

# FEDERATION CYNOLOGIQUE INTERNATIONALE (FCI) (AISBL)

Place Albert 1<sup>er</sup>, 13, B – 6530 Thuin (Belgique), tel : +32.71.59.12.38, internet: <https://www.fci.be>

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## FCI REGULATIONS FOR

INTERNATIONAL NATURAL TRUFFLE SEARCH **C.A.C.I.R.T. (n)** COMPETITIONS  
& INTERNATIONAL NATURAL TRUFFLE SEARCH CHAMPIONSHIP - **C.I.R.T. (n)**



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## 1. FCI REGULATIONS

FCI National Canine Organisations (NCO) are invited to promote the FCI NATURAL TRUFFLE SEARCH COMPETITIONS, and the regulations defined by the FCI.

The main purpose of the FCI regulations for natural truffle search competitions is to set a standard for FCI international competitions and to serve as a basis for FCI international judging guidelines and equipment standards. FCI NCOs should use them as a basis for developing their own regulations, differing only to accommodate local needs.

FCI regulations for natural truffle search competitions regulations and judging guidelines must be applied in FCI international events.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

FCI natural truffle search competition is a dog competition open to all healthy and physically fit dogs, that meet the age requirements. Dogs must be tattooed or chipped and in possession of a FCI recognised pedigree (studbook/appendix).

The aim of natural truffle search competition is for the dog to find 3 to 5 truffles in a given time and in a suitable biotope.

It is an educational and sporting activity intended to assess and improve the dog's intelligence and refine its olfactory qualities.

It requires a good communication between dog and handler, leading to a perfect mutual understanding. Competitors must therefore be familiar with elementary training and basic obedience.

## 3. CATEGORIES

In FCI international competitions, only one category exists:

**Open:** for dogs over 15 months old

The date considered to determine the age is the date of the first day of the competition.

## 4. TRUFFLE FIELD

The competition takes place on covered or semi-covered ground with or without the presence of natural truffles, in order to highlight the dogs' acquired skills in searching for truffles in conditions as close as possible to natural digging.

### 4.1. GENERAL

Each panel of judges will be required to compete on a large plot of at least 1.500 m<sup>2</sup> per dog, without physical separations such as barrier tape.

Residents may be placed to mark the boundaries, the centre, and the plot number: at the four corners of the plot in one color and at the centre with another colour (see [APPENDIX, 1. TRUFFLE TRIAL PLOT FOR THE COMPETITION](#)).

There will be as many truffle fields marked as there are competitors.

Reserve truffle fields will be provided at the rate of one additional truffle field per series (a truffle field at the beginning of the series where a white dog passes).

A minimum of 3 and a maximum of 5 truffles per dog will be placed and marked on each plot, at a minimum depth of 5 cm and a maximum depth of 10 cm. The truffles will be buried at least 18 hours before the competition.

The diameter of the truffles and his weigh must be appropriate for the trial.

For international competitions, all truffle species are accepted, but it is forbidden to introduce truffles that are not native to the country where the competition is held.

Each truffle field will be numbered, and the chronological order of the competitors will be determined by random draw (first truffle field = white dog, then competitor number 2 on truffle field number 2, and so on).

#### 4.2. FCI TRUFFLE FIELD DESIGN

The judge will prepare plans of the truffle's locations in each truffle field, with a precise location of each truffle the day before the competition. We strongly recommend the use of specially prepared plans to scale.

The judge may use a wheel rangefinder to measure the distances in the truffle garden, like agility judges.

Example of a landmark:

- at the foot of a tree, 2 meters to the right of the centre of the truffle plot.

The judge, along with the organising team, will bury the truffles before the start of the competition. The judge will ensure that all truffles are buried to the same depth, at a minimum of 5 centimetres and a maximum of 10 centimetres.

#### 4.3. FCI COMPETITIONS

When there are 2 series in the same competition, lots must be drawn from among all the entries so that the allocation of dogs to the 2 juries is random and not imposed.

**1-** Competitors are required to respect the fields provided for these events

All dogs present on the fields before, during, and after the events are released, disqualifying the competitors concerned.

All dogs not taking part must be kept well away from the competition fields so as not to disrupt the work of other competitors.

**2-** When their name or field number is called, competitors must present themselves to the jury without delay, without any instruments of coercion or training, or any device of any kind.

