AMERICAN KENNEL CLUB™

Performance Events Department

August 2025

To: **All Clubs Licensed to Host Spaniel Field Trials & Approved Spaniel Field Trial Judges**

Subject: **ESSFTA Judging Criteria / Amateur Clarification**

This is to inform your club of three changes made to the *Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedure for Spaniels.* The English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association (ESSFTA) requested two changes be made to their breed's judging requirements: (1) Clarify that potential judges must follow the Apprentice Judging Guidelines as set forth by the ESSFTA. (2) Increase the required number of combined trials previously judged by both All-Age stake judges from 12 to 20. The third change provides clarification that when a dog is running in an amateur stake, the dog must be owned or co-owned by an amateur. These are changes made to an italicized section of the *Field Trial Rules and Standard Procedure for Spaniels* and will begin on September 1, 2025.

The exact wording of these changes are shown below by the underlining and strikethrough and will appear in the next reprinting of the rulebook as follows:

Chapter 5. Judges, Section 1. *English Springer Spaniel Field Trials*

The following judging eligibility requirements apply to All-Age stakes and water tests. Note: There are no requirements to judge the puppy stake. Judges must be a minimum of 18 years of age.

Prior to Apprentice Judging: An individual must attend a Spaniel Field Trial Seminar held by the English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association (ESSFTA) plus receive a passing score on a test administered by the ESSFTA.

Potential judging applicants must follow the English Springer Spaniel Field Trial Association (ESSFTA) Apprentice Judging Guidelines in order to be approved to judge.

Prior to Becoming a Licensed Judge:
An individual must have apprentice judged two Open All-Age and two Amateur All-Age stakes at English Springer Spaniel Field Trials. Minimum Standard for the Judging Panel: In order to be approved, the two Judges of an All-Age stake must have a combined record of having judged at least twelve (~~12~~ 20) All-Age stakes at English Springer Spaniel field trials.

Chapter 15. Rules for Spaniel Field Trials

Definition of A Professional

A professional shall be defined as any person who accepts, or has accepted, money, or other compensation (defined as anything that has a monetary value), for the field training or field trial handling of any breed hunting dog.

A professional may not compete in an Amateur stake. A dog running in an Amateur stake must be owned or co-owned by an Amateur. If someone has not acted as a professional for two (2) years preceding the trial, they may return to amateur status.

This rule update has been posted to the Spaniel Field Trials Rules Update webpage and emailed to all Secretaries and Presidents of organizations licensed to host spaniel field trials as well as all approved spaniel field trial judges. Please remember to keep your email address current so you can receive announcements. If you need to check or update your email address or if you have any questions or comments, please send an email to: fieldtrials@akc.org