

Utility Gundog Society Herts, Beds & Bucks Yearbook 2026



Utility Gundog Society - Herts, Beds & Bucks

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Website: <https://www.utilitygundogsociety.com/branches/hbb/>

Committee & Officers

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Committee Members	Jackie Bone, Amanda Bourne, Sammy Elliott, Deborah Goodman, Jenny Hookham, Roy Jarman, John Keegan, Sharon Smith, Andrew Wright

Chairman's Report

2025 was a busy year for the Club. Harriet Newcombe meticulously organised a series of Working Tests starting off with the Open Qualifier at Easneye Estate, followed by a Novice and Special Puppy Test at Standon, Puppy, Novice Dog/Novice Handler and Veteran at Rickney's and ending with the Open Walked Up Sugar Beet Test at Manor Farm, Royston. In addition, Harriet put together a fantastic Working Test Finals at Woodhall Park. Thank you, Harriet, for negotiating to use the grounds, for carefully selecting the Judges and for attracting the many willing and experienced helpers and for casting the Club in such a professional light.

Steve Coxell stepped up to the mark in 2025 as Field Trial Secretary and skilfully organised two Novice Trials at Kings Walden and the All-Aged Qualifier at Standon. We are grateful to Steve for his care in selecting the grounds, the Judges and the helpers and for the smooth running of each event. For a first year in office Steve did a remarkable job in overcoming the many difficulties faced in this role.

Training is a very good way of initiating and graduating one's interest in competing and working with gundogs. We are grateful for Louise Bailey's hard work over several years and wish her happiness and joy devoting more time to her family going forward. Welcome on board Connie Chappell who has volunteered to organise the evening training sessions in 2026.

We can only enjoy our sport because of the generosity of landowners who allow us to use their interesting grounds for Working Tests and Field Trials. We are exceedingly grateful to Philip Smith, Jeffrey Pearman, David Rand, Andrew Wright, Danny Breeze, Peter Rushbrook, Tom Fletcher and Sir Richard Pilkington.

I am blessed at HBB with a wide community of dog loving friends. When the need arises, they are glad to help. Thank you, Abbie, for co-ordinating our entry to team events and to Roy for coming forward as Trophy Secretary. I am completely reliant on the dedication and input from the long termers like Jose, Jon, Tammy, Phil, John, Andrew, Jackie and Sharon. You never cease to amaze me with your passion and ingenuity for our sport. Thank you, team!

I wish all the Committee and Members a successful and happy year ahead with your dogs

Jim Collins
Chairman



Notice of AGM

**The Annual General Meeting of the Herts, Beds and Bucks
Branch of the
Utility Gundog Society will be held on
28th February 2027 at
Standon, Herts
All members most welcome.**

Election of Officers & Committee Members

All Officers to retire annually but may offer themselves for re-election.

No member of the committee may serve for more than 3-years without standing for re-election.



Membership and Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due on 1st February each year

Single Member	£12 per annum
Joint Members	£17 per annum
Young Handlers – 16 years old and under	FREE

New members (except Young Handlers) will pay a “one off” joining fee of £10 together with the annual subscription.

Joint membership is offered to allow for dogs that are registered with multiple owners but does not allow both joint members to participate in the same event.

If your subscription is not received by 1st April, a re-joining fee of £10 will become payable in addition to the annual subscription fee. Members can update their details through their profile page online.

Please be aware that only fully paid-up members of UGS Herts, Beds & Bucks are entitled to participate in our Working Tests at the membership fee of £15. Non-members are welcome to enter if space permits at an increased fee of £25.

We prefer that membership payments are made by Bank Transfer, or through Standing/Debit Order (please use your **surname and postcode** as the payment reference) as per the Standing Order Mandate. We do still accept cheques.

Cheques should be made payable to:

Utility Gundog Society Herts, Beds and Bucks

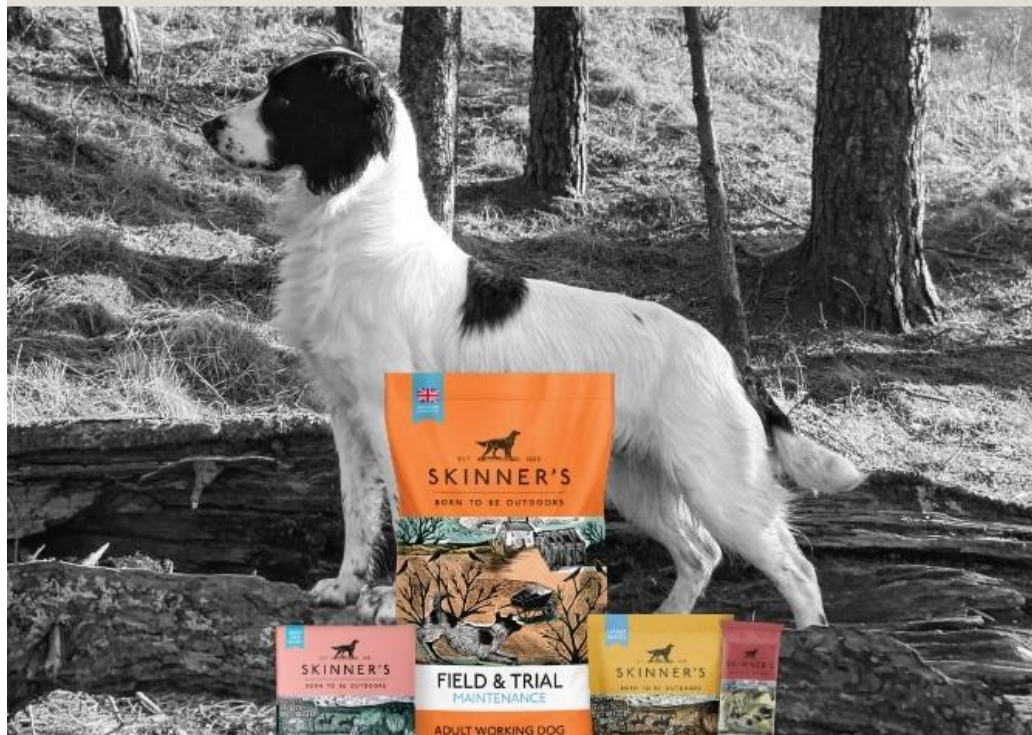
And post to: Jonathan Desmarais
Membership Secretary
17 Apple Tree Close
Biggleswade
SG18 8NF

Change of details:

Please send any address changes to the above address, or by email:

jonde99@yahoo.com

When renewing your membership annually you agree to your personal details being held on our computer (see *UGS Rules and Regulations on our website detailing the club's privacy notice*).