They must provide their first and last name, the dog's name, and the truffle field number, in order to verify the accuracy of the information on the judging sheet.

For presentation to the jury, competitors must arrive at the fields and present themselves to the jury with their dog on a leash and leave the fields with their dog on a leash. The dog will be identified by the judge at the beginning or preferably at the end of the pair's run to avoid disturbing the dog before the trial

**3-** At the judge's command, the competitor proceeds to the location of their choice. Once in position, the competitor releases their dog onto the truffle patch, after removing the leash, collar, harness, etc. The judges must have each dog start on the truffle patch assigned to them by random draw. The dog may then, at the judge's suggestion, explore the patch of the dog that preceded it if the dog has not found all the truffles.

The judge has the right to direct or limit the competitor's progress within the patch, taking care not to "break" the dog's search when escaping.

**4-** At the start of the competition, a 1-minute relaxation period will be permitted, during which errors will not lead to disqualification. Minimum search time is 10 minutes.

The jury may extend this time for all dogs up to double it. The dog must be handled soberly, as if in a natural situation, preferably by signals. Excessive warnings by voice or whistle will be penalized.

During the search, the handler must remain within earshot of the jury to follow their instructions. However, since the handler is also dependent on the dog's work, it is advisable for the judge to remain within earshot of the handler.

The handler must fill in any holes dug by their dog, failing which they will be penalised (points deducted) or **disqualified (if no holes have been filled)**.

At the judge's request, the handler will recall their dog and bring it back on leash to the jury to await instructions. At the end of the time allowed for each test, the judge will announce that the test time is up and that the handler must quickly recall and tether their dog.

A dog that, at the end of the test, avoids the handler's repeated calls will be considered "**out of reach**". Any **misconduct or mistreatment** of the dog by the handler will result in immediate **exclusion** from the trial.

## 5. THE JURY AND ACCOMPANYING PERSONS

1. Only qualified judges whose names appear on the list of judges for this speciality in the country in which they reside, and who have obtained the necessary ratification from their FCI-NCO, are authorized to judge international natural truffle search competitions for all dog breeds. Foreign judges may not judge unless they have first obtained authorisation from the NCO of their country. This authorisation must be requested sufficiently in advance from the NCO of their country.
2. A judge may not enter a dog in the competition in which he is participating as a member of the jury. He may not judge a dog of which he is the owner, co-owner, breeder or trainer, unless he has sold the dog at least 6 months before the competition he is judging; the same applies to dogs belonging to members of his family or to people living under the same roof.

The following may be admitted to the Jury: Aspiring Judges, to complete training courses authorised by the NCO of their country.

The judge may be accompanied by a secretary and a truffle collector to assist in the management of the event.

3. The organisation must facilitate, as much as possible, public viewing of the event. Depending on the nature of the terrain, spectators, possibly divided into small groups, may follow the jury according to their instructions, in complete silence and without disturbing the competitors in any way. The jury has the right, at its unquestionable discretion, to not allow the public to follow the events.

4. A minimum of 6 dogs and a maximum of 16 dogs may be assigned to each jury. Each jury consists of one judge.

## 6. JUDGING

The judging criteria are designed so that a dog well-trained in the natural search for truffles can participate in this test without the need for specific preparation.

The jury will assess olfactory qualities, endurance, and application, as well as aptitude for initiative, receptivity, education, and training.

The jury will not compare the work of different dog breeds. This is a point-based judging process (see [APPENDIX, 3. JUDGING FIELD TRIAL SHEET FOR THE COMPETITION](#)) based on the evaluation of the following five criteria:

### **WILLINGNESS**

The dog must be enterprising, willing and determined throughout the work, able to overcome natural obstacles and weather conditions, without constant prompting from the handler.

The dog must quickly take possession of its area and explore it thoroughly.

It must demonstrate initiative, authority, and consistency in exploring its area.

## **SEARCH**

The search must adapt to the environment; its radius must be sufficiently large to cover the majority of the area.

The area must be explored efficiently, meticulously, showing initiative, in the most orderly manner possible, and without excessive changes of direction.

The dog must be attentive to reach and explore an area indicated by the handler.

The dog must work mainly in front of the handler.

A few passages at a gallop or canter are permitted at the start of the search or when returning from a section of the area already explored. The dog must adapt its pace to the environment in which it is moving.

The pace must be as constant as possible, which does not exclude passages at a walk when capturing and controlling the scent.

