

# UKC® FEIST SQUIRREL HUNT HONOR RULES

Revised September 1, 2022

## 1. HONOR RULES

Before beginning a hunt, a deadline time for completion of hunt will be announced and time posted in plain view of all hunters. The deadline time of hunt and return of scorecard to Hunt Master/HD shall be indicated on the scorecard. Host club has the option of conducting 60, 90, or 120-minute hunts. Hunting time must be the same for all casts and must be announced. All hunters, judges, and/or guides must be drawn publicly for their cast. Owners having multiple entries will have dogs drawn on separate casts if possible. Dogs to be drawn to the fewest casts possible. All dogs, including Champions, to hunt entire hunt time unless scratched. Casts are not to be drawn until after entries close at the listed deadline. Those in entry line at deadline time will be entered.

All events will be run as a combined entry, unless specified to be a breed specific hunt. Any one-dog cast requires a non-hunting Judge be assigned to that cast.

## 2. HANDLERS

The handler's duties are to know their dog's voice and nature. Also, to advise Judge of any of the dog's peculiarities before hunt begins and to tell Judge when dog trees.

- It is the handler's ultimate responsibility to know the rules and abide by rules, and the decisions of the Judge, Hunt Master, Hunt Director, and Question Panel.
- A handler must always conduct himself/herself in a sportsmanlike manner. A handler becoming loud, aggressive, or belligerent may be scratched regardless of the merit of his/her argument. A handler displaying unsportsmanlike conduct or failing to abide by these rules shall be reported to the hunt director. Refer to Misconduct Guidelines found on website.
- Any handler found guilty of interfering with another handler's dog in any way that would affect their ability to compete may be subject to disciplinary action.
- A handler may not encourage, discourage, scold, or discipline their dog during the cast. This includes the use of hand signals
- to control the dog. Praising a handled dog is not considered encouraging. Refer to Rule 13 (q), if applicable.
- A handler may not leave the cast without permission from the judge for any reason. The judge may give a handler permission to leave the cast to search for their dog during time-out. Judge may grant permission for handler to go to their dog on a separate tree after the tree is closed or if all dogs are declared treed, handled, or hunt time expires. EXCEPTION: Handlers may not be granted permission or leave the cast, while search time is running during the scoring of a tree, to go handle a dog on a split tree.
- Each handler is encouraged to remain with the cast for the entire hunt even though his/her dog may not be a part of the cast. Cast members retain voting obligations if dog is withdrawn or scratched. EXCEPTION: If handler is scratched for misconduct that handler loses all voting privileges.
- If permitted, a handler is allowed no more than three spectators. See Rule 4. Handler's dog(s) will be scratched for rule violations by their spectators.
- It is the handler's responsibility to check time and score before signing scorecard.

## 3. JUDGES AND GUIDES

Clubs have the option to use non-hunting judges for any or all categories. One or the other must be used on all casts within a given division. Non-hunting Judge may be assigned to any cast at the discretion of Hunt Master and/or club officials, if deemed necessary. Cast members do not have the authority to designate or assign a non-hunting judge to their cast. The authority of the Judge ceases when the scorecard is turned in to the Hunt Master.

### NON-HUNTING JUDGES

- The Non-Hunting Judge has complete authority and is responsible for making all decisions, including the scoring of all trees, calling time out and whether or not a tree has been previously scored.
- The decision of the Non-Hunting Judge may be questioned in the field at the time the decision is made, or a call that is not

being made. It will be scored with a question mark (?) and taken to the Hunt Master/Hunt Director after the hunt is over, unless it involves a dog being scratched from the hunt. The Non-Hunting Judge's decision cannot be overturned in the field by a majority vote of cast members. If a question has not been satisfactorily resolved by the decision of the Hunt Master, a Panel may be formed for a \$10 fee (this is the first step when utilizing the HD Format). If a handler is still not satisfied the Appeal procedure must be followed. All Appeals must be filed immediately after the Panel has ruled and must be accompanied by a \$20 fee.