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Using the Website

The UGS HBB uses the website as an online portal for membership and event management. It also provides entry into our events. Below is a short guide on how to use the new online portal. We welcome constructive feedback so we can improve the user experience. Please read the sections below carefully.

User Registration

Existing members will not need to create a new portal account, [your username will be your recorded email address](#). You should have received an email from the system with these instructions. If you did not receive this email, check your spam folder. If you are unsure which email we have in our records, contact us via the support options listed below in the "Need Help?" section.

If you need to register a new user account, click on the [LOGIN](#) menu item above and complete the **USER REGISTRATION** section.

Membership

User registration does not constitute membership. Membership should be applied for by following the instruction on the [MEMBERSHIP](#) page. Our events are open to non-members; therefore, membership is not mandatory.

Updating Your Details

You must [LOGIN](#) with your portal user to access your profile details.

You can view your account details on the [PROFILE](#) page which can be found in the **MEMBERS** menu. Please ensure your details are accurate and maintained. Only you and system admins can see these details. Your details will never be shared.

Note: *your email address is also your login name, you can change that at any time from the [PROFILE](#) page.*

Adding Dogs

In order to enter events, you must add your dogs to the system; this can be done from the [PROFILE](#) page, which can be found in the **MEMBERS** menu. At the bottom of the [PROFILE](#) page click the **ADD DOG** button and enter the required details.

Note: *It is important that you maintain your dog's qualifications, as this will be considered during event draws.*

Entering Events

To enter events, you must [LOGIN](#) to the portal.

Events can be entered through the [EVENTS & RESULTS](#) menu item.

Choose the desired event from the list and click the **EVENT DETAILS** button. You will be presented with the main Event Page, divided into TABs (Schedule, Entries, Draws, Results). You can enter the event on the **SCHEDULE** tab, using the **ENTER EVENT** button. The other tabs are self-explanatory.

Withdrawals: *If you need to withdraw from an event, please contact the appropriate events secretary.*

Substitutions: *If you need to substitute your dog at any time please contact the appropriate events secretary.*

Note: *The event system is "Dog Owner Specific". That presents some limitations with respect to managing other people's dogs.*

- *Dogs added to a user account assume that user to be the dog owner, and will be recorded as such in all documentation.*
- *Dogs can only be entered into events by the user account to which that dog is added.*
- *If you manage other member's dogs, you will need to maintain one user account for each of those members.*
- *All automated notifications will only be sent to the user email address.*

Reset Password

Your first login will require a password reset, do that on the [password reset page](#). Make sure the field does not include any blank spaces before or after your email address.

Need Help?

We understand a new system can be somewhat daunting; we are here to help. If you have any problems accessing or using the website, feel free to contact us.

- Via Email [Support](#)
- Via [WhatsApp](#)



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Spaniels Field Trial report

It's been a very busy year for the spaniel section. As well as individual branches addressing spaniel training, the parent body spaniel section has run two working tests with the second test including a puppy test and 4 trials, an open cocker spaniel, an open AV excluding cocker spaniels, a novice cocker and a novice AV including cocker spaniels.

To accommodate the branches being both north of the river and south of the river Thames, one test was run north by kind permission of Andy Waterhouse at Romanriver gundogs which was the spring test and the summer test was south of the river at Balcombe Estate, East Sussex by kind permission of Ross Dymond the head keeper at Balcombe.

Again, with the trials, we have been really lucky with grounds. Savernake forest for both our open trials in Wiltshire and Shadwell estate in Norfolk for both our novice stakes.

As always, a huge thank you to all our hosts for providing the grounds, all the helpers that have thrown dummies, fired guns or stewarded at the tests or stewarded, game carried or just helped at the field trials. Another huge thanks to all the judges who have given up their time to look at everyone's dogs this year. Really looking forward to cracking on with 2026 once this season has finished

James Reavil
UGS Spaniel Section Field Trial Secretary



Spaniels Trial & Test results

Novice & Open Working Tests: Saturday 7th June 2025

The results of the Utility Gundog Societies - Spaniel section working novice and open working tests held today at Romanriver Gundogs, brightlingsea, Essex by kind permission of Andy Waterhouse. Our judges were Steve Newman (B) and Vicky Payne (NP).

A huge thank you to the helpers who threw or placed dummies, stewarded and helped in general. Thanks to Sporting Saint - Gundog Training Equipment and Test Valley Lanyards for sponsoring

Novice:

- 1st place Corona Fire Baby of Killake: ESS Bitch,
Handler: Kevin Williams
- 2nd place Pursley Johnnie Walker: ESS Dog, Handler: Jane Lintott
- 3rd place Pursley Misdemeanour: ESS Bitch, Handler: Mrs T Wolfe
- 4th place Musspring Super Trouper ESS Dog, Handler: D Buckland
- CoM Syncerus Sassy: ESS Bitch, Handler: Nicky Hunter
- CoM Lytracaney Cai at Ravensyard: CS Bitch,
Handler: Stephanie Ravin-Aagaard

Open:

- 1st place Coverscout Amethyst at Tilearies: ESS Bitch,
Handler: J Earey
- 2nd place Bowhill Babe at Tilearies: ESS Bitch, Handler: J Earey
- 3rd place Corona Fire Baby of Killake: ESS Bitch,
Handler: Kevin Williams
- 4th place Natcar Barnes Wallis ESS Dog, Handler: R Cayford
- CoM Shiveck Moonlight Princess: ESS Bitch, Handler: David Cobb



Spaniel Working Tests - 24th August 2025

Sunday 24th August saw UGS spaniel section run its 2nd working test of the year at the fabulous Balcombe Estate, Sussex by kind permission of Miss Martin and Mr Dymond.

Thanks to our judges John Keegan (A) and Dick Hyde (NP) who judged novice and Open and Bob Cayford (NP) who judged puppy. A huge thanks to all the helpers that came along and threw dummies or fired guns and to Julie Curling who was kind enough to bring cake and brownies for everyone!

Thanks to Skinners who sponsored the working test, a first for the spaniel section and a massive thanks to Vicky Payne who kindly sponsored the trophies for puppy, novice and open.

Another thank you to everyone for entering the tests and supporting the club.

