

The FCI Working Commission meeting was held March 11-12, 2017. The primary focus of the meeting was the discussion and approval of the proposed IPO rule changes to be effective 1/1/2019. Everything approved by the Working Commission is not official until approved by the FCI General Committee / Board and will not be implemented until 1/1/2019.

As Director of Judges for USCA I submitted a letter to be on record for this meeting on behalf of USCA outlining the importance of maintaining correct working dog evaluations (IPO) that continue to test working temperament, drives, structure through physical testing as it pertains to the United Schutzhund Clubs of America and our German Shepherd Dogs as well as for any other organization that uses these working dog trials as part of their evaluation for breed suitability.

USCA will communicate with our members at least 6 months prior to the implementation of the new rules to give more than enough time to prepare for trials. At this time none of the proposed changes would require any significant additional training or changes to training to be successful in trialing under the present or the proposed rules for 2019.

If they receive final approval and there are no additional changes in the next 19 months in general this is a very simple overview of the significant changes:

1. The name will now be "IGP" - "International Gebrauchshund Prufung" (International Working Dog Test) No longer IPO - "International Prufung Ordnund"
2. BH- the heeling pattern will be slightly shorter but will still include on and off leash heeling.
3. IGP 1-2-3 levels of track will have 3 articles, each worth 7 points for a total of 21 points for articles.
4. The FH, FH2 and IPO FH will remain basically unchanged.
5. In all Obedience the distance the handler will throw the dumbbell is more clearly defined as approximately 10 meters, the height of the hurdle and wall remain the same. The jump will have to have a top board that allows it to pivot if touched and then return to its starting position. The minimum distance from the jump or wall is defined as 4 meters (no longer 5 paces). The scoring for the send-out exercise scoring is more clearly defined.
6. The IGP Obedience will change slightly in the IGP 1 to exclude the retrieve over the wall and instead have a recall over the wall without the retrieve. In both IGP 2-3 there are no significant changes proposed.
7. The IGP protection will still include pressure and stick contact (padded stick hits) and an "Attack on the Dog Out of Motion" (long bite/courage test) at all levels but done slightly different from current for level 1 -2. There are some changes in all levels most significantly in the IGP 1.
8. The IGP 1 will no longer require a blind search of the # 5 blind, the dog will instead be sent directly into the #6 blind (find blind). The handler will be allowed in IGP 1 to leash the dog during pickup and transport exercises.
9. The IGP 2 will no longer have an "Attack Out of back Transport", but will have an additional Reattack (defense) exercise with no stick contact after the "Attack on Dog Out of Motion" (long bite/courage test) like the IGP 3.

10. The Attack on the Dog Out of Motion (long bite / courage test) for the IGP1 and 2 will not require the helper to return to the blind and then run out to the midline and towards the dog/handler instead the helper will remain mid field after the last defense exercise and the handler will pick up the dog and heel away down the midline of the field to a distance of approximately 30 meters away for the IGP 1, 40 meters away for the IGP2 then the handler will stop and turn towards the helper where the judge will signal the exercise to begin.
11. The IGP3 does not change from our current IPO3 in any phase.
12. Additional sporting titles are slightly changed or added, examples are the IPO V no longer has protection it will only be tracking and obedience, countries will be allowed to offer FPr (TR) 1-2-3, UPr (OB) 1-2-3, BgH 1-2-3 (obedience with additional exercises like retrieves, send out etc), APR 1-2-3 (obedience and protection), and aZTP for organizations using this as a breed test.

My thanks to Mr Frans Jansen of the FCI Working Commission for his friendship and support for USCA by including us in the communication regarding all working dog rules and changes as well as allowing us to make suggestions and comments. My thanks to USCA Judge Frank Phillips for his time and help in reviewing these new rule proposals with me and for attending the FCI Working Commission meeting on behalf of the AWDF and presenting my letter on behalf of USCA to the FCI Working Commission.

More information will be included in my message to the membership in the May-June USCA magazine.

Nathaniel Roque, USCA Director of Judges