dog”

The helper has to continue to pressure a dog that does not engage or comes off the sleeve during a drive, until the judge terminates the exercise. Under no circumstances is the helper allowed to provide any kind of help or stop the exercise independently. Dogs that do not out may not be influenced to out by the helper through body posture or movement of the stick. The helper is not allowed to make dogs that have a tendency to leave the helper during the holding phase, stay with the helper by stimulating the dog. In all the exercises or parts of the exercises, the helper must present himself/herself active or neutral in accordance with the trial regulations. If a dog bumps or grips the helper during the holding phase, the helper must avoid making defensive movements.