The results were:

Puppy:

1 st place	Poppymore Firefly ESS Handler: L Redman
2 nd place	Tilearies Gomez ESS Handler: J Earey
3 rd place	Tilearies Morticia ESS Handler: J Earey
4 th place	Casabaid Hopsotch CS Handler: Jo Hewison
CoM	Cwsaethu Viper CS Handler: E Garrow
CoM	Casabaid Hopsack CS Handler: Jo Hewison
CoM	Cwsaethu Wolfman CS Handler: M Gaskins
CoM	Dakotagun Deck of Cards ESS Handler: K Arlott

Novice:

- 1st place Countryways Urban CS Handler: Steven Owen
- 2nd place Curlianne Galaxy Buttons CS Handler: J Curling
- 3rd place Mathershill Griffin Beaubrook CS Handler: P Brown
- 4th place Taffswell Ramps ESS Handler: A Austin
- CoM Jeggamoors Sweet Chestnut ESS Handler: K Lomas
- CoM Spinnchetti Teeter ESS Handler: L Redman

Open:

- 1st place Bowhill Babe at Tilearies ESS Handler: J Earey
- 2nd place Coverscout Amethyst at Tilearies ESS Handler: J Earey
- 3rd place Mathershill Griffin Beaubrook CS Handler: P Brown
- CoM Natcarw Barnes Wallace ESS Handler: R Cayford



Open AV (excluding Cocker spaniels)- 3rd November 2025

On 3rd November 2025, we held our Open Any Variety Spaniel Excluding Cocker spaniel at Savernake Forest, Wiltshire by kind permission of Mr and Mrs P Howard. Thank you to Simon Blackman for helping facilitate this ground.

The Judges were Angelo Lo Curto & Tom Phillips

- 1st place Marketgate Valley of Valaraukar, Handler: Lewis Cozens
- 2nd place Howesywe Daphne, Handler: James Luxford
- 3rd place Countryways Octavia, Handler: Dave Templar
- 4th place Shiveck Sovereign of Craigs court, Handler: Craig Kilpatrick
- CoM & Gun's Choice: Cindersash Orson, Handler: Oliver Organ
- CoM Polopit Posy, Handler: Craig Gilbert
- CoM FT Ch Shiveck Piccolo at Nossewej, Handler: Steve Newman
- CoM Countryways Barnaby Boy, Handler: Dave Templar



Open Cocker Stake – 13th November 2025

Held at the wonderful Savernake Forest, Wiltshire by kind permission of Mr and Mrs P Howard. Thank you to Simon Blackman for helping facilitate this ground.

Judges were John Keegan & Andy Faulkner

Huge thanks to our sponsors Pureflax and skinnePureflaxood.

Congratulations to the winner making the dog up to FTCH

RESULTS

- 1st place Woodash Beaufort Belle, Handler: Dave Rayner
- 2nd place & Gun's Choice: Beggarbush Kwik, Handler: Ben Randall
- 3rd place Rookhurst Throne of Curlianne, owned by Julie Curling handled by Chris Burns
- 4th place Peasedown Singing by Samsir, Handler: Simon Blackman
- CoM Burghope Delinquent of Wisternox, Handler: Victoria Usher



Novice Cocker Stake – 1st December 2025

Held at Shadwell Estate, Suffolk in lovely bracken. A massive thanks to Robert the head keeper and Jessie the FT supervisor there who made us incredibly welcome and made sure we got in and amongst it. Thanks to our judges who were Gerry Meehan & Vicky Payne. A huge thanks to the guns and all those who helped make it a good trial.

RESULTS:

- 1st place Rookhurst Reign, Handler: Chris Burns
- 2nd place Mallowdale Quack, Handler: Luke Hamilton
- 3rd place Linddraig God's Gift for Queensfleet, Handler: Godfrey Lowe
- 4th place Greenfox Echo, Handler: Rebecca Gyton



Novice AV including Cocker – 8th December 2025

We held our final trial of the season, our Novice AV inc cocker spaniels at the fabulous Shadwell estate in Norfolk. Thank you to the estate, especially Jessie and the keeper Rob. A massive thank you to all the helpers and the guns for putting birds on the ground.

Judges: John Keegan & David Gosling

A huge thank you to everyone for supporting me during this field trial season.

RESULTS:

1 st place	Greenfox Starfruit, Handler: Rebecca Gyton
2 nd place	Greenfox Starlight, Handler: Andrew Gyton
3 rd place	Chadsmynydd Hurricane, Handler: Carl Colclough
CoM	Meridgeness Mary, Handler: Mick Reader
CoM	Haredown Robb, Handler: Daniel Keep
Gun's Award	Twizzlecreek Hattie, Handler: - Gill Holliday



Josefine van der Dussen interviews Simon Chapman

Communication: Why Clarity Is the Cornerstone of Dog Training

Simon Chapman grew up surrounded by dogs, developing a deep understanding of canine behaviour from an early age. At 17, he joined the military, where he served for 25 years, gaining extensive experience in working with and handling dogs across various disciplines.

After leaving the military, Simon pursued his lifelong passion for dogs, founding K9 Manhunt & Scent Work Scotland in 2017. Over the years, he has trained thousands of dogs in disciplines such as nose work, tracking, man trailing, and obedience.

He writes daily articles on his Facebook group. These articles are handler focused. Dog handling is 90% handler - 10% dog. All articles are well written, joyful stories and you'll find something relating to yourself in every article. The article below relates to all levels of dog handlers. Enjoy reading!

“Dog training does not fail because dogs are stubborn, dominant, anxious, traumatised, or “just wired that way”. Training fails far more often because communication is unclear, inconsistent, or emotionally muddled.

We talk endlessly about motivation, drive, reinforcement, genetics, arousal, thresholds, and tools, all of which matter, but none of them work properly without clear communication. Before obedience, before behaviour modification, before relationship building, there must be clarity.

Dogs do not struggle with learning. They struggle with decoding us. Dogs are brilliant at reading information, just not the information we think we're giving.

Dogs are exceptional communicators. They read:

- Body position
- Weight shifts
- Breathing patterns
- Muscle tension
- Facial expression
- Eye direction
- Tone, pitch and rhythm of voice
- Environmental patterns and routines

What they do not do well is interpret:

- Contradictory rules
- Emotional inconsistency
- Delayed feedback
- Vague verbal noise
- Human assumptions

When a dog appears “confused”, what we are really seeing is a dog attempting to make sense of conflicting data. In reality, clarity reduces stress.

A dog that understands:

- what is expected,
- when it is expected,
- how to succeed,

and when it is finished, is a dog that can relax.

