

RISK ASSESSMENT FOR ALL COCKER SPANIEL CLUB FIELD TRIALS

A. POSSIBLE HAZARDS

1. Personal injury resulting from the intended or accidental discharge of a shotgun, driven or falling shot, falling game, noise or blast.
2. Slips and falls on ground that may be wet, uneven, sloping or marshy.
3. Hazards associated with the crossing of water courses, hedges, fences, other natural and man-made obstacles. Whether shooting, beating, picking up, competing or members of the public present.
4. Injury resulting from direct contact with barbed wire, thorn hedges, low branches or other naturally occurring or constructed features of the landscape and from livestock that may be alarmed or disturbed.
5. Hazards associated with the use of vehicles on private land or public highways.
6. Hazards associated with being in the vicinity of machinery on private land or public highway. This is to include crop spraying activities and chemicals that may be associated with this operation.

At risk are:-

- Persons using shotguns (referred to Guns) and their companions.
- Persons employed or volunteering to drive/hold game for the Guns.
- Those placed in charge of the line (Steward of the Beat).
- Hosts, persons employed or volunteers or competitors that collect and retrieve shot game with dogs.
- Those Officials, Judges and Volunteers that are present to run the Field Trial.
- Drivers of vehicles.
- On-lookers and members of the public and press.

B. CODE OF PRACTICE TO BE OBSERVED BY ALL PERSONS TAKING PART OR WATCHING

1. The Organiser will brief all present before moving off, a copy of this Risk Assessment will be displayed within the designated Registration Area.
2. All Guns must be competent at handling shotguns in a safe manner and must be in possession of a valid shotgun certificate and have Public Liability Insurance. The Estate or Cocker Spaniel Club will be responsible for ensuring that all Guns comply with the above requirements depending on whether the Estate or the Club provides the Guns.
3. Vehicles provided to transport Guns, Competitors and Officials must be suitable for the purpose and terrain that is to be encountered. Adequate seating must be provided, no dogs will be allowed in the driving compartment of the vehicles. The driver of each vehicle must be acquainted with the route and terrain over which they are to travel and be aware of the other vehicles in the party.
4. Shotguns and ammunition must not be left unattended under any circumstances.
5. All persons involved should wear suitable non-restrictive clothing, adequate to provide protection from the elements and stout water resistant footwear. It is the responsibility of all persons attending that they equip themselves adequately and appropriately with ear protectors.

6. Guns must keep their weapons in a covered slip until arrival at their allocated position in the field trial line. Shots must not be fired prior to or after the signal is given to start/stop shooting. The Judges or Chief Steward may request the stopping of shooting should there be sufficient game on the ground or the shooting of game whilst dogs are working.
7. In the event of an emergency the drive/trial will be stopped immediately and all weapons must be unloaded and placed back in the covered slip. Should this occurrence be caused by the involvement of persons that are opposed to the activity the Steward of the Beat in consultation with the Chief Steward and Judges must arrange to vacate the ground without the need for confrontation.
8. A shot must only be taken when it is safe to do so. Guns must be aware at all times of the proximity of those closest to them, other Guns, Beaters, Stops, Pickers Up, Officials, Judges, Competitors, Press and Members of the Public and also aware of the location of public footpaths, bridleways, highways and livestock in the vicinity.
9. All members of the party must respect the property on which they are invited guests, be aware of the local terrain and likely hazards and conduct themselves in a friendly and environmental way.
10. Members of the public and competitors that are not required in line must stay with the Gallery within the RED FLAG at all times and obey the instructions of the Officials or Members of the Estate Staff.
11. Any safety equipment deemed necessary for a shooting day such as safety glasses and hearing protection should be provided by the guns and competitors themselves and not the Club however the Club does recommend their use.
12. Everybody involved must keep away from agricultural machinery, although it will not normally be working in the areas where the shoot is taking place.

If the Code of Practice is observed, the risk to human health and safety posed by possible hazards that may be encountered during this authorised activity are deemed to be low.