



Poodle Club of America, Inc

**Rules and Guidelines for WC/WCX Tests**

*For Judges and all Participants*

**Poodle Club of America, Inc.  
Rules and Guidelines for WC/WCX Tests**

**RULES:** The Poodle Club of America, Inc. allows Miniature and Standard Poodles six months of age or over on the first day of the event that have been individually registered with AKC or individually registered with a foreign or domestic registry organization whose pedigrees are acceptable for AKC registration. Those poodles which meet the performance requirements will receive the Working Certificate or the Working Certificate Excellent. The purpose of the WC/WCX tests is to evaluate:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Natural Working Ability</li><li>• Marking Skills</li><li>• Willingness to enter and re-enter water</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Interest in birds</li><li>• Trainability</li></ul>
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**All WC/WCX tests shall be pass/fail.  
No Titles or Designations are awarded for test passes.  
Only one certificate will be issued for a WC or WCX pass to the same poodle**

**It is imperative that the handler be familiar with the regulations and guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers and (Chapter4) the standards for junior and senior hunting tests.**

These tests are designed to enable most Poodles with natural working instinct to pass the Working Certificate Test and with modest training pass the Working Certificate Excellent Test. These programs provide an avenue for Poodle owners to enjoy and develop an appreciation and understanding of the natural working abilities of their dogs and to engage in early training as a working retriever.

**Working Certificate**

**All WC tests shall be run in accordance with the regulations and guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers, Junior Hunting with the following exceptions:**

1. Retrieval of two single birds not to exceed 50 yards on land in light cover.
2. Retrieval of two single birds not to exceed 25 yards on open water.
3. The dog may be held at the line as steadiness is not required.
4. Delivery to hand is NOT required. The bird must be brought across a line to an area designated by the judges.
5. The dog must have a clear view of the fall.
6. No decoys
7. Handling your dog to a mark is not allowed. Encouraging a dog to hunt is allowed.

**Working Certificate Excellent**

**All WCX tests shall be run with the regulations and guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers, Senior Hunting with the following exceptions:**

1. Retrieval of a double mark not to exceed 75 yards on land in light to medium cover, with an honor.
2. Retrieval of a double mark not to exceed 40 yards in water.
3. Retrieval of one blind not to exceed 50 yards on land.
4. No diversion birds or shots.
5. No walkups.
6. Dogs should have a clear view of the fall.

### **Practice days and seminars**

Practice days and/or seminars may be held the day prior to the test on the same land, but at different locations from the site where the tests will be conducted.

## **WC/WCX Guidelines**

### **1. PCA Approval**

The Poodle Club of America grants permission to Affiliate Clubs and other AKC-licensed clubs to hold Working Certificate and Working Certificate Excellent Tests under the PCA Rules and Guidelines. Poodles meeting the requirements set forward in the Rules and Guidelines and which complete the designated tests at one of these events are eligible to receive a PCA WC or WCX Certificate. The club holding the test is the sponsor, not PCA. There is no limit to the number of tests a given club may hold as long as they are conducted properly.

### **2. PCA Application**

Clubs applying for permission to hold a PCA Working Certificate or Working Certificate Test must do so on the official PCA application. Applications may be obtained from the PCA website or from the PCA Affiliate Club Council Chair. You will find the name and address of this person on the Poodle Club of America web site. Send your completed application to the PCA Affiliate Council Chair at least 60 days prior to the test date.

To avoid a delay in approval, make sure the applications are filled out properly. When filling in the judge's qualifications (see #7 below), be sure to be specific.

### **3. Other Retriever Breeds**

PCA has no objections to non-Poodles running in the tests. The test giving club may require that non-Poodles run after all Poodles. PCA does not award certificates to non-Poodles. Each breed club has rules and regulations, and some will send certificates to the host club to give out to owners of the dogs of their breed passing the test. This should be arranged by the owners of the non-Poodles requesting to run in a Poodle test. It would also be good to remind the judges when they are making out their evaluation sheets that the PCA is only interested in the performance of the Poodles running. Other retriever breeds are allowed to run out of courtesy. The PCA does not want the performances of the breeds compared to each other.