Dogs learn through:

- timing
- consistency
- consequence
- pattern recognition, not paragraphs.

A single, well-timed marker or command delivered consistently will outperform a thousand emotional words.

Timing: The Silent Language Most People Ignore

Timing is communication without words. If your reward is late, the dog learns the wrong thing. If your correction is delayed, the dog links it to the environment, not the behaviour. If your praise comes randomly, it loses meaning. Dogs live in the moment of behaviour. Humans live in the story about the behaviour.

Consistency: The Rulebook Must Not Change Daily

Dogs do not generalise rules automatically. If the rule changes based on mood, time, company, guilt, or convenience, the dog does not see flexibility, they see instability.

Clear communication requires:

- the same rule,
- applied the same way,
- by the same people,
- every time.

Boundaries Are Communication, Not Control

Boundaries are often framed as limitation. In reality, they are information.

A boundary tells the dog:

- where they can be,
- what they can do,
- when they can do it,
- and where responsibility lies.

Dogs without boundaries are not free, they are burdened with decision-making they are not equipped to handle.

Clear communication requires emotional neutrality:

- calm voice,
- relaxed posture,
- decisive movement,
- predictable outcome.

This is leadership, not dominance.

Final Thought: Train the Dog in Front of You, Communicate With the Dog in Front of You

Dogs do not need:

- louder voices,
- longer explanations,
- or emotional negotiations.

They need:

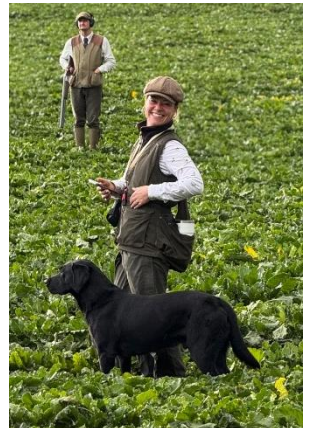
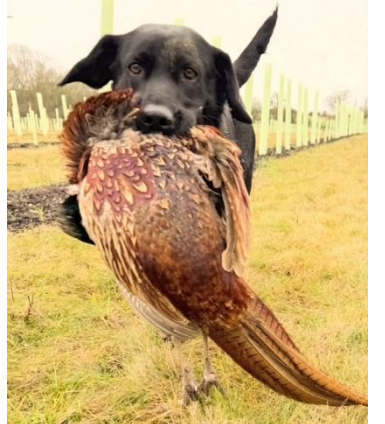
- clear signals,
- fair timing,
- consistent rules,
- and calm leadership.

Communication is not what we say. It is what the dog understands.

And clarity is the greatest gift we can give them."

<https://www.facebook.com/share/p/1DFxz7uhUq/?mibextid=wwXlfr>





Working Test report & results

Working Test report

We've had another successful year for the Working Test season with all the tests going well.

Thank you to all those that helped make the days run so smoothly, I honestly couldn't run the days without my amazing helpers and everyone on our fabulous committee!

I would like to thank our generous sponsors Sporting Saint and Skinners for their continued support at each of our working tests and I am pleased to announce they will be sponsoring us again this year.

If anyone would like to offer their help this year please email me at Harriet.newcombe94@gmail.com, helping is a great way to learn about working tests and to see what is required by both dog and handler. It also allows you to see some truly great dog work.

Looking forward to the year ahead!.

Harriet Newcombe
Working Test Secretary



First test held was the **Open Qualifier** on Sunday 16th March at Easneye Estate, Ware, by kind permission of The Buxton Family.

Judges: Andrew Wright (A2617), Craig Horwill (B2589), Julia Reed (B3557) and Michael Crutchley.

We were very kindly sponsored by Skinner's Field and Trial, and Sporting Saint. A big thank you to the landowner, judges and helpers for all your hard work and for a great day.

Open Qualifier

1 st place	Tammy White with Birdsgreen Lyric of Bobwalden
2 nd place	John Scott with Abbotsannfirefly
3 rd place	Steve Coxell with Brockaghs Llan
4 th place	Andrew Cooper with Dapplebrook Laxtons Superb
CoM	John Keegan with Geordieland Wolfie



- Tammy White with Birdsgreen Lyric of Bobwalden winning **The Marlborough Trophy** and **The Rayleas Cup**.
- John Scott with Abbotsannfirefly winning **The Edrith Cup** to the Runner up.
- Lesley Crompton with Hanwoodgold winning **The Leanchor Cup** for The Best Golden Retriever.
- Andrew Cooper with Dapplebrook Laxtons Superb winning **The Riverlily Working Dogs Trophy** for Youngest Dog in the Awards. .

Second test held was a **Novice Working Test** and **Special Puppy Working Test** on Sunday 4th May at Standon Lordship by kind permission of Phillip Smith.

Judges: Jim Collins (B3377), Steve Coxell, Marianne Copp and Sarah Nickels-Hawkins

We were very kindly sponsored by Skinner's Field and Trial and Sporting Saint. A big thank you to the landowner, judges and helpers for all your hard work and for a great day. Also a big thank you to Amelia Nicholls at Pawtraits Photography for taking photos on the day



Special Puppy

- 1st place Roy Jarman with Sirenbirch Ennerdale Head
- 2nd place Steve Bancroft with Hanans Heart of Gold

Novice

- 1st place Andrew Wright with Millgreen Basil of Wadesmill
- 2nd place Jeanette Lithgo with Meddrows Primrose
- 3rd place Helen Knight with Jaycote Firestorm Tallulah
- 4th place Fiona Joint with Waveneyway Brandy by Hullabaloo
- CoM Pearl Tickell with Artistryn Eddy

Next, we hosted the **UGS Area Finals 2025** on Sunday 8th June at Woodhall Park, Watton-at-Stone by kind permission of Mr Abel Smith.

Judges: Jim Gale and John Keegan

Awards:

1st Place - Herts, Beds & Bucks with 422 points, winning the Halday Cup:

- Tammy White with Birdsgreen Lyric of Bobwalden
- John Scott with Abbotsannfirefly
- Steve Coxell with Brockaghs Ilan
- Andy Cooper with Dapplebrook Laxtons Superb

2nd Place - Surrey, West Sussex and Hampshire with 413 points:

- Louie Robertson with Mitforton VaVa Voom
- Bryony Hamilton with Welige Lady Sybil of Wight
- Michael Crutchley with Mitforton Teal
- Nick Pastias with Blue Mist of Hillside

3rd Place - Kent and East Sussex with 411 points:

- Marianne Copp with Easthoath Benedict
- James Brindley with Easthoath Beatrix
- Beth Morgan with Rookhollow Dahlia of Woodlandway
- Jon Debnam with Tullysedge Lone Star

4th Place - Eastern Counties with 394 points:

- Sharon Dingle with Bellspaddle Norah
- Lesley Crompton with FtCh Hanwoodgold Breeze
- Callum Raywood with Pinfeathers Excalibur
- Sadie Montague with Staalwijk's Otto of Willowrose

Top Dog winning the **Westernash Trophy** with 113 out of 120 points after a run off was John Scott with Abbotsannfirefly

Judges Choice winning the **Tilly Trophy** was James Brindley with Easthoath Beatrix

Thank you to Abbie Reid for the fabulous photos!



