

The Role of an AKC

By The AKC Retriever Field Rep Team

AKC's team of field representatives is comprised of six dedicated individuals who represent the American Kennel Club in the field. Each of them has an appreciation for the sport and a history of accomplishments achieved through working in the field with their own dogs. This team of representatives have numerous responsibilities and fill many roles.

As representatives of the licensing body for the sport of hunting tests and field trials, they provide guidance to AKC licensed and member clubs, as well as to participants and judges. They serve as an educational resource, conducting HT seminars throughout the year designed to help bring reasonable consistency to the sport and standardization of performance evaluations. Field Rep, Joe Reinhardt shares his thoughts about giving seminars, "I enjoy helping educate handlers and judges. I really appreciate watching the handler/dog teamwork come together, especially for those getting their first orange ribbon or the young folks in the Junior Handler Program." The seminars are advertised in advance and are open to anyone, not only judges. AKC field representatives also act as a general source for information to be utilized by host



clubs and participants as well as providing technical support for conducting tests and trials. They provide explanations and interpretations of rules, regulations and procedures as required or requested.

Field representatives travel the country to ensure events are conducted in accordance with the rules, regulations and procedures as set forth by AKC. If an issue has been observed by an attending field representative or it has been brought to their attention, it is the decision of the

field representative to address the issue according to protocol which is to first work through the event committee. However, if a major issue arises and the committee is not readily available, or the issue requires immediate attention, or the committee fails to act, the AKC field rep will use his or her judgement regarding the best way to handle the situation.

Another aspect of being a field rep is being cognizant of positive PR for the sport in general. AKC field representatives are essentially ambassadors for retriever hunting tests and field trials. They monitor that all dogs and game are treated properly and humanely while on test grounds and during the event. Their role does not stop when the event is completed. Detailed reports are filed following each event attended or semi-

Field Representative



nar presented. These reports are kept on file and maintained by AKC indefinitely.

Another role in the life of an AKC field representative is to serve in an advisory capacity to the host club during a misconduct hearing for both the event committee and the accused. This is to ensure proper procedures are followed. Some clubs may need assistance conducting a hearing and the availability of the field rep can be beneficial in preventing procedural errors which can possibly result in a nullified outcome. A field rep may serve in this advisory capacity whether he or she is on the grounds or contacted by phone. AKC field representatives are a neutral party in this process and are not able to participate or influence any decision making during a misconduct proceeding. However, a field rep has the right to file a misconduct charge in certain situations.

They also promote awareness of the AKC Code of Sportsmanship which is found in the inside back cover of every regulation and rulebook. They travel across the country each weekend to share their expertise, encourage participants, including our youth, support our clubs and



event committees. As Field Director Russ Reavis explains, “It truly is an honor to represent AKC in this position. After 44 years of owning, training and handling retrievers it was time to give something back to the sport.”

AKC Reps are relied upon to help promote the sport of retriever field trials and hunting tests to both our constituents and related organizations. AKC field reps are also promoters and advocates of the importance of working purebred dogs in the field.

Our valuable team of AKC field reps have committed themselves to this role because they want to give back to the sport that has given so much to them. They each have an appreciation for quality retrieving in the field and value the significance of successful events. It is through these events the preservation of hunting abilities can remain a part of the sporting breeds we all love so much.

If you find yourself at an event where an AKC rep is attending, please take a moment to say hello. They are here to help you and they are here for our sport. The entire staff and their contact info can be found below.

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