The dog must not be distracted by possible game scents, or false trails, or by the presence of strangers (secretary, collector, public, etc.).

## **CONTACT**

In its independent and determined search, the dog must demonstrate great complicity with the handler, without showing fear.

It must develop its search in the directions indicated and return promptly when called by its handler, unless it is in the process of marking a truffle.

The dog's stopping work, on command, during a marking will be positively noted.

## **SCENT**

The dog's olfactory acuity and concentration on the task will be evaluated in the way it traces a ripe truffle scent.

A dog that is able to mark truffles ignored by other competitors in truffle patches already explored will be highly rewarded.

## **MARKING**

The judges take into consideration not only the number of markings (with truffles), the quality of the markings in assisting the handler in confirming the presence of truffles, but also their quality through the precision of the pointing. Marking must be determined and clear.

The ability to stop digging on command, to assist the handler in their exploration in search of the truffle, to resume the search to refine the location if the handler is unsuccessful, and finally to assist the handler in capturing the truffle will be evaluated positively.

These criteria will serve to verify the dog's efficiency and the quality of its work; to this end, each dog may conduct part of its search on terrain already explored by other dogs, in order to compare performances. To receive a qualification and be ranked, the dog must perform a correct task and at least one justified marking with a nose lift.

Clear and determined markings not justified by the presence of a truffle will be taken into account to weight the final assessment.

Note: In the forest, the dog may be required to perform light discrimination scratching (environment rich in different odours: animals, droppings, underground mushrooms, etc.).

## 6.1. JUDGMENT RULES

No competitor may challenge the judge's decision. Their decisions are final.

1. The competition is judged on a total of 100 points, distributed as follows:

- Willingness: 20 points
- Search: 20 points
- Contact: 20 points
- Olfaction: 20 points
- Marking: 20 points

2. Ranking

At the end of the competition, the jury must establish the ranking based on the number of points obtained for the five judging criteria using the **Judging and Score sheet** (see **APPENDIX, 2 &3**).

### **Eliminated and Not Qualified Dogs**

A dog that has made errors leading to its elimination or that has been withdrawn at the handler's request will be referred to in the judge's report as "**Eliminated**"

A dog that fails to place at the end of the competition due to a lack of marking will be defined as "**Not Qualified**".

Any cheating during a competition will be submitted to the disciplinary committee of the organising association, which may impose sanctions by banning entry into the competitions it organises for a limited period or permanently, and may request the NCO of its country to extend the sanction to the national or even international level.

## 6.2. FAULTS

The following faults and errors are penalized:

- Lack of obedience, moving the dog too far away, or leaving the hand except for catching a scent in the wind.
- Disorganised search, with a majority of passes behind the handler.
- Lack of initiative and discontinuous action.
- Physical deficiency or lack of stamina.
- Abandonment of a marking with a nose.
- More than two false markings with the handler actively searching and no truffle present.
- Too many recall commands or restarts to work, even depending on the breed.
- Any continuous pursuit of game.
- Unclosed hole.

It is up to the jury to objectively assess the seriousness of an error made by the dog, taking into account the various circumstances that caused it on a scale of 0 to 5 points, within the five criteria to be judged (willingness, search, contact, olfaction, marking).

Any error made within the first minute of the round or during the first minute of the recall round does not result in elimination.

## 6.3. ELIMINATION

- Inappropriate conduct toward the judge.
- Brutality toward the dog.
- Aggressive dog.
- The dog wears a collar.

The FCI prohibits the use of collars that deliver electric impulses to the body of a dog.

Furthermore, the FCI prohibits the advertising of such collars at events within its jurisdiction.

The FCI prohibits the distribution of such collars as prizes or gifts

- Dogs leaving the handler permanently.
- The dog eats the truffle.
- A truffle collected and not immediately handed over for inspection will result in the competitor's elimination.
- Any voluntary cessation of the search by the competitor before the end of the allotted time (unless requested by the judge).
- Any dog entered in the competition that re-enters the competition area before or after the judge's visit.
- No holes filled by the competitor.

When eliminated, the handler and dog must leave the competition area as quickly as possible, unless the judge decides otherwise.

The judge must resolve all unforeseen cases in a coherent manner.

## 7. RESULTS

The ranking is based on the number of points obtained.

The ranking may include ex aequo.