Third test held was a **Puppy, Novice Dog Novice Handler and Veteran Working Test** on Sunday 13th July at Rickneys Training Ground by kind permission of Andrew and Julie Wright.

Judges: Phil Allen (A003), Angie Townsend, Keith Townsend and Cynthia Thackwell.

We were very kindly sponsored by Skinner's Field and Trial, and Sporting Saint. A big thank you to the landowner, judges and helpers for all your hard work and for a great day.

Puppy

- 1st place Lesley Crompton with Mistygreen Meadow Land
- 2nd place Jenny Hookham with Sirenbirch Gunnerside Gill
- 3rd place Steve Coxell with Brockaghs Jana
- 4th place Tammy White with Bobwalden Kestrel
- CoM Jim Collins with Brockaghs Jarlath

Novice Dog Novice Handler

- 1st place Gosia Seton with Teywillow Humming Bee
- 2nd place Dave Forster with Montoux's Ember
- 3rd place Kevin Fleckney with Lyebreach Raven
- 4th place Becky Stone with Lyebreach Black Ash
- CoM Lesley Bloomfield with Theodore Thames

Veteran

- 1st place Michael Crutchley with Mitforton Neon
- 2nd place Abbie Reid with Riverlily Summer Star
- 3rd place Glynis Hillier with Lannakers Quest of Tofts
- 4th place David Sworder with Mistybrook Ebony
- CoM Jenny King with Riverlily Sunshine Swift At Lyebreach

Congratulations to all those in the awards!



UGS HBB held an **Open Walked-up FT Lines in Sugar Beet** on Sunday 3rd August. Near Melbourn, Royston by kind permission of Mr D Rand.

Judges: Nick Clitheroe (A2450) and Andy Mutimer (B3733)
Steward of the Beet: Sharon Dingle.

Sharon did an amazing job keeping the competitors on their toes today as nobody knew what was coming next, really made for great trial scenarios. There was also a surprise retrieve of the day



Awards

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1 st place | Anthony Peters with Atikonak Bullrush |
| 2 nd place | Steve Coxell with Brockaghs Ilan |
| 3 rd place | Lesley Crompton with FTCh Hanwoodgold Breeze |
| CoM | Abbie Reid with Lyebreach Golden Eagle Of Riverlily |
| CoM | Jacqui Crew with Millgreen Rocket (youngest dog in the card!) |

We were very kindly sponsored by Skinner's Field and Trial, and Sporting Saint. A big thank you to the landowner, judges and helpers for all your hard work and for a great day.

Thoughts from the podium...

A chance to hear a sampling of the thoughts of a few of the all-weather, all-terrain entrants who shone on their days:

Tammy White with Birdsgreen Lyric of Bobwalden – 1st Place Open Qualifier 16th March 2025 at Easney Estate

“The 16th March was a bright spring day at the beautiful Easney estate near Ware in Hertfordshire for the UGS HBB Open Qualifier, by very kind permission of the Buxton family.

The first test we had was two long marks, one a memory mark and the other a long run to the river with the mark the other side. We couldn't see from where we sent but apparently the banks were tricky to negotiate and caught some dogs out. Sedge had marked them both well and we were on our way. The second test was a blind on an angle over a ditch and up a steep hill in the woods, and if the dog went too far it was out of sight. The second element was a memory mark over the ditch on the opposite angle on uneven ground.

Our third test was two blinds with no shot, we were given three different areas and asked to pick at two of them, handler's choice which two, but then told that at one area was an injured 'bird'. This we picked first and my second choice area went smoothly.

Our final test was a two dog walk up and we were done.

There followed a run off between two dogs and then the awards. It transpired that the run off had been for second place and Sedge and I were announced as the winners. I was absolutely delighted as the competition was strong and there were only two points separating 1st and 4th place.

A big 'thank you' goes to Harriet and her team of helpers, and also to the four judges - Andrew Wright, Craig Horwill, Julia Reed and Mike Crutchley.

It was lovely also that various members of the Buxton family came to watch at times during the day.

The final thank you goes to my special girl Sedge, who gives me everything and loves it all!”



Roy Jarman with Sirenbirch Ennerdale Head – 1st place Special Puppy 4th May at Standon Lordship

“Knowing that the UGS HBB always put on well-organised and fair tests I decided to enter Duke for their special puppy test on May the 4th at Standon Lordship. He was only 11 months at the time but felt he could cope and the experience would be good for him.

Superb grounds and fair but challenging tests alongside experienced judges made the day very pleasurable. And the icing on the cake was he won so one very happy and proud owner-handler.”

Many thanks UGS HBB.”



Andrew Wright with Millgreen Basil of Wadesmill – 1st place Novice

4th May at Standon Lordship

“Test 1 - My first test of the day was a two dog walked up, two dummies were thrown by different throwers. I was sent first for a marked dummy and went straight to the mark and he retrieved it well back to me. Then the 2nd dog was sent for the memory retrieve. We all walked forward and the exercise was repeated except I went second with the memory mark retrieve and then my running partner had the first mark.

Test 2 - A long distraction mark into an open grass field and a blind alongside a riverbank into the corner of the field. My dog managed to complete blind first and, on his return, retrieved the memory.

Test 3 - In the Willow trees, double blind. A shot fired for each blind, pick the first blind in front and then the other distraction blind at an angle. The first retrieve was a bit tricky as you lost sight of your dog as it got near the blind. The second retrieve was a bit easier as there was a trackway but you had to make sure your dog was in right area to wind the dummy

Test 4 - Double Blind. First retrieve was a long blind in front and down a dip then up to a scrubby patch on the hill. On your dog's return you had to turn your dog around one hundred and eighty degrees and send it down the hill for the second blind. My dog managed to negotiate both retrieves although this was the hardest test for my dog.