### HUNTING JUDGES

- When a non-hunting judge is not utilized, a hunting judge will be appointed to each cast. This person must have knowledge of the rules and be able to interpret and apply them in a fair manner. Authority of the Judge begins when he is officially designated and receives the scorecard.
- They will show no favors to any dog or hunter and will inform handlers of score and time recorded, if requested.
- If hunting Judge scratches his dog he should continue to judge the cast as a hunting Judge. The following procedure must be followed when using Hunting Judges:

- The host club must designate a Hunting Judge for each cast from the entries received (see procedure for selecting hunting judges under Hunt Master/HD Guidelines (Drawing Casts)).

- The Hunting Judge has complete authority and is responsible for scoring all situations with exception to three situations only.

The following three situations go directly to a majority of the cast vote:

- Scoring a tree (plus, minus, or circle). This does not include 1) the decision on whether or not the squirrel could cross out to an adjoining tree or scoring multiple trees as one tree or; 2) whether the game seen is a squirrel or off-game. The Hunting Judge makes those decisions, but they may be questioned by a handler as outlined below (7).
  - Calling time out.
  - Whether or not dogs are on a previously scored tree.
- Any cast members, though scratched, retain all voting privileges. Exception: If handler is scratched for unsportsmanlike conduct handler loses all voting privileges.
  - In the event only one cast member remains in the hunt, handler must return to Hunt Master/Hunt Director for a Non-Hunting Judge to complete cast. Deadline may be extended, if necessary, for this cast only.
  - Should a situation arise where a handler questions a call that was made, or a call that should have been made but wasn't, that handler may ask to have his question voted on by all cast members that remain with the cast at that time.
  - Majority of cast rules. Each handler must vote, or their dog will be scratched. If majority decision is not reached, the call stands as it was scored by the Judge. Any handler that is not satisfied with the majority of cast decision retains the right to place a question mark (?) on the card and present his question to the Hunt Master/HD Panel.
  - If the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved by the decision of the Hunt Master, a Panel may be formed for a \$10 fee (this is the first step when utilizing the HD Format). If a handler is still not satisfied the Appeal procedure must be followed. All Appeals must be filed immediately after the Panel has ruled and must be accompanied by a \$20 fee.

### GUIDES

- A Guide is willing to take a cast to a location where they can hunt safely and has permission. Any member of the cast, be it a non-hunting judge, hunting judge, or handler, may be a guide.

## 4. SPECTATORS

- The Hunt Director will discuss and announce if spectators will be allowed on casts, if agreeable with the majority of cast members. Spectators should be allowed to accompany the cast if possible.
- There shall be no more than three (3) spectators allowed per

handler on any one cast unless otherwise agreed upon by the remaining cast members.

- c. Handlers shall be responsible for the conduct of spectators accompanying them on casts. Handler's dog will be scratched for rules violations by their spectators.
- d. Spectators must follow the directions of the judges and Hunt Director/Hunt Master.

## 5. CELL PHONE USAGE

Cell phones may be used for keeping time and other reasonable situations during the hunt. Cast members should not be using them to contact other casts or individuals at the club to find out information pertaining to scores. Individuals found guilty of correspondence or relaying any type of electronic messaging with reference to scores, that is deemed detrimental to the integrity of event placements or the hunt, are subject to suspension from United Kennel Club.

## 6. TRACKING AND TRAINING COLLARS

**Tracking Only Devices:** The handheld of locating only devices may be carried by the handler. Device may be used during the hunt but only under strict provisions as outline below. A dog must be heard treeing before a tree call may be accepted regardless of any tree alerts on the handheld.

**Tracking and Training Combo Devices:** Any handheld device capable of both locating (tracking) and controlling (stimulating or toning) may not be carried by the handler during the hunt. The handheld must be left in the vehicle and may not be used by the handler or spectators during hunt time. However, the handheld may be used during time out situations during the hunt for locating purposes only.

**Training Only Devices:** Any handheld device capable of controlling a dog (stimulating or toning) must be left in vehicle and may not be used by handler or spectators until dog wearing device is scratched and all other dogs are recovered for re-casting. Controlling device rule violations may result in suspension.

**Under no circumstances shall telemetry be used to determine the scoring of any dog(s).**

If by way of telemetry a handler deems dog to be in danger, per an item outlined in Rule 14, they may ask for a cast vote to call time out. If a majority is not reached the handler may withdraw then handle the dog due to safety concerns.

At no time may a handler demand the cast walk in the direction of a dog that has not been heard opening. The judge, or majority of the cast when hunting judge is used, may agree to walk in that direction.