Example:

N° Truffle Plot	Willingness	Search	Contact	Olfaction	Marking	Overall Total	Ranking
1	12	15	16	16	16	75	6
2	16	20	20	20	20	96	2 ex aequo
3	20	20	18	20	20	98	1
4	20	18	18	20	20	96	2 ex aequo
5	15	16	18	19	17	85	5
6	14	16	20	20	18	88	4

## 8. ORGANISING FCI INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

FCI-NCO wishing to organise an FCI international natural truffle search competition must:

1. have a forest capable of accommodating all dogs present at the competition. In natural truffle search competitions, it is possible to find natural truffles in addition to those buried by the organisers. The surface must present no danger to dogs and handlers (no broken glass, no nails, etc.).
2. appoint a judge whose name appears on the list of judges for this speciality in the country in which he/she resides, and who has obtained the necessary ratification from his/her FCI-NCO
3. plan the number of people necessary for the smooth running of the competition, namely:
  - a secretary who notes the location of the truffles found in relation to the plan, and any mistakes or comments noted by the judge, so that the judge does not have to take his eyes off the dog as it performs.
  - two (2) secretaries in charge of establishing the ranking, posting it, and filling out the workbooks.

## 9. COMPETITIONS/CLASSES

### 9.1 FCI international natural truffle search tests.

Open to all dogs of all breeds over 15 months old and registered in a Studbook or Appendix to the studbook recognised by the FCI.

Access to these competitions is permitted only to subjects who have already obtained at least one **C.A.C.RT. (n) (Certificat d'Aptitude au Championnat National de Recherche naturelle de Truffes)** or a **Reserve C.A.C.RT. (n)** in National Canine Organisation (NCO) competitions, males and females together.

These awards do not make the dog eligible to enter the working class at FCI international shows.

Dogs must be identified (tattoo or chip) and their owners or handlers must be members of an FCI-NCO.

Competitors must have a workbook and/or a license issued by their FCI-NCO, in which the test results will be recorded.

## 9.2 INELIGIBILITY TO ENTER

- Pregnant bitches.
- Dogs that apparently are ill, hurt or physically unfit
- Castrated dogs
- Doped dogs.

Dogs coming from or going to a region infected with rabies must have a valid inoculation certificate against rabies.

Competitors and their dogs must provide proof of membership in a club affiliated with an FCI-NCO and of participation in official competitions in their own country.

An award given by the judge to a competitor (competing in a foreign country) who has lost the right to compete in his own country will not be homologated by the FCI.

Competitors are expected to behave and be properly dressed.

Any act of brutality towards the dog will be severely punished and immediate **disqualification** will be required. A complaint may also be filed against the handler.

The organising club has the right to refuse any entry.

## **10. The FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) (Certificate of Aptitude to International natural Truffle Search Championship) (Certificat d’Aptitude au Championnat International de Recherche naturelle de Truffes) and Reserve C.A.C.I.RT. (n) at stake in international natural truffle search competitions**

**The basic FCI requirements to be eligible for the FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) Reserve FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) are available in the Regulations for the FCI International Championship [INTRODUCTION 1) 2) 3)]**

The FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) and the Reserve FCI-C.A.C.I.RT.. (n) can be awarded to all the breeds entered in the competition.

In international competitions the FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) is at stake if at least 6 dogs are entered and physically present and when males and females compete together. The judging criteria on the basis of which the FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) is awarded are identical to those on the basis of which the C.A.C.RT. (n) (Certificat d’Aptitude au Championnat National de Recherche naturelle de Truffes) is assigned.

The assignment of the FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) will be carried out at the same time as the assignment of the C.A.C.RT. (n) except for cases in which the development of the competition requires the formation of batteries.

In FCI international competitions where performance requires the formation of batteries, only one FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) may be awarded. If there are two or more winning dogs in the battery that have obtained the C.A.C.RT. (n) they will be subjected to a barrage judged by a jury, composed of an expert judge qualified for the FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n), drawn by lot from among those already composing the juries, for the possible assignment of the FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) and the Reserve FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n). During the barrage, it is essential that the dog provides a performance of an adequate level. The judges must consider the severity that the FCI expects from them when it comes to proposing subjects for the FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n) or the Reserve FCI-C.A.C.I.RT. (n)

These awards do not make the dog eligible to enter the working class at FCI international shows.