I would like to thank Harriet for setting the tests which weren't easy but they were fair. I think everyone would have gone home with things to think about and work on, including me.

I would also like to thank the judges and all the helpers for their efforts on the day!”



John Scott with Abbotsannfirefly – 1st place with UGS HBB Team, and Top Dog winner

UGS Area Finals 8th June 2025 at Woodhall Park, Watton-at-Stone

“I was lucky enough to qualify with two UGS clubs, so as I'd given my word to Harriet after the first qualification competition, so it was game on with a very strong team indeed alongside my talented team mates Tammy, Steve and Andy. Our team's potential for a good result was favourable, but at this level everyone has potential.

The team were all quite familiar with one another from various competitions and the omens were good. So, on behalf of my esteemed team mates...

Woodall Park is a very scenic and glorious setting on such a day as it was with bright sunshine casting a glow over all of us. This simply encouraged a warm ambience amongst the competitors as they arrived to be treated to a warm drink and a bacon roll, the early birds may have able to bag a couple of rolls, well done to the very efficient organisers, who did a sterling job throughout the competition.

John Keegan and Jim Gale were our eminent and very knowledgeable task masters; they were soon to be seen plotting our demise within the gorgeous sunny kissed setting. The tests would soon prove to be difficult, challenging and very relevant.

Team events allow for discussion and debate prior each test in regard to suitability, capability, strengths and weaknesses in regard to handler and the dog, honesty and no fibs

are the order of the day, we all get on very well so this works very as does some help and advice during the actual retrieve that is also allowed.

Our first two tests were set by Jim who is a very friendly, amiable and helpful judge.

A mixture of two very long memory marks and a couple of very technical marked retrieves over a very wide deep ditch, two lots of water and thick reeds. These were without a doubt the hardest of the day. Good team work shone through and we succeeded in achieving a very good score on our first test, which settled our nerves no end.

Jim was clearly using the topography to produce very long, very visible retrieves in a very good natural spectator friendly setting. The well-manicured estate really was the most perfect setting and a real pleasure was being had competing here.

We achieved both of Jim's tests with aplomb and confidence for a solid performance so far. John, who runs a calm and settled regime had a similar mixture of very long retrieves which began with a simulated drive followed by memory marks and such like.

Good marking, strong out runs, precise handling, distance perception and team discussions saw us turn in another strong performance, I must also mention our slice of good luck which is a prerequisite of all these competitions.

Our team had an inkling that our overall score could well be a good one as the competition had been held on very open ground and every had a chance to certain amount of spectating, which was a real treat enabling us all to watch some first-class dog work and handling.

My call up for the top dog run off was good reflection of our team performance and I felt that I was representing all of my fellow team mates in the run off for top dog as it was down to all of our efforts that I was able to turn in a good score and win the top dog award, but an round brilliant team achieved overall first team.

My marvellous little dog, Biscuit, deserves a mention as she chooses, or not as the case may be, to pay attention and demonstrate on the day that she was indeed the top dog. As I gave my speech I was almost overwhelmed by emotion and I must apologise for a swear word, but as I cast glance around the company I was in, I felt that the apprentice had got one over on the wizards."



Lesley Crompton with Mistygreen Meadow Land – 1st place Puppy

13th July 2025 at Rickneys Training Ground

“A very warm summer’s day saw a good turnout at the superb Rickney’s Gundog Training ground for the Puppy Working Test. A big entry of good dogs & some very capable handlers, so the game was on!

My young lad made a good job of the walk up, where the dogs were required to pick two individual marks, with a section of walked up in between each. Certainly, tested the puppies’ tendency to run in!

This was followed by a long mark into cover, then one had to turn one’s dog to pick a water mark, which landed just out of sight on the island. As with most young dogs, dropping of the wet dummy in order to shake was a common problem, but luckily my boy resisted the urge & delivered nicely to hand! We then moved on to a double mark to shot, in long grass, which most puppies completed nicely. The day was rounded off by a short mark landing in cover just above the river bank, which tempted some dogs to jump down into the water. My twit definitely thought about taking a quick swim, then fortunately winded the dummy behind him on the land just in time, whew!

The second element in this test was a blind to shot on a track, with a sneaky fork in the track proving troublesome to some.

All in all, some sensibly thought out retrieves by the judges, which suitably tested all the key factors required by a competent gundog. Thank you UGS HBB for a good day, well planned & efficiently carried out by Harriet & her great team of helpers.

I was over the moon when my youngster was awarded 1st place, as there was a strong field of puppies & and an even stronger spirit of competition amongst their handlers! Well done little guy, you did me proud!”

Gosia Seton with Teywillow Humming Bee – 1st place Novice Dog Novice Handler

13th July 2025 at Rickneys Training Ground

“Blipper and I took part in our second Utility Gundog Society HBB test, entering the Novice Dog Novice Handler category at Rickneys on Sunday 13th July. It turned out to be a much bigger and more memorable day than we had anticipated.

The test comprised four exercises with varying levels of difficulty. We began with the water test, which involved a retrieve from the island followed by a long memory through tall grass. Blipper was focused and confident from the outset, delivering two clean and faultless retrieves and scoring maximum points on the test. A great start to the day!

The second test was a double mark across open ground, which he completed confidently and with good delivery. The third test combined a mark and a blind, where Blipper again showed strong understanding of the task, required minimal handling, and worked with good commitment. The final test was a walk-up, and we finished the day on a high note with another strong performance.

Across the four tests, Blipper scored full marks on two of them. While there were a few small hiccups along the way, nothing was significant, and they gave us useful areas to work on in training. To our surprise and delight, we were placed first overall. To say I was in shock is an understatement.

This was our first ever Novice Dog Novice Handler test, and I could not have been prouder of Blipper’s focus, confidence, and enthusiasm throughout the day. The event was excellently run, with professional judges who provided thoughtful and constructive feedback.

The atmosphere was welcoming and supportive, and the organisation of the day was spotless.

Blipper is my first dog, and this journey has been a huge learning experience in understanding what motivates him and how best to work together. I am incredibly grateful to Abbie and Harriet at Riverlily Working Dogs for their training and support. Without them, we would never have made it this far. This was a birthday gift I could never have dreamed of, and I could not be more proud of my boy”

Michael Crutchley with Mitforton Neon – 1st place Veteran

13th July 2025 at Rickneys Training Ground

“Sunday 13th July was not just a day out for the Puppies and Novice handlers but for a few old dogs as well. The Veteran test was run on very much the same lines as the other groups. Held at Rickney’s training ground by kind permission of Andrew and Julie Wright With Amber in her twelfth year, and her handler six times her age and old enough to know better we were drawn first to run. Our wonderful judges had set four lovely tests – Phil Allen a mark with distraction, Angie Townsend a mark with memory over a short splash, Keith Townsend a short walk and a couple of marks finishing with Tammy White and a tricky distraction in white grass. The judges were very kind to us and Amber being an old soldier knew the tricks and only dropped a point to take home the UGS veteran shield for the second year. We look forward to being fit enough to return in 2026 to defend the title.