When considering the use of telemetry during the hunt the handler may not interfere with any handler's ability to listen for their dog. This to be rigidly enforced. Handlers not adhering after being warned of such by the judge; shall result in their dog being scratched from the cast.

A Hunt Master / Panel may not consider any debate that is based on telemetry use.

## 7. POINT SYSTEM

- a. No strike points will be awarded.
- b. 100 points for dog declared treed first; 50 points second; 25 points third.
- c. Points may be split for tree position when called tree positions cannot be determined.
- d. If squirrel is caught on the ground, points are received as follows: three dogs 58.3 points, two dogs 75 points, and one dog 100 points.

## 8. GENERAL INFORMATION

- a. Judge is to be informed of any dog's peculiarities before the hunt.
- b. Cast must remain together unless timeout is called, or permission has been granted by the judge.
- c. A dog must bark to be declared treed.
- d. When a dog is declared treed by the handler, the dog must hold the tree for 2 minutes, unless all dogs are declared treed or handled or hunt time expires. Dog must bark at least once every minute. (If only one dog in cast or one dog remaining in cast, dog must still hold tree for 2 minutes.)
- e. Any dog declared treed within hunting time will be scored.
- f. After a dog(s) is declared treed, the cast is to move at a

reasonable pace towards the tree but not arriving at the tree prior to the two-minute tree time elapsing, the handler of the dog declared treed 1st will determine how close to the tree is acceptable as long as it's not interfering with the dog treeing or encouraging the declared dog to stay treed.

- g. After the two minutes has elapsed, the tree is considered closed, and no other dog may be declared treed on that particular tree.
- h. If dog is minused for leaving or failing to bark, the tree shall be reopened and first tree position available if no other dog was declared treed.
- i. After 2 minutes and tree is closed the judge may declare that the dogs can be handled, handlers can leash their dogs only after judge permits. See Rule 2 (e) if applicable.
- j. The Judge should observe and make sure that dog declared treed is showing treed by either looking up or barking up before allowing handlers to leash their dogs. Dog is not to be minused if he comes back a short distance to meet handler so long as the dog returns to the tree and trees satisfactorily. If a dog declared treed is not showing treed, by ACTIVELY TREEING dog to be minused and tree reopened if no other dogs have been declared treed. Actively Treeing is determined by judge or, if questioned, by the majority cast vote when hunting judge is used. Once tree is declared closed and dogs are in sight dogs are not required to continue to bark but must remain at tree or be minused.
- k. When dogs tree and squirrel (excluding ground squirrel or flying squirrel) is seen within the 5 minutes of search time: (1) by a non-hunting Judge, or (2) by a majority of the cast when hunting Judge is used. Squirrel must be in tree dog is on or in a tree within 15 normal steps (45') of tree dog is on.
- l. Only one tree is counted even if more than one squirrel is up tree.
- m. When squirrel is seen timbering from tree to tree and the dog is moving with the squirrel, the tree is to be scored as plus. This applies only if squirrel is seen.
- n. Dog must be turned loose after tree is scored. However, if another dog is already treed, handler has the option to hold onto dog or turn loose, so long as at least one dog is still out hunting.

## 9. SPLIT TREE

- a. If dog's tree on separate trees that are over 15 steps (45 feet) apart this will be declared a split tree and points will be awarded separate. Separate time must be kept on each tree unless all dogs are declared treed. In case of a split tree, the judge will go to the first dog called treed and that tree will be checked first. The dog called treed second; handler will be allowed to go to the tree and leash his/her dog with judge's permission, unless the cast is already in process of scoring the tree. See Rule 2 (e). Handler is to return to the cast for judging of the other dog's tree unless non-hunting judges is being utilized.
- b. Dogs treeing on separate trees within 15 steps (45 feet) and more than 1 squirrel is found, the second squirrel must be seen in the actual tree that the second dog is treed on for the dog to receive split tree points. Split points can only be awarded if at least one of the other dogs in cast was declared treed before the tree closed and after the 1st dog's squirrel is found.
- c. Dogs treeing on separate trees within the 15 steps (45 feet) and only one squirrel is found, it shall be scored as one tree.