## **11. Title of FCI International natural Truffle Search Champion - Champion International de Recherche naturelle de Truffes - C.I.RT.(n)**

**The basic FCI requirements to be eligible for C.I.RT.(n) are available in the Regulations for the FCI International Championship [INTRODUCTION 1) 2) 3)]**

To obtain the title of Champion International de Recherche naturelle de Truffes (FCI International natural Truffle Search Champion) - C.I.RT.(n) a dog must have obtained:

- 2 (two) Certificat d’Aptitude au Championnat international de Recherche naturelle de Truffes - C.A.C.I.RT. (n) awarded by two different juries/judges, at FCI international competitions organised by two different NCOs in two different countries.
- At the age of at least 15 months in an FCI international CACIB show, regardless of the number of participants, at least the qualification "Very Good" or, in countries where this qualification is not provided for, a second prize, in Working, intermediate, open or Champion class.

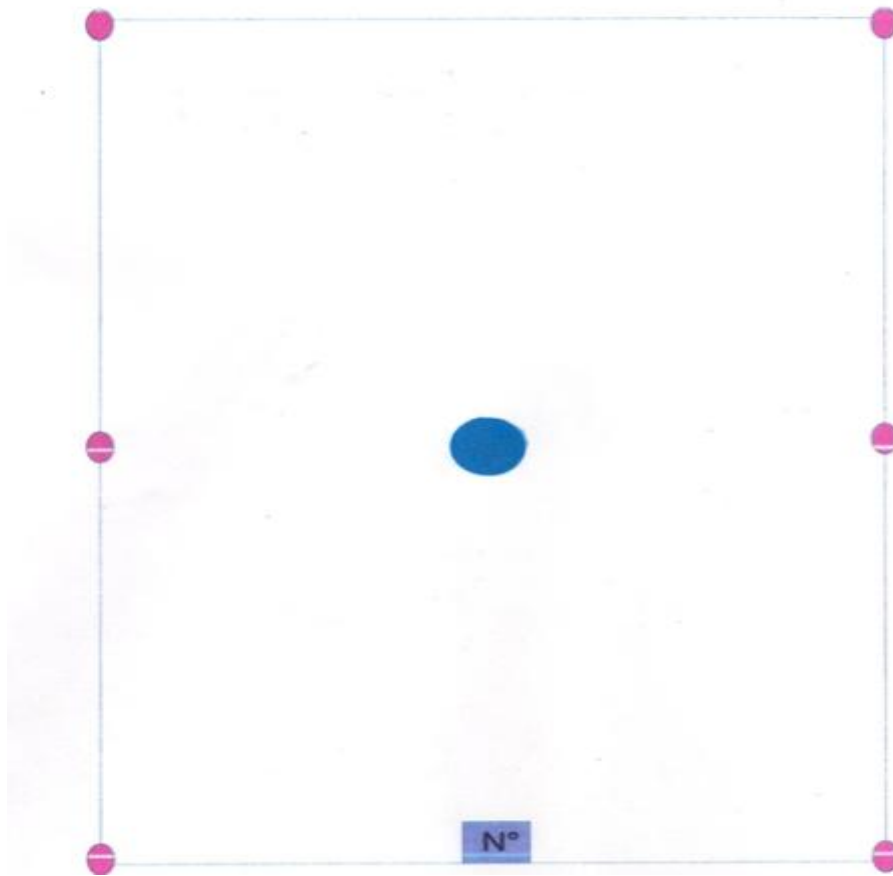
The English language is authoritative.

These regulations were approved by the FCI General Committee, during their meeting held in Rome in February 2026. They become effective on the day of their publication.

## APPENDIX

### 1. TRUFFLE TRIAL PLOT FOR THE COMPETITION

**PLOT N°**



**WAY**

## 2. SCORE SHEET FIELD TRIAL INTERNATIONAL COMPETITION

SCORE SHEET NATURAL TRUFFLE SEARCH				
Judge name				
Passage N°				
Place				
Organiser				
Dog breed				
Dog name				
Studbook / Appendix N°		Date of birth		
Identification (tattoo or chip)				
Handler				
License n°				
Number of truffles found	Hidden		Natural	
Search time:	10 mn - 11 mn - 12 mn - 13 mn - 14 mn - 15 mn - 16 mn - 17 mn - 18 mn - 19 - 20 mn			
WILLINGNESS	/ 20 points			
SEARCH	/ 20 points			
CONTACT	/ 20 points			
OLFACTION	/ 20 points			
MARKING	/ 20 points			
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	<b>/ 100 points</b>			
<b>RANKING</b>	<b>/</b>			