Thank you so much Harriet and your lovely crew for running yet another enjoyable summer day’s sport. And to our lovely competitors who made it such a laugh. We truly love the veteran circuit – no pressure!”



Anthony Peters with Atikonak Bullrush – 1st place Open Sugar Beet

3rd August Near Melbourn, Royston

“I remember this day as one among friends with perfect conditions for the dogs, a gentle breeze, cloud cover and dry under foot. The sugar beet was short following a long dry spell but gave good cover for the dummies. The preceding day Bertie had been wildly off the whistle in a similar Test so I had arrived without hope. My mood swing between arrival and departure was sweet indeed. As Jim Collins handed over the trophy he implied, with amusement, I had now qualified to have one of his puppies, that puppy is now 7 months old as I write, I shall be back...”

When asked to say a few words I hope I conveyed the appreciation of all of us competitors to Harriett for her work and that of her team for yet another very enjoyable Test. Then in a moment of regret, I realised I had overlooked the skills of the one person tasked with its success, our Line Steward, Sharon Dingle. I take this chance to say thank you Sharon. The Tests were varied and challenging, everyone knew what they were doing, no one dared step out of line. Perfect... I thank also the judges, Nick Clitheroe and Andy Mutimer, who were calm and easy to stand with and whose kind words afterwards were much appreciated.

For my part a long mark in front over a ridge was heart stopping, an unexpected mark behind didn't fool Bertie whose awareness and speed on the turn made it look easy and then a memorable long blind diagonally down the line showed his speed and straight line running at its best, a little handling in the area was the only point lost in the day. One needs some luck from time to time and this day Bertie approached every retrieve on the right side of the wind which always helps.

Now I shall cherish the awards photograph, for there, coincidentally, in line beside me, are the three Trainers that have, each in their turn, helped me over many years and I owe them greatly. Jacqui Crew, Abbie Reed and Lesley Crompton.

Congratulations to all involved and for a most successful day.”



Field Trial Reports & Results

Steve Coxell , Honorary Field Trial Secretary

14 Dog Novice Stake, Kings Walden Shooting Estate on 18th October 2025

By kind permission of Sir Richard Pilkington

Judges: Mr R Ketley, Mr A Mutimer, Ms C Wilkinson, Ms A Reid.

It has been 17 years since the club held a Two-Day Open Trial at the Kings Walden Shooting Estate. This year the club came back to the estate to hold not one, but two novice trials. All thanks to the Head keeper Tom Fetcher. Although Tom was fairly unfamiliar to trialling, he has been more than accommodating. He also allowed committee members to organise a few walked up training days prior to the trials. I think that Tom will be the first to admit that it has been a steep learning curve, however he deserves our respect and admiration. Trialling can be a bit of an odd ball in the game shooting world, but Tom and his team have taken it in their stride and finished the season, having had hopefully a few laughs on the way.

The shoot is situated across 6000 acres of the Kings Walden Estate in the lovely rolling Hertfordshire countryside. We all started from the yard and walked to a nearest field. The day was set to go; we walked up through fields of Oil Seed Rape. The game came nicely, but occasionally sparingly, which was testing for the dogs in line. The game was shot under fantastic conditions and gave the dogs plenty of opportunity to show style and ability. The guns for the day made the trial run extremely smooth and were shooting to the highest standard. The picker upper was left redundant! The third round saw long retrieves across the line and with this challenge the judges were able to pick a clear winner.

RESULTS

- 1st Place & Gun's Choice: winning: [The Earnsfield Teal Memorial Trophy and The Raynton Park Trophy](#): Carrigvales Paddy handled by Rob Collins
- 2nd Place winning [The Pintailen Cup](#):
Easthoth Beatrix handled by James Brindley
- 3rd Place Halorros Brandy handled by Miss Sarah Cox
- 4th Place Gwidigada Atlantic spirit handled by Mrs Jennifer Thomas
- CoM: Millgreen Basil of Wadesmill handled by Mr Andrew Wright

Many thanks to my helpers: Tammy White, Roy Jarman, Jim Collins. Josefine van der Dussen



The All-Aged stake, Standon on 29th November 2025

Judges: Mr P Allen, Mr J Collins, Ms H Newcombe, Mr A Wright.

By kind invitation of The Smith and Pearman Families. The history between the Smith/Pearman shoot and the UGS HBB goes back a long time and is uninterrupted. Our president has been picking up with his dogs for many years and the chairman, the field trial secretary and a few other committee members followed in his steps. In return for our excellent service in the winter, the shoot invited us to run the trial. This was the first year where the syndicate was shooting one drive and left the competitors to pick the birds, the guns went to the next drive only for us to catch up at the second drive. The trial needed three drives to finish, and the judges supplied enough challenging retrieves to end on a good result.

The first round saw pretty much all 14 dogs in the water, with birds tucked into the reed beds & strong runners throughout. Most dogs made it through but the 2nd drive within the willows demanded patience & grit from all competitors. A Final 3rd drive added more water, long retrieves on grass, and the trial was finished with 4 dogs left on 5 retrieves.

- 1st Place & Gun's Choice: winning [The Liphook Game Farm Trophy](#) and [The Geordieland Cup](#): Charnpark Fisher handled by Arthur Cook
2nd Place: winning [The Manymills Cup](#): Brockaghs Ilan handled by Steve Coxell
3rd Place Carningvale Donegall handled by Peter Abbs
4th Place Hecktorkirk Garsdale of Flypatch handled by Tim Brain



14 Dog Novice stake on 12th December 2025, at Kings Walden Shooting Estate by the kind permission of Sir Richard Pilkington.

Judges: Mr T Brain, Mr D Laffin, Mr M Elsey, Ms J van der Dussen.

For the last trial we came back to Kings Walden. Head keeper Tom Fletcher welcomed the judges, guns and helpers with the now famous coffee, tea and bacon rolls. The day seemed at the start a repeat from the first trial with the same glorious weather, but the few hares being shot presented a challenge for some young dogs and we lost three dogs in the first round. The guns shot exceedingly well again and the dogs were able to show their marking and game finding abilities. Our winning dog performed solid on the day and the judges were satisfied to award a first!