## 10. POINTS WILL BE MINUS

- a. When dog has been declared treed and dog leaves tree. (dog's must be actively treeing.) If dog returns to tree within the two minutes he will receive the next available position on tree, unless all dogs have been declared treed.
- b. When dogs tree and (1) a non-hunting Judge or (2) a majority of the cast when hunting judge is used, can plainly see no squirrel is there.
- c. After a dog is declared treed, one of the dogs declared treed must bark at least once every minute until cast arrives at the tree or be minused. If no dog barks in one minute, tree is declared open.
- d. Dogs treeing but not declared treed, when Judge arrives, will be minused on tree points on slick tree, they receive no points if squirrel is seen. Points will be determined by next available

position in the case of one dog, or split available tree points in the case of two or more dogs. Refer to rule 7(d) for split point value.

#### 11. SCORING OF CIRCLE POINTS

Points will count neither for nor against dog except when tie is to be broken.

- a. When game is treed in a hole or nest and not seen. Nest or hole must be within 30 steps (90 feet) of tree that dog is treed on to be circled. Trees not containing game, and with no nest or den within 30 steps will be deleted.
- b. When leaves or vines make it impossible to locate game.

#### 12. SCORING OF DELETED POINTS

Points will be scored with a line through them, and count neither for nor against the dog. Deleted points will not be considered to determine tiebreakers.

- a. When Judge orders dogs to be called in because of livestock or nearness to highway, building, etc.
- b. If no majority when voting to plus, minus, or circle when Hunting Judge is used.
- c. No points, not even circled points, will be awarded when dogs return to tree that had previously been scored, cast may go to tree without dogs being declared treed, if majority of cast agree (when Hunting Judges are used).
- d. If dog declared treed and non-target tree game is seen. Tree game is defined as any game capable of climbing a tree.
- e. Points are to be deleted if judge or majority of cast can see that the dog is obviously timbering if squirrel is not seen. **NO PLUS POINTS GIVEN UNLESS squirrel IS SEEN.**

#### 13. DOGS TO BE SCRATCHED DOG RELATED OFFENSES

- a. If a dog has a total of 300 minus points, regardless of how many plus points the dog has.
- b. Fighting or attempting to fight. Attempting to fight is defined as follows: when dog(s) are interfering with other dog(s) during the authority of the Judge by aggressive behavior during the authority of the Judge.
- c. No handler will be allowed to withdraw to avoid dog from being scratched for fighting.
- d. When the aggressive dog is known, scratch the aggressor only. If not known, scratch dogs involved.
- e. Failing to make any attempt to hunt within any 15 consecutive scorecard minutes.
- f. Bitches smelling strong enough to attract dogs or a dog that is just bad to bother bitches while other dogs pay them no attention.

#### HANDLER RELATED OFFENSES

- g. On second offence for declaring dog treed when dog is not treeing.
- h. On second offense if handler calls another handler's dog, the dog is to be scratched.
- i. Failure to sign scorecard after the completion of the hunt. Scorecards may be signed in the presence of the Hunt Master.
- j. For climbing or cutting trees or disturbing a place of refuge.
- k. For pulling of vines or any action deemed to be interfering with dog(s) for the first 3 minutes of the 5-minute search time. **When other dogs are declared treed, but have not been handled, the last 2 minutes of search time can be used to pull vines so long as said dogs are not within visual sight of the cast.**
- l. For intentionally killing squirrel or other game.
- m. For failure to stay with the cast unless given permission to leave.
- n. If cast becomes separated on the way to the field or during the hunt, it is the responsibility of all cast members to return to the Hunt Master at the host club. Any cast members not returning to the Hunt Master will be scratched.
- o. If a handler is drinking or using abusive language.
- p. For use of any device used to control dog prior to cast completing hunt time.
- q. For encouraging, discouraging, using hand signals, or physically abusing a dog. Praising a handled dog is not considered encouraging.
- r. Dog(s) hunting over or under advertised hunt time will be

scratched.

- s. Handler's dog will be scratched for rule violations by their spectators.

#### 14. TIME-OUTS

Judge, or majority of cast if hunting Judge is used, may call time out in accordance with the following:

- a. When dogs are getting on highway, onto posted land or into a place where there is danger to dogs or hunters.
- b. If new ground must be found to finish cast and more than 15 minutes is required or have to move to new area by vehicle, call time out immediately.
- c. In case of accident or sickness.
- d. If cast becomes lost.
- e. Dog(s) declared treed before time out is called will be scored.
- f. When a dog is injured.