**Signature**

### 3. JUDGING FIELD TRIAL SHEET FOR THE COMPETITION

NAME OF THE DOG:				COMPETITION :				DATE :									
NAME OF THE HANDLER:				TRUFFLE FIELD N° :				JUDGE(S) :									
<b>1 - WILLINGNESS 20 pts</b>																	
CONSISTENCY (gait and sustained search)				5	4	3	2	1	0	<b>TOTAL WILLINGNESS</b>							
PERSISTENCE (even if all truffles were found within the minimum time: 12 mn)				5	4	1	2	1	0								
INITIATIVE ON THE PLOT				5	4	3	2	1	0								
AUTONOMY				5	4	3	2	1	0								
pts																	
<b>2 - SEARCH 20 pts</b>																	
ACTIVE DOG – DOG AT GOOD DISTANCE, IN FRONT OR AROUND THE MASTER				5	4	3	2	1	0	<b>TOTAL SEARCH</b>							
GAIT ADAPTED TO THE TERRAIN - QUALITY IN THE NEGOTIATION OF THE OBSTACLES				5	4	3	2	1	0								
EXPLORATION AND COVER OF THE GROUND				5	4	3	2	1	0								
USE OF THE WIND AND OF THE BIOTOPE				5	4	3	2	1	0								
pts																	
<b>3 - CONTACT 20 pts</b>																	
COMPLICITY – WORK WITH GESTURES (frequent vocal and whistle calls, reminders to be avoided) – SOBER WORK				5	4	3	2	1	0	<b>TOTAL CONTACT</b>							
OBEDIENCE - QUALITY OF THE CALL BACK- QUALITY OF THE PIVOT DONE BY THE DOG AROUND THE HANDLER				5	4	3	2	1	0								
DEGREE OF INSENSITIVITY TO EXTERNAL DISTURBANCE (game, strangers, dogs, noise, etc.)				5	4	3	2	1	0								
RESUMING WORK AT THE INDICATION OF THE HANDLER - BLOCAGE IN SEARCH				5	4	3	2	1	0								
pts																	
<b>4 - OLFACTION 20 pts</b>																	
SEARCH NOSE TO GROUND - DOUBLE SNIFFING (quality of the dog's focus)				5	4	3	2	1	0	<b>TOTAL OLFACTION</b>							
DEGREE OF NATURAL NOSE POWER AND SENSE OF SMELL (quality obtained through training)				5	4	3	2	1	0								
PRECISION IN LOCATING THE AREA WHERE THE TRUFFLE IS PRESENT (pointing)				5	4	3	2	1	0								
QUALITY OF PICK UP THE EMANATION IN THE WIND				2,5	2	1,5	1	0,5	0								
CAPACITY TO FIND TRUFFLE IN A PERIPHERAL OR ALREADY EXPLORED AREA				2,5	2	1,5	1	0,5	0								
pts																	
<b>5 - MARKING 20 pts</b>																	
NUMBER OF TRUFFLES FOUND (attention penalty if truffle eaten)				5	4	3	2	1	0	<b>TOTAL MARKING</b>							
QUALITY OF PRECISE AND UNMISTAKABLE INDICATION OF TRUFFLE PRESENCE TO THE HANDLER (clear and determined marking with a back and forth movement of the paw) - DOUBLE MARKING (by static position, look) OR CONTROLLED MARKING - (remote stop of scratching)				5	4	3	2	1	0								
PRECISION OF MARKING ALLOWING TO FIND THE TRUFFLE – THE DOG ASSISTS THE HANDLER'S SEARCH (remains in place by his side)				5	4	3	2	1	0								
HANDLER COVERS THE HOLE (whatever the marking distance of the dog, even if it retrieves). ATTENTION: if none of the holes are covered = disqualification				5	4	3	2	1	0								
pts																	
<b>TOTAL AMOUNT OF POINTS AT THE COMPETITION</b>												pts/100					
pts																	
EXCLUSION			DISQUALIFICATION			WITHDRAWAL			ELIMINATED			SUFFICIENT					
Misconduct			No hole covered						Roaming			Aggressive			Out of reach		
Mistreatment																	