**Only Poodles shall be allowed to run at tests that are associated with a National or Regional Specialty. These are "Poodles only" events and all aspects of them should be for Poodles.**

### **4. Purpose**

The purpose of the WC test is to demonstrate the natural ability of a Poodle. The dog should be a natural retriever, not afraid of guns and able and willing to swim and to reenter water. The WCX test is also designed to demonstrate memory and trainability.

### **5. Philosophy**

Attention to fairness and an attempt to carefully answer the questions of handlers and spectators should be undertaken. It is the intent of PCA to encourage the entrance of dogs into these tests and the participation of Poodle owners and handlers in all aspects of field work. To that end, an attitude of helping and educating those in attendance is sought from judges and committee members alike.

## 6. Handler Knowledge and Dog Work

It is the handler's responsibility to familiarize themselves with the WC/WCX Rules and Guidelines. If possible, attending several retriever hunt test events is encouraged prior to entering a WC/WCX test. The committee can help by making copies of the Rules and Guidelines available to all participants before the running of the tests. The WC/WCX rules are available on the PCA website.

## 7. Judges

PCA requires 2 judges. One judge must be **licensed** and should have judged at least one licensed AKC Senior Test or higher. The other judge must either be licensed (JH or higher) **OR** must have titled a dog in Senior or higher. In a test in which the entry is not limited, additional judges can be appointed by the club if the number of entries would otherwise prevent completion of the test during the days listed in the premium list.

**It should be noted if other breeds are invited that qualified AKC judges will be required.**

Judges should be receptive to the WC/WCX Committee. Any complaints from handlers will be directed to the Committee and the Committee or designated representative will approach the judges if there is a legitimate complaint, according to the majority of committee members.

Should the judges have questions prior to a judging assignment, they may contact the test committee of the club for answers.

Call back of dogs failing the first series may be allowed (and is encouraged) at the discretion of the judges. This encourages the full participation of dogs and handlers and can be used as a learning experience. Note that these dogs are to run after all qualifiers have run in each test level.

The decision of the judges shall be final in all matters relating to the test performance of the dogs. Full discretionary power is given to the judges to withhold any pass for want of merit.

## 8. Setting up the Test

It is the judges' job to set up the tests, not the committee's job. The committee should see that the judges receive the Poodle Club of America Inc. WC/WCX Rules and Guidelines in advance of the tests so they may familiarize themselves with PCA's intent regarding the tests. This document is also available on the PCA website.

The cover on land should be light for the WC and, light to moderate for WCX. The direction and intensity of the wind should be taken into consideration as well as the background and horizon. The dogs must see the gunners and the horizon must not obscure the view of the falling birds. Roads and hazards should be avoided for WC tests and are to be limited in nature for WCX tests. Consider any cover changes and ditches and roads when setting up the test as they can cause a dog to hunt short. Land marks should generally not exceed 50 yards for WC and 75 yards for WCX. Land blind for WCX should not exceed 50 yards.

In the water test the intent is to prove that a dog will go into the water, retrieve a duck and then have the courage to re-enter the water to retrieve yet another duck. Bank running temptations in WC and WCX tests should be avoided. Water marks should not exceed 25 yards for WC and 40 yards for WCX. Weather and conditions should be considered when setting the water test. Shorter distances are appropriate in difficult conditions.

For the WC, marks should generally fall into open water with no hazards, if possible. For WCX, light cover and limited hazards may be used for the marks. Decoys may be used.

The fall of the doubles should be at about 90 degrees apart.

The blind retrieve is a test designed to exhibit a dog's ability to take a line away from the handler as well as take direction at a distance to find a bird it did not see fall. The blind retrieve should not be complex and in light to moderate cover and is not to exceed 50 yards. It should be possible for a dog to find a well-planned blind-retrieve on

the initial line from its handler. Judges should make every effort to keep the blind clear of other marks and should be planned so that the dog is in sight continuously. While dogs should show the ability to follow whistle and voice or directional commands, a degree of tolerance is necessary as most of these are not seasoned dogs. Less control and more whistle and cast refusals can be accepted.

Sitting on the whistle is not a necessity, but dogs should demonstrate the capability to respond to directional control. Lining the blind is not required. It is preferable that the dog exhibits the ability to be under control. It is not necessary to handle the dog to the bird. A dog that takes a cast to the area of the fall, establishes a short tight hunt and finds the bird unaided should not be penalized. The intent is to encourage the dog to run the blind and show willingness to take direction from the handler. Popping (looking to the handler for direction without a signal) shall not be penalized.