AWARDS GIVEN

- 1st Place Lyebreach Golden Eagle Of Riverlily handled by Abbie Reid
 winning [The Jason Memorial Trophy](#);
- 2nd Place Ashlevel Master handled by Keith Bianchi
 winning [The Geoff Hicks Memorial Trophy](#);

Many thanks to Jose, Tammy, Jenny and everyone else that has helped me during the season!



UGS Team Events 2026

The Club plans to enter the following Team Events in 2026:

East Anglian Game Fair Team Event

26th April at Euston Hall Estate

The Team will include 3 open dogs.

Sherborne Castle Country Fair

25th May at Sherborne, Dorset

The Team will consist of 4 open dogs

The Southern Area Interclub Team Challenge

7th June, at Gardners Farm, Ashburnham

The Team will include 3 dogs: 1 open, 1 novice and 1 NDNH.

UGS Open Finals

21st June, at Isenhurst, Heathfield

The Team will include 3 open dogs.

The Team of 3 Open dogs will be decided by qualification at the HBB Branch Qualifier Test on 22nd March

If you have a dog with suitable experience, please email Abbie Reid at outdoorchick99@hotmail.co.uk to express your interest in joining the Team. The Club is willing to make a contribution towards the expenses of those members selected to run for the Teams and everyone will be given a club t-shirt.

2026 Working Test schedule

Retriever

Open Qualifier: Sunday 22nd March at Blakesware, Ware

Judges: John Keegan, Colin Pelham, Sue Berman and Ben Starns

Novice and Special Puppy: Sunday 12th April at Easneye Eastate

Judges: Abbie Reid, Jennifer Thomas, Josefine Van Der Dussen and Liz Taylor

Puppy, NDNH and Veteran: Sunday 12th July at Rickneys Training Ground

Judges: Jim Collins, Steve Coxell, Tammy White and Roy Jarman assisted by Jenny Hookham

Open Sugar Beet on Field Trial Lines: Sunday 2nd Aug, (*location tbc*)

Judges: – Peter and Karen Hurst, steward of the beet – Sharon Dingle

Retriever Working Tests can be entered on our website or with a postal entry. Entry forms are available on the branch events page on the website.

Spaniel

Novice & Open Working Test: Sunday 15th March at Rivers Wood, Balcombe Estate, Balcombe, East Sussex

Judges: Ms T Siwek (A3772) and Mr C Burns (NP)

NOVICE STAKE: Open to dogs or bitches not having won a 1st in a Novice Working Test, or a 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in Open Working Test or ANY Field Trial Award

OPEN STAKE: Open to dogs or bitches of an Open Test Standard

ENTRY FEES: Members £15.00 per dog Non-Members £20.00 per dog

ENTRIES CLOSE: Saturday 1st March 2026

ENTRIES TO: James Reavil. The Old Cottage, Smallhythe Road, Tenterden, Kent. TN30 7NF Telephone:07545 476 381 email: James.reavil@icloud.com

Please include your name, membership number and Code SWTq on Entry Forms.

2026 Branch Training schedule

This spring and summer you can train and test your dog on the prestigious and purpose build Rickneys Dog Training Ground in Bengeo, hosted by the Herts, Beds and Bucks branch.

Several classes run in parallel, with handlers and dogs grouped into appropriate levels for Spaniel and Retriever. We welcome new handlers.

Dogs require at least basic obedience: walk to heel, sit and stay and must be at least 6 months old to attend. Bitches in heat should not be brought to the ground.

Costs are **£13 per session. Cash only!** Junior handlers 16 years old and under go for free

No booking required, just show up. Enjoy some tea, coffee, cake and a chat after the class!

Contact the training evening coordinator, **Connie Chappell** at chappellconnie4@gmail.com with any questions.

Dates: 13th May, 20th May, 27th May, 3rd June, 10th June, 17th June.

Time: 18:00 for 18:30 start usually continues for about 2 hours, light permitting. **Please do not turn up for training before 17:30 under any circumstances**

Details can be found on the website.
www.utilitygundogsociety.com



Definition of Working Tests

To be in conjunction with UGS and
Kennel Club GWT Regulations

Novice Dog/Novice Handler:

Neither dog nor handler to have won any award, including unclassified certificate of merit at a Field Trial, or 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th or COM in an Open Working Test, or 1st in ANY test.

Special Puppy: (unclassified)

Open to any dog less than 2-years old on the day of the test.

Puppy:

Open to any dog less than 18-months old on the day of the test.

Novice:

Any dog of any age not having won: a Field Trial award including a COM; a 1st in a Novice Test or any test above Novice level.

Intermediate: (unclassified)

Graded between Novice and Open. Any dog of any age not having won a 1st in any Intermediate or Open Working Test or 1st, 2nd, or 3rd in a Field Trial.

Open:

Open to all dogs although preference in a draw will be given to branch members and dogs who have qualifications making them ineligible to run in any other category test.

Veteran: (unclassified)

Open to all dogs aged 8-years or over on the day before the test.

Young Handler:

Any person 16 years old and under at the time of the test.

Excerpt from the 2026 FT regulations

b. The following classes of competition are recognised by the Royal Kennel Club:

(1) **OPEN**. Open to all dogs of a specified breed or breeds, although preference may be given to dogs which have gained an award or certificate of merit at a field trial, been placed first, second or third in an open GWT, or first in a Novice GWT. 33J(G)

(2) **NOVICE**. Confined to dogs which have not gained an award or certificate of merit at a field trial, been placed first, second or third in an Open GWT or first in a Novice GWT held in accordance with Royal Kennel Club Rules and Field Trial Regulations.

(3) **PUPPY**. Open to all dogs of specific breed or breeds less than eighteen months of age on the date of the test regardless of awards gained.

(4) **NOVICE DOG/NOVICE HANDLER**. Confined to dog and handler who have not gained any award in a field trial or classified GWT or won a Novice Dog/Novice Handler test.

(5) **UNCLASSIFIED**. Open to all dogs of a specified breed or breeds, but may be restricted by conditions as determined by the society. To include water and team tests. A water test can include dogs of any sub-group competing together. However, if dogs of more than one sub-group are competing as a team, each sub-group will compete and be judged in accordance with the Royal Kennel Club Gundog Working Test Regulations relating to that group.