**(NOTE: If time out is called then time is out, and if dog should tree, it will not count. When time out is called and dog(s) are still loose you have 30 minutes to recover dog(s) or the dog(s) will be scratched and the remainder of the cast may proceed to hunt. NO TIME IS TO BE CALLED OUT TO SEARCH A TREE OR WHEN DOGS ARE TIED OR TO BE LED AWAY FROM A TREE. If dog(s) declared treed, 5 minutes of hunting time may be demanded to search tree, or place of refuge, which is not a time out. No plus points will be awarded if squirrel is seen after 5 minutes searching time has elapsed.)**

#### 15. SCORECARDS

- a. Scorecards must be completed in the woods, and no changes can be made later except mathematical errors that are corrected by the official or where a question arises and is noted in the woods.
- b. Handler's signature verifies hunting time, and scores are correct. Any protest relative to time or scores must be noted with a question mark.
- c. Any handler failing to sign the scorecard in the woods may have the opportunity to sign upon returning the scorecard to, and in view of, the Hunt Master/HD.
- d. All scorecards must be made available after the deadline to return scorecards or when all scorecards are in possession of the Hunt Master/HD.

#### 16. QUESTIONS

- a. Non-Hunting Judge Cast: The decision of a non-hunting Judge may only be questioned in the field at the time the decision is made. The non-hunting Judge's decision may only be overturned by the Hunt Master/panel. It may be scored with a question mark (?) and reviewed by the Hunt Master/panel. **Situations not questioned and notated at the time Judge's decision is made, will not be considered.**
- b. Hunting Judge Cast: The following procedure must be followed when using hunting judges on a cast, regardless of category.
  1. The Hunting Judge has complete authority and will be responsible for scoring all situations.
  2. Should a situation arise where a handler questions a call that was made, or a call that should have been made but wasn't, that handler shall ask to have his question voted on by all cast members that remain with the cast at that time.
  3. Each handler must vote, or their dog will be scratched. It takes a majority vote to overturn judge's decision. Any handler that is not satisfied with the outcome retains the right to place a question mark (?) on the card and present his question to the Hunt Master/panel. Situations not questioned and notated at the time Judge's decision is made will not be considered.
  4. Scorecards to be carried by Judge and must be scored by Judge in plain view of all.
  5. Any owner or handler disputing event placement must address the matter with the Hunt Master/Hunt Director, within 30 minutes after the deadline to return scorecards. If the matter is not resolved, the complainant shall request an Appeal Form. They must clearly note their complaint on the form and return it to the event official to be mailed, along with the Event Report to UKC for a ruling. The Appeal must be accompanied by a \$20 fee, otherwise the matter will not be considered. The fee will be refunded if ruled in favor of the complainant.

## 17. PANELS

To form a panel a \$10 Panel Fee must be paid before the question is heard.

- a. When using a Hunt Master, a panel may be formed if a handler/owner is not satisfied with the Hunt Master's ruling.
- b. When using a Hunt Director, a panel must be formed to hear any and all questions.

## 18. APPEALS

- a. If the matter has not been satisfactorily resolved by the decision of the panel, an Appeal may be filed.
- b. An Appeal Form must be requested and filed immediately following the panel's ruling, while panel is still assembled.
- c. Appeals must be submitted to the Hunt Master/HD with a fee of \$20.
- d. All Appeals will be investigated and ruled on by the UKC.

## 19. CAST WINNERS

- a. A dog must have a total score of plus points to receive a Championship win.

## 20. TIES

- a. All ties to be broken as follows:
  1. The dog with the most circle points.
  2. If still a tie, the dog that has the most plussed first trees.
  3. If still a tie, the dog with the least minus points.
  4. If still a tie, dogs involved to hunt in sudden death. First dog to receive plus, minus, or circle points, shall end the hunt and determine the winner. Points awarded shall not be reflected on original score. No more than 15 minutes shall be used. Return deadline shall be extended 15 minutes for this cast only.
  5. If still a tie, flip a coin.



© Copyright 2022 by United Kennel Club®  
All Rights Reserved.  
UNITED KENNEL CLUB  
100 E Kilgore Rd · Kalamazoo MI 49002-5584  
[www.ukcdogs.com](http://www.ukcdogs.com)