For WC the judges should designate a line over which the dog must return with the bird, since return to hand is not required. The WC handlers must never go over this line (towards the retrieve) to recall their dogs.

Prior to each test the judges should have a handlers' meeting where questions are answered, guidelines discussed and a test dog demonstrates the test.

Severe weather or dangerous conditions may be cause for delay or cancellation of a test.

Since there may be dogs which run in all tests, it is preferable the same area is not used for all tests. If the same area must be used, the WCX should be run first, followed by the WC.

Blinds can be used at gun stations to camouflage wingers. Field workers must, and handlers should be encouraged to dress in appropriate hunting attire (camouflage etc.) or jeans and dark colored clothing.

## **9. Touching the Dog between Birds**

In the WC tests the handler may guide the dog by the collar between birds to get his attention before sending him for the second bird. For WC, at no time may the handler touch the dog before taking delivery of the bird. In WC the bird must be in the handler or judge's possession before touching the dog. It is advisable to ask the judge ahead of time what he/she considers guiding, or a demonstration is best. Touching the dog between birds or during the honor in the WCX test is prohibited.

## **10. Delivery of the bird**

In WC, the dog does not have to deliver the bird to hand but must deliver the bird across the line to an area designated by the judges.

In WCX the bird must be delivered to hand.

## **11. Birds**

Freshly killed birds should be used in all tests. This means birds that are either shot as fliers or are dispatched immediately before the test by the people in charge of the birds. Shot fliers are allowed, but not encouraged, for the WCX test, and are prohibited for the WC test. Frozen birds are not acceptable. If a local ban is placed on the transport and acquisition of live birds, thawed frozen birds or Dokken Waterfowl Trainers can only be used with the explicit prior approval of the PCA Affiliate Club Council Chair.

Upland game birds are defined as pheasant, pigeon, chukar, quail and any other species of game bird that might be unique to a specific region. Ducks must be game birds. Barnyard ducks are unacceptable due to size, color and lack of sufficient oil in their feathers to keep them afloat. Geese will not be used. **Ducks are the bird of choice for all land and water marks**, but upland birds may be used for the land portion of the tests if sufficient numbers of live ducks are unavailable. The type of bird to be used must be stated in the Premium List for the tests. In order to provide for the correct number of birds for a test, the committee should figure one water bird per dog entered in WC/WCX. One land bird (duck or upland) per dog entered in the WC/WCX. This should provide enough birds so

that the dogs running last will not have to retrieve ducks that do not float or upland birds which are of poor quality.

The humane care and treatment of birds is the responsibility of the test giving club. Crated birds must be sheltered from inclement weather, not overcrowded and have feed and water available. Shot game as it is retrieved during a test should be sacked at once and not allowed to pile on the ground. A crippled bird should be dispatched at once.

## **12. Controlled Breaks, Recasting and other Problems**

See the AKC Regulations and Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers Part V as a guide for dealing with some of the interpretational issues.

Running order will be determined by draw as described in the AKC Regulations & Guidelines for Hunt Tests. Handlers entering multiple dogs will be given time between dogs in each test.

Severe weather or dangerous conditions may be reason to cancel or delay a test. This may be decided by the judges and Committee in mutual consultation.

## **13. Limited Entries**

It is strongly recommended that when limiting entries at a WC/WCX tests, preference should be given to Poodles. Any Poodle that has already passed one of the tests should run first followed by first time Poodle entrants and then other breeds. This allows new Poodles and/or handlers the fairest chance. Day of entries may be taken at the host club's discretion.

## **14. Record Keeping**

It is required that all clubs use a catalog and keep a marked catalog from their WC/WCX tests. Have the Judges annotate pass/or fail and sign the catalog. Mail a copy of the marked and signed catalog to the PCA WC/WCX Test Chair and keep a copy for your records.

## **15. Consideration to Qualifiers**

A PCA-approved WC/WCX test held by a poodle club should submit a marked and signed catalog to the PCA Hunting Poodle Administrator. The catalog must be signed by both judges. Handlers of dogs who pass a WC/WCX test held by a licensed AKC club may submit evidence of their pass to the PCA WC/WCX Test Chair. If neither of these apply the handler may take a filled-in copy of the WC/WCX certification to the test and have the judges sign it. A copy of the certification is available on the PCA web site.

It is a nice gesture, although not required, for the host club to give some sort of token prize, rosette, congratulatory card, etc., to the handlers of dogs passing on the test day (qualifiers). This also gives the handler additional tangible proof that their dog qualified.

## **16. Collars and Neoprene Vests at the WC/WCX Test**

If a dog runs with a collar, a flat or rolled buckle collar shall be used. Choke collars are prohibited while the dog is running because of potential danger to the dog. Electronic collars and pinch or prong collars are not allowed on the grounds at a WC/WCX test. Dogs competing in WCX must be brought to the line off-lead and in the heel position. The use of a neoprene vest is allowed for these tests. The vest may NOT contain flotation devices.

## **17. After the Test**

Judges are required to submit an evaluation form to the PCA WC/WCX Test Chair within 7 days of the test. The host club is responsible for completing and submitting paperwork to the PCA WC/WCX Test Chair within 7 days of a test. This will assist PCA in the future development and refinement of guidelines and suggestions for test giving clubs and handlers. Judges are required to sign the PCA Catalog of Poodles passing WC/WCX tests so that the

owners can obtain their official award certificates from the PCA WC/WCX Test Chair.

### **18. The Committee**

The WC/WCX tests are intended to be essentially self-regulating. To accomplish this, the host club shall appoint a WC/WCX test committee. It is recommended that the Test Chairperson be a member of the sponsoring Club. At least three members of the committee, including the chairman, must be available during the test. The Committee shall have complete responsibility for the planning and conducting of the test. The Committee shall be held responsible for compliance with all of the rules and procedures and the authority to decide upon any matter arising during the running of the test except a matter coming within the jurisdiction of the judges. Such committee decisions must be made in accordance with the general PCA Rules and Guidelines for WC/WCX Tests and the Regulations and Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers. No person should agree to serve on a test committee unless he/she is prepared to carry out these duties creditably and exercise these powers fairly, firmly and impartially. A club member serving as a judge for a test should not serve on the committee. The committee should be familiar with the PCA Rules and Guidelines for WC/WCX Tests. Although the judges set up the tests, it is important for the committee to know that if the judges set up a test that is contrary to the intent of the PCA rules, the committee should step in and tactfully explain the problem. In this way you can ensure a proper test for those competing.

While PCA is always prepared to back up a test Committee that properly exercises its powers as described herein, it is the duty of the committee and not the PCA to deal initially with any matter which may occur during the tests.

The WC/WCX Test Chairperson should also have a copy of the AKC Regulations and Guidelines for AKC Hunting Tests for Retrievers available.

### **19. Complaints**

Each participant is expected to do his part to keep up the standards of the WC/WCX tests and to report to the Committee any incident which may be detrimental to the purpose or the rules of the tests. No person shall make complaints directly to the judges but shall work through the Committee which is held solely responsible for the conduct of the tests.

Upon receipt of a complaint or suggestion, the member or members of the Committee is expected to take appropriate action. If the complaint is of a serious nature which may be detrimental to the purpose of the rules of the WC/WCX test, the entire Committee should convene immediately to hear the complaint. After duly hearing the evidence in a fair, orderly and impartial manner, the test committee may decide to withhold the issuance of any WC/WCX Certificate provided that the Committee did determine that the WC/WCX Rules and Regulations had been violated.

If the Committee does withhold a certificate based on a detrimental incident, then the reasons for withholding it must be submitted to the PCA WC/WCX Test Chair within 30 days.

A participant who is dissatisfied with the action taken by the Test Committee of the host club may submit an appeal in writing to the PCA WC/WCX Test Chair within 30 days. Such appeal should describe the nature of the incident and set forth the grounds on which the appeal is made.

Upon receipt of a written appeal involving the WC/WCX test, the written records from the Test Committee of the host club and from the complainant will be submitted to the PCA Affiliate Club Council Chair, who will investigate the incident and submit a recommendation to the PCA Board of Directors for final action. The PCA Board of Directors shall have the power to withhold or rescind any or all WC/WCX Certificates.

If the Test Committee of a host club fails to fulfill its obligation with respect to the planning and conduct of the WC/WCX test, the question may arise as to whether the club will be entrusted with future PCA Certificate events.